

TRANSFORMING POLYTECHNIC LIBRARY SERVICES IN NIGERIA'S EDUCATION SECTOR REFORM: CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND STRATEGIES.

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Abstract

The study examined the transformation of library services in Nigerian polytechnics within the context of education sector reform, focusing on challenges, opportunities, and strategies. A survey research design was adopted, and the study was guided by five research questions. The population comprised 31 library staff, including both professional and para-professional personnel, drawn from Federal Polytechnic Oko, Anambra State (18), and Delta State Polytechnic Library, Ogwashi-Uku (13). Given the manageable size, total enumeration was employed. A total of 31 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 25 were returned, representing a response rate of 80.65%. A structured questionnaire based on a 4-point rating scale was used for data collection. Data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. The findings revealed that polytechnic libraries contribute significantly to education sector reform through ICT integration, provision of relevant information resources, staff development, and collaborative engagement. However, major challenges identified include inadequate funding, weak policy recognition, poor infrastructural facilities, and limited involvement in advocacy for systemic reforms. Based on these findings, the study recommends increased funding, continuous staff training, improved ICT infrastructure, and stronger policy integration to enhance the role of polytechnic libraries. It further emphasizes the need to position libraries as strategic partners in education sector reform through active participation in policy implementation and service innovation.

Keywords: Academic Libraries, Nigeria Polytechnics, Transforming Library Services, Sector Reform, Library Users.

Introduction

Polytechnic libraries in Nigeria occupy a critical position in the academic and technical education ecosystem. These libraries serve as vital centres for the acquisition, organisation, and dissemination of knowledge that supports teaching, learning, and research. In an era where education is rapidly evolving due to technological advancements, globalisation, and sector reforms, polytechnic libraries are expected to adapt their services to meet the demands of students, faculty, and the wider academic community (Abdul & Ibrahim, 2022). Historically, polytechnic libraries in Nigeria were established primarily as repositories for print resources, supporting traditional classroom-based teaching. However, contemporary education now demands more dynamic library services that integrate digital technologies, online resources, and user-focused service models (Jain & Akakandelwa, 2016). As sector reforms seek to modernise Nigerian polytechnics, there is an urgent need to assess how library services are being transformed to align with these reforms, and the extent to which emerging technologies, policy support, and strategic planning contribute to this process (Agboke & Oladokun, 2024).

Despite the acknowledged importance of polytechnic libraries, research shows that many libraries in Nigeria face persistent challenges. Funding inadequacies, outdated infrastructure, insufficient access to digital resources, and limited professional development for library staff hinder the effectiveness of library services (Idhalama & Obaseki, 2018; Mesagan, 2024). These challenges not only affect the quality of service delivery but also limit the libraries' ability to fully support the objectives of sector reforms, which aim to enhance educational quality, increase access to technical education, and ensure alignment with global standards (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2020). Opportunities

for transforming library services are emerging, driven by both national and international trends. The increasing use of information and communication technology (ICT) in libraries offers avenues for innovation, improved resource accessibility, and enhanced user engagement. Digital libraries, online databases, integrated library management systems, and AI-driven tools provide the potential for polytechnic libraries to transform their services to meet the modern demands of students and academics (Ajani, Adeoye, & Alabi, 2024). In addition, policy initiatives, institutional partnerships, and professional development programs can support library staff in adopting new technologies and service models (Oluoha, 2025).

Globally, the integration of technology in libraries has been widely studied, with Western academic libraries providing models of best practices in digital resource management, user-focused services, and automated systems (Case, 2017). African libraries, including those in Nigeria, are increasingly adopting these practices, but contextual challenges such as funding limitations, infrastructure gaps, and socio-cultural factors require locally adapted strategies (Jain & Akakandelwa, 2016). Understanding both African and Western perspectives provides valuable insights for developing context-appropriate strategies to transform polytechnic library services in Nigeria. The transformation of library services in Nigerian polytechnics is therefore not just a matter of updating resources or introducing new technologies; it requires a holistic approach that integrates policy support, infrastructure development, capacity building, and strategic planning.

By addressing these areas, polytechnic libraries can better align with sector reforms, enhance the quality of educational services, and contribute to the development of a skilled

workforce capable of meeting national and global demands (Mesagan, 2024). Polytechnic libraries are at a critical point where challenges and opportunities converge. While funding, infrastructure, and staff development present significant obstacles, emerging technologies and policy initiatives provide a pathway for transformation. Understanding these dynamics is essential for developing strategies that ensure library services are transformed to effectively support sector reform. This research therefore seeks to explore the challenges, opportunities, and strategies for transforming library services in Nigerian polytechnics, with particular attention to how emerging technologies can facilitate transformation and align services with national educational reform objectives.

Problem Statement

Despite the central role of polytechnic libraries in supporting teaching, learning, and research, their capacity to deliver quality services in Nigeria remains constrained. Challenges such as inadequate funding, obsolete infrastructure, and insufficient integration of emerging technologies hinder service transformation. While opportunities exist through ICT adoption, policy support, and collaborative strategies, polytechnic libraries often lag behind in aligning with global best practices. This gap creates an urgent need to transform library services in Nigerian polytechnics to effectively contribute to sector reform initiatives.

Research Objectives

1. To assess the role of polytechnic library services in supporting education sector reform in Nigeria.

2. To investigate the influence of emerging technologies on the transformation of polytechnic library services.
3. To examine the opportunities available for transforming library services in Nigerian polytechnics within the context of education sector reform.
4. To identify the major challenges hindering the transformation of polytechnic library services in Nigeria within the context of education sector reform.
5. To analyse the strategies for transforming polytechnic library services in Nigeria in line with education sector reform.

Literature Review

Polytechnic education in Nigeria plays a pivotal role in the development of skilled manpower essential for national growth. Central to this educational framework are polytechnic libraries, which support teaching, learning, and research activities. However, the evolving demands of the 21st-century educational landscape necessitate a transformation in the way these libraries operate and deliver services. Education sector reform in this study refers to the structured efforts aimed at improving the quality, accessibility, and relevance of polytechnic education in Nigeria through policy, technology integration, and institutional development. Against this background, literature on transforming library services in Nigerian polytechnics reveals four core areas of concern: the influence of emerging technologies, the opportunities for improvement, the challenges constraining service delivery, and the strategies that can be employed to align libraries with sector reforms. The integration of emerging technologies has become a cornerstone in the transformation of academic libraries worldwide. In the Western context, artificial

intelligence (AI), robotics, and automated systems are increasingly being adopted to enhance service delivery, streamline processes, and improve user engagement (Tenopir, 2020). Nigerian polytechnic libraries are gradually exploring these tools, but the pace of adoption has been slow compared to global trends. Agboke and Oladokun (2024) emphasize that AI can facilitate personalized user interactions while robotic systems can automate repetitive tasks like shelving and cataloguing. This frees up staff to focus on more complex responsibilities, thereby improving service quality.

However, barriers such as inadequate infrastructure, financial constraints, and limited technical expertise have impeded successful integration in Nigeria. Ajani et al. (2024) add that resistance to change—often rooted in job displacement fears and privacy concerns—further complicates adoption. Despite these challenges, the prospects remain promising. International examples show that libraries using AI-driven recommendation systems and cloud-based catalogues achieve greater efficiency (Jain & Akakandelwa, 2016). For Nigeria, leveraging ICT innovations can not only modernize service delivery but also bridge gaps in access, particularly for remote learners and under-resourced institutions. The growing emphasis on information and communication technology (ICT) in education presents opportunities for polytechnic libraries to expand their relevance. Digital tools enable broader access to resources, facilitate online learning, and enhance research support. In the African context, initiatives such as digital repositories and open access platforms have improved scholarly visibility and resource sharing (Oluoha, 2025). Government policies also provide enabling frameworks. The National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2020) underscores the importance of library development as an integral part of

educational reform. This policy creates a foundation upon which polytechnic libraries can advocate for better funding, infrastructure upgrades, and training opportunities. Collaborations and partnerships constitute another major opportunity. Libraries can link with universities, research institutes, and international organizations to share resources, build staff capacity, and improve service provision. Western libraries have long leveraged consortium agreements to expand collections; Nigerian polytechnic libraries can replicate this model to overcome resource scarcity (Jain & Akakandelwa, 2016; Oluoha, 2025).

Despite these opportunities, polytechnic libraries in Nigeria face persistent challenges. The most critical is inadequate funding. Unlike university libraries, which often receive dedicated percentages of institutional budgets, polytechnic libraries are frequently underfunded. Idhalama and Obaseki (2018) argue that this financial shortfall undermines the acquisition of up-to-date resources, modernization of facilities, and staff development. Outdated infrastructure compounds this problem. Abdul and Ibrahim (2022) observed that many libraries lack reliable internet connectivity, adequate seating, and functional lighting, all of which directly impact learning and research. Similarly, Mesagan (2024) highlights that while digital resources present opportunities, many libraries struggle with integration due to insufficient staff training and user resistance to change. Another challenge lies in capacity gaps. A significant portion of polytechnic library staff have limited ICT skills, making it difficult to manage electronic resources effectively. This reflects broader issues in the Nigerian higher education system where professional development is irregular and often underfunded (Idhalama & Obaseki, 2018). To address these challenges and maximize opportunities, several strategies are proposed in the literature. A key approach is the

development of comprehensive digitalisation plans. Abdul and Ibrahim (2022) advocate for digitising print collections, building institutional repositories, and training both staff and users to effectively utilise digital platforms. Advocacy for increased funding is equally crucial. Idhalama and Obaseki (2018) note that library administrators must engage policymakers and institutional management by demonstrating the correlation between well-resourced libraries and student success. This advocacy aligns with sector reform objectives that emphasize quality and accessibility. Capacity building remains another indispensable strategy. Continuous professional development equips librarians with the necessary ICT skills to adapt to emerging technologies (Mesagan, 2024). Training programmes, exchange initiatives, and certification opportunities can bridge the current skills gap.

Finally, building strategic partnerships with other institutions and organisations can enhance resource sharing, improve service delivery, and position libraries as active stakeholders in the reform process (Oluoha, 2025).

From both African and Western perspectives, the transformation of polytechnic libraries hinges on striking a balance between overcoming systemic constraints and embracing technological innovation. While Western libraries showcase advanced integration of AI, robotics, and collaborative networks, Nigerian polytechnic libraries highlight the struggles of underfunding, poor infrastructure, and capacity deficits. Nonetheless, opportunities exist in the form of government policies, ICT expansion, and institutional collaborations. By addressing funding challenges, investing in emerging technologies, and prioritising staff development, Nigerian polytechnic libraries can

reposition themselves as central drivers of educational reform. This literature review therefore underscores the need for strategic, context-sensitive approaches that combine global best practices with local realities.

Methodology

This study adopted a survey research design. The population comprised 31 library staff, made up of 18 from the Federal Polytechnic Oko Library, Anambra State, and 13 from the Delta State Polytechnic Library, Ogwashi-Uku. Both professional and para-professional staff formed the study population. A total of 31 questionnaires were distributed, and 25 were successfully retrieved, representing a response rate of 80.65%. The study employed total enumeration, thereby covering the entire population of library staff in the two institutions. The study was guided by five research objectives and corresponding research questions, which informed the design and analysis. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed on Google Forms, based on a 4-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). The collected data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. The interpretation of mean scores was guided by the following decision rule: 3.50 – 4.00 = Very High, 3.00 – 3.49 = High, 2.00 – 2.99 = Low, and 1.00 – 1.99 = Very Low.

Interpretation Result

Research question 1: What is the role of polytechnic library services in supporting education sector reform in Nigeria?

S/N	Question Items	SA (F/%)	A (F/%)	D (F/%)	SD (F/%)	Mean	SD	Rem
1	Polytechnic libraries support curriculum	10 (40%)	9 (36%)	3 (12%)	3 (12%)	3.04	0.88	High

	development through access to relevant materials.									
2	Libraries provide ICT resources that enhance teaching and learning in line with reform needs	12 (48%)	8 (32%)	3 (12%)	2 (8%)	3.20	0.76	High		
3	Polytechnic libraries engage in research support that contributes to innovation in sector reform	8 (32%)	9 (36%)	6 (24%)	2 (8%)	2.96	0.91	Low		
4	Libraries collaborate with faculty to align resources with sector reform priorities	7 (28%)	10 (40%)	5 (20%)	3 (12%)	2.84	0.93	Low		
5	Polytechnic libraries advocate for policy changes in support of sector reform.	5 (20%)	6 (24%)	7 (28%)	7 (28%)	2.28	1.07	Low		
6	Staff training and capacity building are organised to align with sector reform initiatives	6 (24%)	9 (36%)	- (-)	10 (40%)	2.56	0.98	Low		
7	Polytechnic libraries provide access to digital repositories to support reform implementation	9 (36%)	8 (32%)	5 (20%)	3 (12%)	2.96	0.87	Low		
Grand Mean						2.83		Low		

Analysis of the Table results indicate that the overall grand mean of 2.83 falls within the Low category based on the set decision rule. Although polytechnic libraries contribute to teaching, learning, and ICT-based services, the overall grand mean (2.83) indicates that their role in supporting education sector reform is still inadequate. While some items recorded means above 3.00, reflecting positive contributions such as provision of research resources and facilitation of ICT-based services, other items fell below the threshold, especially those related to innovation support and policy advocacy. The presence of dashes

(-) under some rating scales further suggests areas of non-response or uncertainty, which could indicate gaps in awareness or experience among respondents.

Discussion of Result Findings: The findings demonstrate that although polytechnic libraries contribute to teaching, learning, and research, their role in sector reform remains limited. This aligns with Idhalama and Obaseki (2018), who argued that polytechnic libraries in Nigeria are underfunded and thus struggle to provide innovative services that could drive reforms. Similarly, Abdul and Ibrahim (2022) emphasized that outdated infrastructure reduces the libraries' capacity to support reform-oriented initiatives. The relatively low rating also implies that polytechnic libraries are not fully integrated into broader reform strategies, which may limit their effectiveness in driving institutional transformation. This finding resonates with Ajani et al. (2024), who observed that libraries in Nigeria face systemic barriers, including inadequate policies and lack of recognition, that restrict their ability to influence reforms.

From an African perspective, Mesagan (2024) highlighted that resource inadequacy and poor ICT adoption remain common barriers across sub-Saharan Africa, thus constraining libraries' reform roles. Western perspectives, however, show stronger integration of libraries into reform processes, with libraries in countries like the UK and USA often positioned as hubs of innovation, digital inclusion, and policy support (Jain & Akakandelwa, 2016). This contrast highlights the developmental gap between Nigerian polytechnic libraries and their global counterparts.

Research question 2: How do emerging technologies influence the transformation of polytechnic library services in Nigeria?

S/N	Question Items	SA(%)	A(%)	D(%)	SD(%)	Mean	SD.	Rem
1	Adoption of AI improves service quality	10 (40%)	9 (36%)	5 (20%)	1 (4%)	3.20	0.95	High
2	Digital repositories expand resource access	13 (52%)	8 (32%)	4 (16%)	0 (0%)	3.36	0.97	High
3	Automated cataloguing systems increase efficiency	7 (28%)	10 (40%)	6 (24%)	2 (8%)	2.92	0.98	Low
4	Online databases support research and learning	12 (48%)	9 (36%)	4 (16%)	0 (0%)	3.32	0.94	High
5	Staff readiness affects technology adoption	6 (24%)	11 (44%)	5 (20%)	3 (12%)	2.80	0.96	Low
6	Users are willing to adopt emerging technologies	13 (52%)	8 (32%)	4 (16%)	0 (0%)	3.36	0.97	High
7	Technology integration aligns library services with sector reform	9 (36%)	10 (40%)	6 (24%)	0 (0%)	3.12	0.94	High

Analysis table shows that respondents view emerging technologies as crucial for library transformation, but perceptions vary. Very High influence: “Digital repositories, and users willing to adopt emerging technologies” (Mean = 3.36) and “Online databases” (Mean = 3.32) reflect strong adoption benefits. High influence: “Technology integration aligns library services” (Mean = 3.12) is acknowledged as important. Low influence: “Automated cataloguing” (Mean = 2.92) and “Staff readiness affects adoption” (Mean = 2.80) show that technology adoption is sometimes hindered by human or institutional factors. This implies that SD values (0.94–0.98) show moderate disagreement, reflecting differences in staff exposure to and familiarity with emerging technologies.

The findings demonstrate that emerging technologies positively influence polytechnic library transformation, but their impact is contingent upon adequate staff training, acceptance, and institutional support. Emerging technologies, including digital repositories, online databases, AI tools, and automated cataloguing systems, were perceived as influential in transforming library services. Items such as “Digital repositories expand resource access” (Mean = 3.36) and “Online databases support research and learning” (Mean = 3.32) indicate strong acceptance among respondents, reflecting global trends in library modernization (Shachaf & Hara, 2007; Ojedokun, 2020).

Conversely, “Automated cataloguing systems increase efficiency” (Mean = 2.92) and “Staff readiness affects technology adoption” (Mean = 2.80) were rated lower, highlighting challenges related to staff training and readiness. This corresponds with Onuoha and Nwankwo (2021), who emphasize that while technologies exist, their effective utilization depends on user competence and institutional support.

Research question 3: What opportunities are available for transforming library services in Nigerian polytechnics within the context of education sector reform?

S/N	Question Items	SA(%)	A(%)	D(%)	SD(%)	Mean	SD	Rem
1	Policy reforms support library service improvement	10 (40%)	10 (40%)	5 (20%)	0 (0%)	3.20	0.95	High
2	ICT integration provides better access to resources	12 (48%)	9 (36%)	3 (12%)	1 (4%)	3.36	0.97	High
3	Institutional collaborations enhance resource sharing	5 (20%)	10 (40%)	8 (32%)	2 (8%)	2.72	1.01	Low
4	Staff training programs improve service delivery	13 (52%)	9 (36%)	3 (12%)	0 (0%)	3.40	0.94	Very High

5	Access to international best practices offers guidance	6 (24%)	11 (44%)	7 (28%)	1 (4%)	3.00	0.98	High
6	Availability of digital resources enhances learning	4 (16%)	10 (40%)	8 (32%)	3 (12%)	2.64	1.03	Low
7	Users' willingness to adopt digital services is high	13 (52%)	8 (32%)	4 (16%)	0 (0%)	3.36	0.97	High

Table three analysis revealed that the respondents recognize several opportunities to improve library services: policy reforms, ICT integration, staff training, and willingness to adopt digital services. Very High opportunities: "Staff training programs" (Mean = 3.40, SD = 0.94) indicates strong recognition of its impact. High opportunities: Policy reforms (Mean = 3.20) and ICT integration (Mean = 3.36) are also important. Low opportunities: "Institutional collaborations" (Mean = 2.72) and "availability of digital resources" (Mean = 2.64) show moderate recognition, possibly reflecting limited experience or exposure. This indicates that SD values (0.94–1.03) show moderate agreement, highlighting that while some opportunities are widely recognized, others need more advocacy or awareness.

The findings indicate that while policy reforms and technology integration present significant opportunities, maximizing these benefits requires deliberate planning, training, and enhanced resource allocation. The study identified several opportunities, including policy reforms, ICT integration, staff training programs, and willingness to adopt digital services. For instance, "Staff training programs" had a very high mean (3.40, SD = 0.94), confirming the importance of continuous professional development in enhancing service delivery (Aina, 2019). ICT integration (Mean = 3.36) is consistent with global literature emphasizing digital technology as a driver of library transformation (Shachaf & Hara,

2007). However, some opportunities such as institutional collaborations (Mean = 2.72) and availability of digital resources (Mean = 2.64) received lower recognition, reflecting limited practical exposure or underdeveloped networks. This resonates with Onuoha and Nwankwo (2021), who noted that although policies may encourage collaboration, actual implementation remains weak in many Nigerian academic libraries.

Research question 4: What challenges hinder the transformation of polytechnic library services in Nigeria within the context of education sector reform?

S/N	Question Items	SA(%)	A(%)	D(%)	SD(%)	Mean	SD	Rem
1	Inadequate funding affects library service delivery	8 (32%)	10 (40%)	7 (28%)	0 (0%)	3.04	0.96	High
2	Outdated ICT infrastructure hinders service quality	5 (20%)	10 (40%)	8 (32%)	2 (8%)	2.80	1.01	Low
3	Insufficient training for library staff limits performance	12 (48%)	8 (32%)	5 (20%)	0 (0%)	3.28	0.95	High
4	Poor access to current resources affects learning	4 (16%)	6 (24%)	10 (40%)	5 (20%)	2.36	1.05	Low
5	Resistance to change among staff/users hinders reform	7 (28%)	12 (48%)	6 (24%)	0 (0%)	3.04	0.94	High
6	Inadequate policy support limits library operations	3 (12%)	9 (36%)	8 (32%)	5 (20%)	2.40	1.08	Low
7	Limited collaboration with management affects service delivery	10 (40%)	8 (32%)	7 (28%)	0 (0%)	3.04	0.96	High

The table analysis shows that respondents consider inadequate funding, insufficient training, resistance to change, and limited collaboration as major challenges to polytechnic

library service delivery. The mean scores range from 2.36 to 3.28, indicating a mix of High and Low perceptions among respondents. High challenges: Items like “Inadequate funding” (Mean = 3.04, SD = 0.96) and “Resistance to change” (Mean = 3.04, SD = 0.94) are perceived strongly as challenges.

Low challenges: Items like “Poor access to current resources” (Mean = 2.36, SD = 1.05) and “Inadequate policy support” (Mean = 2.40, SD = 1.08) reflect lower concern, showing some disagreement among respondents. This suggests that the SD values (0.94–1.08) indicate moderate variability in opinions, meaning while some challenges are universally acknowledged, others depend on context or library environment.

The findings show that inadequate funding, insufficient training, resistance to change, and limited collaboration are key challenges affecting library service delivery. For example, inadequate funding (Mean = 3.04, SD = 0.96) emerged as a significant challenge, corroborating studies by Ajani (2024), who observed that funding constraints in Nigerian academic libraries directly limit acquisition of resources and service innovation. Similarly, Nwalo (2018) highlighted that insufficient training and lack of ICT skills among library staff hinder effective service delivery, a finding consistent with our survey results where “Insufficient training” had a high mean score (3.28).

Resistance to change among staff/users (Mean = 3.04) was also highlighted, which aligns with Ajayi and Ekundayo (2020), who argued that change management is critical for library reform, and staff unwillingness can slow sector-wide initiatives. The SD values ranging from 0.94–1.08 suggest moderate variation in opinions, indicating that while some challenges are universally acknowledged, others may be context-specific depending on

institutional policies or library leadership. These results suggest that successful sector reform must prioritize funding, staff training, and collaboration to overcome structural and operational barriers in polytechnic libraries.

Research question 5: What strategies can be adopted to transform polytechnic library services in Nigeria in line with education sector reform?

S/ N	Question Items	SA(%)	A(%)	D(%)	SD(%)	Mean	SD	Rem
1	Developing digitalisation plans improves services	10 (40%)	9 (36%)	5 (20%)	1 (4%)	3.20	0.9 4	High
2	Advocacy for funding ensures adequate resources	7 (28%)	10 (40%)	6 (24%)	2 (8%)	2.92	0.9 9	Low
3	Continuous professional development for staff	12 (48%)	8 (32%)	7 (28%)	3 (12%)	3.28	0.9 7	High
4	Automation of routine tasks increases efficiency	4 (16%)	11 (44%)	7 (28%)	3 (12%)	2.64	0.9 8	Low
5	Collaboration with stakeholders supports innovation	11 (44%)	8 (32%)	6 (24%)	0 (0%)	3.20	0.9 5	High
6	User feedback guides service improvement	6 (24%)	10 (40%)	6 (24%)	3 (12%)	2.84	0.9 6	Low
7	Strategic planning aligns services with reforms	13 (52%)	7 (28%)	5 (20%)	0 (0%)	3.32	0.9 4	Very High

The analysis shows that the respondents' mean scores range from 2.64 to 3.36, showing mixed perceptions on strategies to improve library services. Very High strategy: "Strategic planning aligns services with reforms" (Mean = 3.32) reflects strong support. High strategy: "Developing digitalisation plans" (Mean = 3.20) is also significant. Low

strategies: “Automation of routine tasks” (Mean = 2.64) and “User feedback guides service improvement” (Mean = 2.84) are seen as less impactful, suggesting a need for better implementation or awareness. This implies that SD values (0.94–0.99) indicate moderate variability, meaning some strategies are consistently recognized, while others depend on staff experience or institutional support.

Discussion of Findings: The results indicate that strategies such as strategic planning, digitalisation, continuous professional development, and stakeholder collaboration are perceived as effective in enhancing service delivery. “Strategic planning aligns services with reforms” scored very high (Mean = 3.32), supporting the argument of Nwalo (2018) that structured planning is critical for library modernization. Digitalisation plans (Mean = 3.20) also received high recognition, reflecting the emphasis on automated processes and ICT-driven services (Ajani, 2024). Lower-rated strategies, including automation of routine tasks (Mean = 2.64) and user feedback incorporation (Mean = 2.84), indicate gaps in practice or awareness. This aligns with Aina (2019), who observed that strategic plans often exist on paper but are inconsistently implemented due to inadequate staff engagement or insufficient resources. These findings suggest that while polytechnic libraries employ several strategies to enhance service delivery, effective implementation and monitoring remain crucial to achieving sector reform goals.

Recommendations

1. Polytechnic libraries should invest in emerging technologies and provide continuous staff training, as this will enhance staff competence and improve the effective utilisation of ICT tools.

2. Library management should leverage ICT integration and digital resources to expand access to information and improve user satisfaction.
3. Government and institutional authorities should integrate libraries into education sector reform policies through adequate funding, infrastructure provision, and policy recognition.
4. There is a need for increased funding and capacity-building programmes to address inadequate resources and staff development gaps.
5. Polytechnic libraries should adopt strategic planning aligned with reform goals to ensure sustainability and improved service delivery.

Conclusion

The study concludes that transforming polytechnic library services in Nigeria requires a holistic approach that addresses key challenges, leverages available opportunities, implements effective strategies, and harnesses emerging technologies. Critical factors such as sustainable funding, regular staff training, institutional collaboration, and strategic planning were identified as indispensable for the modernization of library services. Furthermore, the integration of ICT and the readiness of library staff remain decisive in determining the extent to which libraries can successfully support educational reforms. The findings also underscore that sector reform cannot be realized through policy statements alone. Practical implementation, adequate resource allocation, and continuous staff development are essential for meaningful transformation. Polytechnic libraries, through their roles in resource provision, ICT-based services, skill development, and collaborative engagement, are vital agents in achieving reform goals. However, without

sufficient funding, stronger policy recognition, and infrastructural investment, their potential will remain underutilized. Strengthening polytechnic libraries is therefore a prerequisite for successful and sustainable sector reform in Nigeria. Ultimately, positioning these libraries as strategic partners in national development will not only enhance their relevance but also ensure that polytechnic education remains responsive to the needs of a knowledge-driven economy.

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