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FUTO LIBRARY SO FAR: 1981-2008

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Introduction

The Library, Federal University of Technology Owerri like every living organism has undergone series of metamorphic growth and development since its establishment in 1981. It has experienced traumatic and exciting movements. There have been three successive management changes; structural expansions and changes, monumental growth and expansion in resources, operations and services; dynamism in the type and number of users as well as increase in the capacity and number of staff. The most striking transformation is in the area of adoption of Information and Communication Technology in library operations and services.

After 23 years of documented information on the management, operations, services and activities of the University Library, the **FUTNOTES** is coming up with another special edition, though this will not jeopardize the 1985/86 tagged **FUTNOTES Special Edition**. On this premise, this paper is poised to provide in abridge form the development of FUTO Library with respect to its accommodation, leadership, resources, operations and services.

Accommodation

The Library started on August 3, 1981 in a two room apartment at 196 Ikenegbu Layout, Owerri with Mr. J. C. Anafulu as the pioneer University Librarian and five junior staff. On September 21, 1981 the Library was moved to a two classroom block at what was called the Temporary Site at Lake Nwaebere Campus. Lake Nwaebere campus was originally conceived and built for the Federal Government Girls Secondary School. The first Readers' services were provided on November 9, 1981 with a collection of 2,500 volumes, seating capacity for 80 readers and increased staff strength of 21 made up of 5 professional librarians, 1 sub-professional and 15 junior staff. In September 1983, the Library moved to its Purposed-built-Library at the Lake Nwaebere Campus. It was originally designed to serve as the Library of the Federal Girls Secondary School then modified as a university library. At that stage, it had resources and reader capacity for 50,000 volumes and 300 readers respectively.

The sudden take over of The Lake Nwaebere Campus by Imo State University destabilized the partly settled Library which had no place to pack. The unplanned movement to the Permanent Site in 1993 resulted in the Library being temporally housed in the **Pilot Plant House** belonging to the Department of Food Science and Technology located then in the School of Science of the University. Movement to the Permanent Site started on September 7th and was concluded on September 21st 1993. Accommodation for the 37 staff, 35,780 volumes of collection excluding current

periodicals/newspapers and 5,228 registered users became a monumental problem due to limited space at the Pilot Plant house. The Pilot Plant house was therefore used as a borrowing point for the very few volumes of books that could be shelved while the **Multi Activity Centre (MAC)** of the University was used as the **Reading Room**. This MAC located almost 1km from the Pilot Plant was indeed a Library without books and shelves. Library staffs were posted there to sit around while students read.

Work on **the New Library building** aimed at minimizing the space problem started in October 1993. On completion of this New Library which was tagged **Library Phase IV** or **The Main Library**, actual Library operations and services began in both libraries – **Pilot Plant Library** and **Library Phase IV** with 514M² and 1038M² area respectively. The two libraries are still being maintained by the University Library with a total seating capacity of 600 readers at a time. At the Pilot Plant are located bound and current periodicals, newspapers, documents, and light reading collection. Staff offices and work areas for Acquisitions, Processing, Serials, Documents, Database of African Theses and Dissertations (DATAD), Bibliographic Services, and Research, Training & Statistics Units of the Library are also located at the Pilot Plant Library.

The Library Phase IV is presently situated at a convenient distance from hostels, classrooms and laboratories in a relatively noiseless zone of the Campus. Its modular form presents the Reference Collection to the far North wing; Social Sciences and Humanities in the North West wing; ICT Unit at the South West;

Science, Technology and Agriculture by the East while the Central Hall serves as the core reading area. The Southern part of the Library houses the University Librarian's office, Security checkpoint, the Circulation Counter in which the Reserve books are located; The Bindery/Reprography Units now occupy part of the Library foyer.

An annex to the building supposedly the **Coffee shop** is currently serving as the Bookshop. Another phase of the Library is at the final stage of completion and is expected to ease off the accommodation problem currently faced by the Library. This Phase of the Library is ICT compliant in structure as considerations are made for data and electric cables, hubs, workstations etc

Headship

The pioneering leadership of the University Library rested on Mr. J. C. Anafulu who was appointed the University Librarian on June, 1981. After sixteen years of purposeful directorship, he was succeeded by Elder M.S. Onye on April 1, 1998 as the second substantive University Librarian. On April 3, 2003, the baton was handed over to Chief J.E. Nwogu who is the third and present University Librarian. Heads of the various units of the Library from inception to date is presented on Table 1. The changes in the Units' nomenclature are also reflected.

Table 1: Headship of Various Units of the Library 1981 – Date

Units	Headship	Date
Collection Department Collection Development Acquisition	M. S. Onye N. Emerole C. N. Okorafor N. Emerole C. N. Okorafor	1981-1997 1998-2001 2001-2005 2005-2008 2008 –Date
Reader Services Reference Information Services User Services	C.W. Marks W. G. Labi J. E. Nwogu J. C. Ogugua K. N. Egbukole	1981-1983 1984 1984- 2003 2003-2005 2005 – Date
Technical Services Processing Unit	M. E. Onyelucheya A. M. Iheaturu N. Emerole	1981-1990 1991-2007 2008-Date
Serials Periodicals Reference Information Services User Services Reference Information Services User Services Reference Information Services User Services	A. M. Iheaturu W. G. Labi E. O. Ucheagauwa J. C. Ogugua N. Emerole C. V. Anunobi N. Emerole C. N. Okorafor J. C. Ogugua	1981-1990 1990 –1992 1993-1994 1994-1995 1995-1998 1998-2000 2001-2005 2006-2008 2008 – Date
Documents Reference Information Services User Services Reference Information Services User Services	W. G. Labi E. O. Ucheagauwa M. I. Oparajaku G. C. Umunnakwe G. Opara G. C. Umunnakwe	1983-1990 1991-1992 1993-2002 2003-2005 2006-2007 2007 – Date
Bindery	I. N. Nwosu	2001-Date
Information Communication Technology (ICT)	C. V. Anunobi	2001-Date
Reprography	P. O. Moneke	2001-
Research and Training Research, Training and Statistics	K. N. Egbukole J. C. Ogugua G. Opara	2003-2005 2006-2007 2007-Date
Light Reading Collection	M. I. Oparajaku	2006-Date

Organizational structure

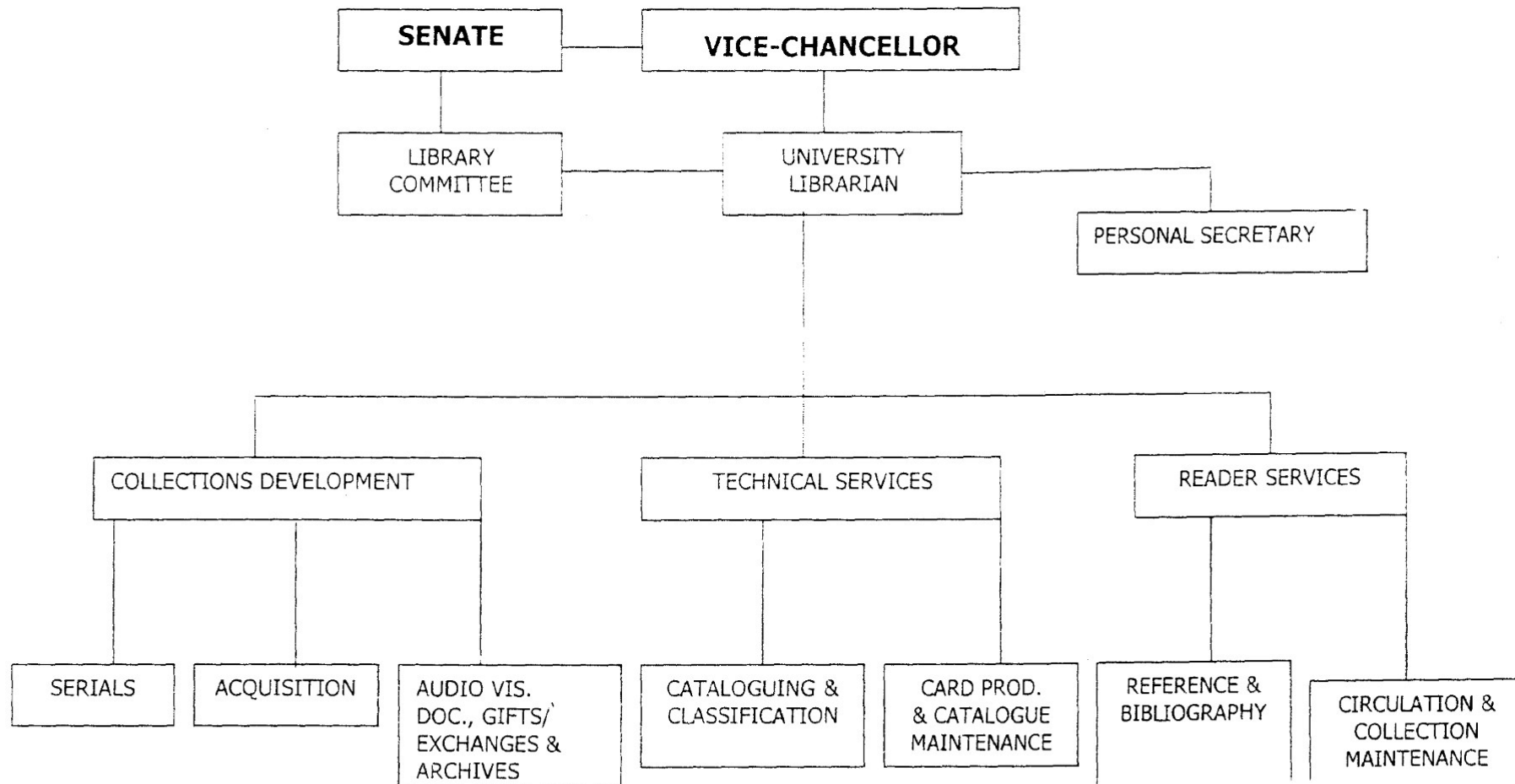
Within this period of successive leadership, the Library also witnessed some developmental changes which resulted in organizational transformation. Existing Units were split and more units created as informed by global changes resulting in new operations and services or changes in the existing ones.

On inception, the initial organizational structure was Administration; Technical Service Division comprising Acquisitions, Cataloguing and Serials subunits; Readers' Services comprising Reference and Circulation subunits. In October 1985, the reorganization of the Units brought about a new Division called Collections Development Division comprising Serials, Acquisition, Audiovisual (AV), and Documents, Gifts & Exchanges subunits. Technical Services was subdivided into Cataloguing and Classification; and Card Product & Maintenance. Reference & Bibliographical Services, Circulation and Collection maintenance became subunits under Readers' Services (Fig.1). In 1986, a new nomenclature, Learning Resources was given to the AV Unit with its head reporting to the University Librarian (Fig.2). Two units: Information Technology which replaced the Learning Resources and Bindery were created in the year 2000 and 2001 respectively by Elder W. S. Onye. Major organizational changes were made by Chief J.E. Nwogu on assumption of office in 2003. The Research and Training Unit created in 2003 was renamed Research, Training and Statistics in 2005 in order to capture the true scope of activities of the Unit. While the organizational changes are still evolving as shown in Fig.3,

Many of them are already operational. They include Reprography, Public Affairs, Research, Training & Statistics, and Light Reading Units. Some of the existing units were split and/or renamed. These include **Readers Services** renamed **User Services** with Circulation, User statistics, Reference and Bibliographical Services as its subunits; **Technical Services** renamed **Processing Unit** which is also housing **Database of African Theses and Dissertations** subunit. **Collection Development** was renamed **Acquisition** and split into three units including Books, Serials, and Documents.

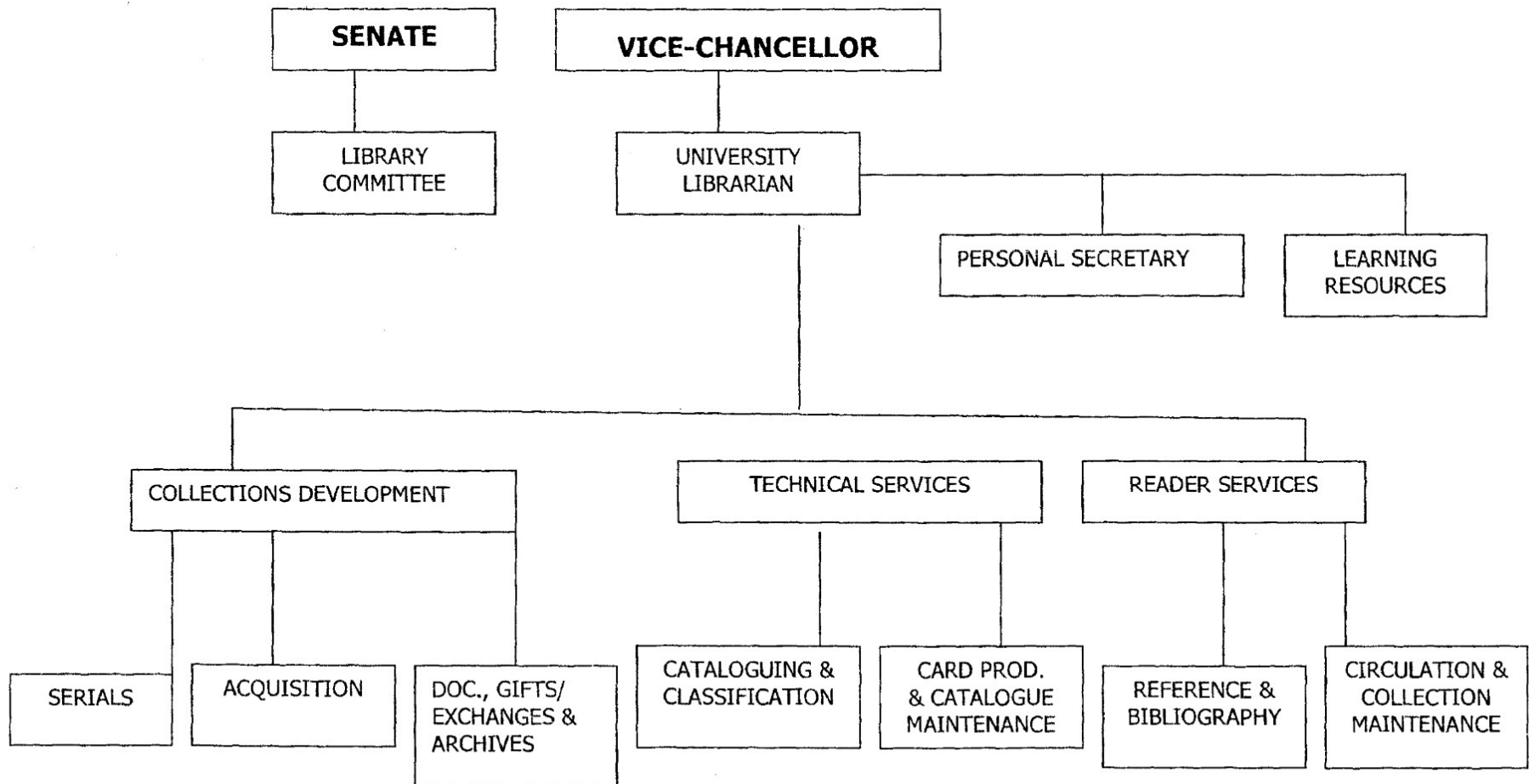
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Fig. 1: LIBRARY – ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 1984/85



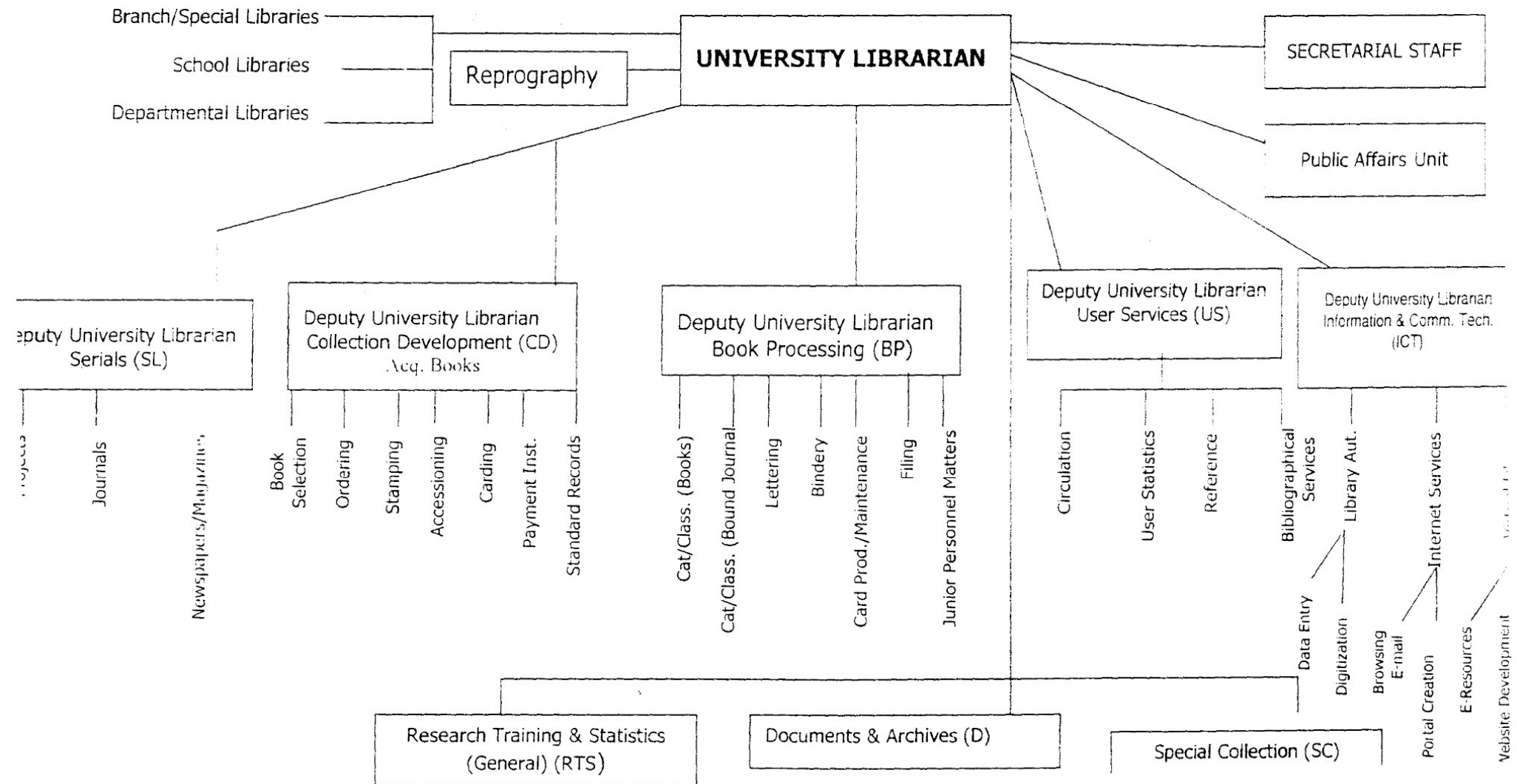
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Fig. 2: LIBRARY – ORGANIZATIONAL CHART 1986/87



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Fig.3: EVOLVING FUTO LIBRARY ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Resources

The resources of the University library are dynamic in nature and form aimed at accommodating the changes in medium of packaging, number and type of users served and dynamic programme areas. Mindfully that the Library serves a university of Technology Community which focus on Engineering, Science, Agriculture, Technology, Management Sciences and Health/Environmental Technology, resources are acquired to satisfy the academic, recreational and all round developmental needs of the undergraduates; postgraduates; faculty and non-teaching staff of the University. Thus books, periodicals, newspapers/magazines, maps, technical reports, patents, documents etc. are acquired in both electronic and print forms through purchases, gifts, donations, exchange and deposits of all publications emanating from the University community.

From the initial collection of 2,500 volumes which the Library started with in 1981, the collection rose to 20,597 volumes in all formats in 1985, 31,984 in 1990; 50,000 in 1995; 61,320 in 2000; 72,785 in 2005, and presently 79,607. The swell from 31,984 volumes in 1990 to 50,000 volumes in 1995 is the result of the World Bank credit facility to Federal University Libraries in 1994. The collection by year is presented in Table 2 showing consistency in acquisition which rate varies from year to year; a reflection of acquisition variables including fund. The total Library Holdings as at July 2008 was 79,607.

Apart from the print resources, the Library has since the establishment of the ICT Unit in 2001 maintained electronic resources and other ICT based software and hardware. These non-print resources are discussed under ICT operations and services.

Table 2: Collection of FUTO Library by Year

Year	Collection All Format(vols.)	No. Current Periodical	No Newspapers/Magazine Titl
1981	2,500	625	18
1986	24,370	667	60
1987	25,353	171	62
1988	28,833	221	62
1990	31,984	229	66
1993	36,000	350	66
1995	50,000	229	45
1999	58,650	260	14
2000	61,320	258	14
2001	64,057	260	13
2002	68,670	288	13
2005	72,785	272	38
2006	74,140	251	40
2008	79,607	1045	43

Staffing and Users

There has been a steady growth in the number and quality of staff of the University library. Though the Library started with only the University Librarian, five junior staff and one National Youth Corp member, when it opened its door to users on November 9, 1981, the staff strength rose to 21 comprising 5 professional librarians, 1 Para-professional librarian and 15 junior staff. There were a total of 43 staff in 1985 which increased to 45 in 1995. By the year 2000 the number of staff doubled to 82 and increased to 98 and 106 in 2005 and 2008 respectively. The increase in staff strength cannot however match the astronomical

increase in the number of users served. The increase in users continued until 2006 when a sharp drop was experienced due to the decline in the University students enrollment occasioned by reduction in admission quota to universities in Nigeria by the National Universities Commission. For instance from 6,500 students enrollment in the University in 2005, the number was dropped sharply to 2,233. The number of staff and users served over the years is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Number of Staff and Users served by FUTO Library over the Years

Year	Number of Staff	Users
1981	21	274
1985	43	790
1986	43	1578
1987	43	1642
1988	43	1958
1990	38	2684
1993	37	5228
1995	45	5375
1999	36	7200
2000	82	10,923
2001	83	12315
2002	85	11630
2005	98	11,913
2006	101	8768
2008 (July)	106	7709

Operations and Services

There has been expansion and changes in the operations which is necessitated by the global changes and immediate needs of the Library-user community. The Library operations from the

time of establishment were based on the acquisition, processing, preservation and dissemination of the processed information to its user community. The Library resources were basically in print format. With global changes in information packaging, the operations and services not only changed but also expanded while maintaining the traditional baseline.

FUTO library traditional operations and services are administration, acquisition, processing, user services, serials, documents and archives.

Administrative activities of the Library are responsible to the administrative Head of the library - the University Librarian who is responsible to the Chief Executive of the University i.e. The Vice-Chancellor ideally through the Library Committee. All the support staff (non-library) posted to the Library report to the University Librarian through his Secretary. The Library staff that is in charge of special duties is also responsible to the University Librarian.

Acquisition of library resources in the Library is headed by the Acquisitions Librarian who reports to the University Librarian. The Unit is responsible for selection, bibliographic verification, ordering and receiving of all print resources in the Library.

Processing Unit of the Library is headed by The Processing Librarian. It is a major segment that oversees technical processing of materials acquired in the Library. AACR2 Cataloguing Rule and The Library of Congress Subject Heading & Schedule are adopted in the processing of text, bound periodicals and theses/dissertations. Two types of manual catalogues are

maintained as the product of the processing and are used as access points for all the processed resources in the Library. The catalogues include the Author/Title and the Subject catalogues are alphabetically arranged. The Card production and Catalogue maintenance subunit of this unit produces the catalogue card including the shelf list as well as ensures that the cards are filed and the catalogue maintained.

User services formally called Readers' Services is headed by the User Services Librarian who reports to the University Librarian. The Unit maintains library users profile, provides borrowing services, bibliographic services, and reference services to the clientele and collect use statistics,

Serials operations is headed by Serials Librarian who reports to the University Librarian. The Unit is responsible for all activities involved in the acquisition of/subscription to academic and professional journals, processing and dissemination of information associated with serials using Current Awareness Services (CAS) and Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI). Serials resources maintained by this Unit are current and bound newspapers/magazines, current and bound periodicals including their indexes. Newspaper indexes are prepared from all articles relating to Agriculture, Science, Technology, Health, Higher Education and Topical Issues. Topical Issues are sometimes indexed and posted on notice boards from time to time.

Document and Archives is a very important Unit of the Library. It keeps custody of all documents emanating from the

University Visitor, Chancellors, Pro-Chancellors, and Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Principal Officers, Deans, Directors, Heads of Departments; University Rules and Regulation, Academic Brief, Strategic Plan, Students' Handbooks, Publications from staff, Research reports, Offprint, Patents, Information from & about Trade Unions, religious groups, approved students' societies and those of the adjoining university communities. Also found in the Documents and Archives Unit are maps, Publications/Documents from government and non-governmental organization (national and international e.g. UN documents, UNESCO, IMO etc). Access to the Library's document and archival resources is provided through an In-house developed Faceted Classification Scheme. Heads of these traditional operational/service units since establishment are provided in Table1.

Other services which are of recent development aimed at meeting the information needs of the dynamic library users include: Bindery, Reprography, Database of African theses/dissertations (DATAD); Information and Communication Technology (ICT); Research, Training and Statistics; Light Reading and Bibliographical services.

Bindery Unit was established by Elder M. S. Onye on 20th November, 2001 with Mr. I. N. Nwosu as Head till date. It provides hard cover and spiral bindery services to the Library and the University community.

Database of African Theses and Dissertations (DATAD) which is a recent operational unit was an offshoot of the

operations of the Documents and Archives Unit. It was established in November 2007 by Chief J. E. Nwogu to process and make available for use all theses and dissertations deposited in the University library and for uploading in electronic form to Association of African Universities (AAU). On establishment, it was placed as a subunit of the Technical Services and headed by Mrs. Ngozi Chima-James. At present it stands as a Unit, headed by Mr Augustine Anyanwu and responsible for the processing of all theses and dissertations for use by University community and global community through the AAU DATAD project. Electronic processing of this Unit takes place at the ICT Unit of the Library. Presently DATAD Unit has processed and uploaded to AAU over thirty records.

Reprographic Unit of the Library was established in November 2001 by Elder M. S. Onye with Mr. P. O. Moneke as the Head. It was aimed at discouraging mutilation and pilfering of library resources by helping users make photocopies at low rates. The Unit has expanded from helping in making a few photocopies to readers to massive production of examination papers for Schools/ Departments and other support Units of the University. This has been achieved through the acquisition of a reprographic machine or duplicator which has the capability of producing hundred of documents in a minute.

Research and Training Unit was created in 2003 by Chief J. E. Nwogu and headed then by Mr. K. N. Egbukole. The Unit is responsible for the planning and co-ordination of the Use of Library component of the Use of English (GST 102) course; co-

ordination of workshops, conferences, seminars and courses; staff training; SIWES training; co-ordination of Students Work Aid Scheme; organizing exhibitions; compilation of quarterly reports; compilation of Library Fact Sheet; compilation of Digest of Statistics. The unit also handles questionnaires from external sources. The Unit was renamed Research, Training and Statistics in 2005

Special Collection Unit was established on January 2006 with Chief J. E Nwogu and headed by Mr. M.I Oparajiaku. It was aimed at assisting users and staff to improve their standard of English and to acquire all round knowledge expected of a graduate of good standing. Based on that the Unit acquires, processes and make available for use light reading materials such as novels and existing national and international literatures. It is also aimed at acting as relaxation outlet for students and ease off tension.

ICT operations and services stand out in revolutionizing the University Library. It was established by Elder M. S. Onye in September 2001 as Information Technology (IT) Unit headed by Mrs. Chinwe Anunobi. Prior to the creation of this unit, the Library operated the Audiovisual Unit where all the Library resources outside prints were managed. However a new sensation was triggered off with the Federal Government initiative to provide global library resources to university libraries in Nigeria. Hence government provided The Information Navigator Library (TINLIB) in 1994 from which FUTO library benefited. With TINLIB, new mode of cataloging and classification, acquisition and circulation became visible. The use of TINLIB in FUTO Library like other

libraries in Nigeria was met with some technical and logistic problems which brought an end to its application.

However, that did not stop the effort to actualize the provision of non-print and other state-of-the-art services by the Library. The limit in the ICT operations and services was abated through the ingenuity of the present University Librarian, Chief J. E. Nwogu who initiated and constructed a cubicle to house the ICT Unit at the Main library in 2004.

Standing out as a unit of the Library, it has the mandate to:

- a) Report to the University Librarian on the staff and resources of the Unit.
- b) Manage all non-print resources of the Library;
- c) Manage the automation of the Library; and
- d) Manage the Internet and other electronic services in the library;

All the non-print resources of the Library are housed in this Unit. They include

1. **Offline and Online databases** namely:

- 2. Compact Disk Read-Only-Memory (CD-ROM) which are acquired through purchase or as donation or as software accompanying print resources in the Library. They are processed according to School and programme area and made available for use in the Library or borrowed as overnight loan. Presently, the available CDs for the various Schools are as follows :

Agriculture	16
Engineering	124

General	41
Health.....	16
Management	52

- ⌋ Encyclopedia Britannica on CD;
- ⌋ EBSCOhost on CD,
- ⌋ E-Granary: A 20GB Electronic Library is a product of the WiderNet Project, a non-profit organization based at the University of Iowa that seeks to improve digital communications in developing countries through the provision of electronic resources in large storage disks. Presently the hard disk is crashed and the service rendered through the Library Local Area Network grounded.
- ⌋ Online Portals: The Library subscribes to many online portals which provide full text peer reviewed journal articles to the University Community. The Portals which cover all the programme areas of the University include: Access to Global Online Research in Agriculture (AGORA); Health Internetwork Access to Research Initiative (HINARI); Online Access to Research in the Environment (OARE); EBSCOhost and many other free online databases. Members of the University community are provided with user ID and password with which to access the portals.
- ⌋ **Software:** Apart from the general purpose application software which includes Office Suits up to 2007 and operating systems namely Windows XP and Server 2003, the Library has acquired automation software- **Alice for**

Windows. The Management, Circulation and Serials modules of this integrated software are applied in the automation of the various units of the Library. Initial steps in the automation started in 2005 with the networking of the ICT Unit, circulation, and manual catalogue areas as well as the Office of the University Librarian. On 20th March 2006, the Library acquired the **Alice for Windows Software** from Sylvester Chinga, a sales representative of Softlink Europe, a software company based in Europe. Installation and training of library staff for the automation was completed by the 23rd of same month. The Library has advanced in its automation effort with the cataloguing, circulation and serials modules fully in use. Both retrospective and current resources bibliographic information has been digitized. Users' profiles have also been digitized and electronic circulation services are due to start in the 2008/2009 academic session.

- 3 **Hardware:** The Library has acquired ICT hardware to propel its ICT based operations and services. Presently there are over 30 networked personal computers and accessories; 1 server , 3 hp scanners , 1 Multimedia projector with screen, one digital camera , external mass storage devices for backup as well as other low technology hardware like Public Address Systems, Overhead projector, magnetic board, flip board etc. Internet connectivity in the Library comprise of a Dish with 2 Watt BUC , S2A Linkstar modem ,

a proxy server with many 32, 16 and 12 ports switches distributed over the network.

With all theses on ground, ICT services are rendered to library users. The available services include:

- a) **CD-ROM services:** CD-ROM are organized and lent to users for immediate access in the ICT Unit or as overnight loan. Like the print circulation services records of loans and returns are kept.
- b) **On-line Public Access Cataloguing (OPAC):** The result of library automation is the **oasis** database which contains the bibliographic information of both electronic and print resources available in the Library including users' profile. Hence a module of Alice for Windows Software – **Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)** has been designed and used to access needed bibliographic information of all the automated resources. Workstations have equally been made available for user to search for information. The OPAC is gradually replacing the manual catalogue.
- c) **Internet Services:** The foundation of Internet services in the Library was laid by the donation of 10 computers, VSAT and 64/128kpbs bandwidth to the Library in 2005 by **The Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA)**. The OSIWA project was a donation by an Austrian philanthropist who decided to extend his benevolence to university libraries in Nigeria instead of original health-based philanthropy to West Africa. Following the suspension of the support and maintenance of the OSIWA project, the

University took over the continuous maintenance of Internet services in the Library. At present the Internet is running on a C-band 64/256kpbs.

d. Database of African Theses and Dissertations (DATAD)

The Library started maintaining electronic collection of the University's staff and students' masters and doctoral theses and dissertations in 2005. This collection is compiled annually in one CD-ROM and made accessible to library users. This was taken as a necessary platform for the provision of Database of African Thesis and Dissertation maintained online and on CD by the Association of African Universities (AAU) of African Union. From a workshop organized by the Association of African Universities (AAU) in Nairobi, Kenya, in September, 2007 for the DATAD project which was attended by the present University Librarian, J. E. Nwogu to a recent technical workshop still organized by AAU at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in April 2008 and which was attended by Dr. (Mrs.) Chinwe . V. Anunobi of our ICT Unit, the Library has successfully installed the software "ENDNOTE" and uploaded some electronic theses and dissertations of the University for the DATAD project.

Conclusion

From the foregoing, the Federal University of Technology, Owerri Library has taken a giant stride in the areas of resource acquisitions, staff growth, ICT development, and efficient and

effective services to users. The enviable efforts so far made have been possible as a result of the commitments of the successive University Librarians, the dedication of the various categories of staff, the unflinching support of the University Management, and the zeal and desire of users which has always posed an interesting challenge to the management of the University Library.

The Library as shown in Fig.2 is still evolving in resources, staff and services. Plans are at the advanced stage to develop Institutional Repository for the University while efforts are on the way to create portals of resource for the various programmes in the University. The main focus of the Library is to have the resources and services fully digitized. It is expected that with the support of the University Management, the Library Management and staff of the Library and with the cooperation of the users, the Library will always remain the first among equals.



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