Embedded Librarianship as a Strategy for Service Provision and Relevancy Assuage of Librarians' at the Institute of Finance Management Library, Tanzania: A Case Study

*1Valeria Kyumana

(Directorate of Library Services/ Institute of Finance Management, Tanzania)
Corresponding Author: Valeria Kyumana

Abstract: *Embedded Librarianship has received some attention within academic literature. With a significant change observed in library users at IFM library who prefer to 'Google' due to the availability of every information at their fingertips rather than go to the library and employ the expertise of a librarian; it is time for librarians to re-think their methods of service provision and reaching users so as to maintain their relevancy and recognition of the value of using a library. The study used focus group discussion with head of departments and sections; interview with the library director and observation to come up with strategies to incorporate embedded librarianship in service provision. Seven (7) senior library staff participated in the study and content analysis was used to analyze the obtained data. As a result the following strategies were provided; introduction of information literacy programs, communication and promotion and social media were strategies chosen to introduce embedded librarianship at IFM library. In order for these strategies to be successful; management advocacy and partnership is required. However, since librarians are stepping out of their comfort zone, it was recommended that support is paramount from all stakeholders of IFM library, training and development for librarians to be carried out regularly and networking with other libraries should be encouraged.*
Keywords: *Embedded Librarianship, Institute of Finance Management, Library Services/Utilization, Librarians, Tanzania.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Service provision at the IFM library entails a more passive approach where by librarians wait for users to come and get served depending on their needs. With the new advanced digital age as Kwanya and Stilwel (2010) notes how the volume of information has grown drastically; the variety of information, its sources and format of presentation have increased; the speed of information flow has increased; times and places to experience communication media have expanded; the number of information perspectives and points of view has exploded; and people's interest in and alertness for information has grown; a more aggressive approach is needed by librarians to keep pace with the users.

While reflecting on Tanzanian libraries in the digital age, a comprehensive note on the characteristics' of the library was observed: the current library is characterized by the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in performing various tasks. The advent of these technologies in libraries have changed virtually all roles of librarians while at the same time posing some challenges including the need for updating new knowledge and skills, re-assessing the strategic plans, changing new working titles, adding new responsibilities and installation of relevant ICT Infrastructure. The sustainability of ICT based services is raising a lot of questions in the environment like Tanzania leaving the future of the current libraries vague (Muneja, 2013).

In the same light, IFM library has been able to embrace ICT in service provision where by an online public access catalogue (OPAC) of all resources in the library is available; subscriptions to online journals to facilitate research is carried out each year and the automation of the journal of finance management is still on-going to create an institutional repository. Despite all these efforts, utilization of these resources is not satisfactory; as may be users, are not familiar what the library has to offer; that's why they cling to 'Google'. Thus, librarians need to embed themselves in their users' community and activity to enhance utilization of resources. This necessity has come as a result of change in information seeking behavior of the users' i.e. People don't have to come into libraries to get information or to use it. They obtain and use information at home, in the office, in dorm rooms, and in restaurants. They gather information sitting down and standing up. They use desktops and laptops, smart phones and tablets. Moreover, they access every type of information this way— whether it's for business, personal interest, scholarship, or science. Thus, when people do come to a library, they don't come for the traditional reasons. They come for programs, a quiet place to work, group study spaces, or to

use the computers. They don't come to ask for help from the reference librarians, and as a result, traditional reference activity is declining. Smart librarians have recognized this trend. In fact, they've realized that the new environment of abundant, ubiquitous information offers them the opportunity to rethink traditional library services and do work that is new, more challenging, more rewarding, and more valuable for their communities (Shumaker, 2012).

Embedded librarianship has became one of the option chosen to assuage relevancy and a new way of service provision at IFM library following a BBC investigation which revealed that 8000 jobs in UK libraries have disappeared in six years and 343 libraries have closed leading to fears of the future of the profession. BBC news also analyzed how library habits have changed noting that number of books borrowed have fell and the amount of time spend with computers in the library has fell also, as everyone has a computer now and internet costs have been lowered to make them affordable to the many. The same BBC report noted that: "The danger is we predict the end of libraries, and it's not the end of libraries." Thus changes are inevitable to the library necessitating invention of new ways to save the academic community in the wake of internet age and social media revolution. Carlson and Kneale (2011) note that as librarians seek to redefine themselves, the model of embedded librarianship is generating interest as an effective means of applying the knowledge and skills of librarians towards the information challenges of the digital age.

1.1 Embedded Librarianship

Embedding implies that ''the group seeking to integrate is experiencing and observing, as near as possible, the daily life of the primary group''. Embedded librarian programs often locate librarians involved in the spaces of their users and colleagues, either physically or through technology, in order to become a part of their users' culture. A librarian's physical and metaphorical location is often what defines them as embedded (Drewes and Hoffman, 2010). Riccio (2012) defines embedded librarianship as to move librarians out of the traditional library setting, whether physically or virtually, and into a new framework for providing library services. It shifts the emphasis from reactively answering research requests in a vacuum to developing a unique understanding of what customers need and delivering proactive results. Embedded librarianship allows for a more focused approach, and for librarians to become fully engaged in the work of the team, group or department they inhabit. Drewes and Hoffman (2010) note that many articles suggest embedded librarianship was adopted as a term because it is a similar concept to embedded journalism. An embedded journalist is placed with a military unit to observe and report on conflicts, exercises, and missions from an insider's vantage point. However, it is Shumaker (2012) elaboration of the concept of embedded librarianship that captures its essence spectacularly by vividly saying that embedded librarianship is a distinctive innovation that moves the librarians out of libraries and creates a new model of library and information work. It emphasizes the importance of forming a strong working relationship between the librarian and a group or team of people who need the librarian's information expertise. As the relationship develops, the librarian's knowledge and understanding of the group's work and objectives grow, which leads in turn to greater alertness to the information and knowledge needs of the group. The embedded librarian becomes just as engaged in the work of the team as any other team member. As the engagement grows, the embedded librarian develops highly customized, sophisticated, and value-added contributions to the team—contributions that sometimes go far beyond the confines of traditional library reference work and that some might be surprised to find a librarian delivering. The librarian functions as a team member like any other—and shares responsibility for team and organizational outcomes with all the other members of the team.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Among the challenges faced by IFM library is the low utilization of online and print resources and the decrease in number of students who come to the library for these resources, it was observed. This could be a result of lack of knowledge of the numerous resources that the library has to offer or the availability of information through 'googlelization' that reduce the sacredness of the library as the information hub. Similar challenge was found by Nkebukwa (2016) who noted that students lack awareness of the educational e-resources offered resulting in low utilization of academic and learning resources at the College of Business Education (CBE) in Tanzania. Manda (2005) and Mutani (2016) observed the same challenges in ten (10) research and academic institutions and at St. Augustine University in Tanzania respectively. In the light of this observation, this study aimed at exploring how embedded librarianship can be adopted as a strategy of service provision at the IFM library with the hope of increasing resource utilization, market the library and maintain librarians' relevancy at the institution.

1.3 Objective of the Study

To explore strategies that can be adopted at IFM Library to incorporate embedded librarianship in service provision.

1.4 Specific Objectives
1. To identify ways that embedded librarianship can be incorporated in service provision at IFM library.
2. To assess prerequisites needed for successful adoption of embedded librarianship in service provision at IFM library.

1.5 Research Questions
1. What ways can be used to incorporate embedded librarianship in service provision at IFM library?
2. What are the prerequisites needed for successful adoption of embedded librarianship in service provision at IFM library?

1.6 Significance Of The Study
Technology is growing at a rapid speed rendering information availability in different formats available to users with only a click on a search engine or notifications in their smart phones. This phenomenon has led to librarians and libraries seem unimportant while in actual sense, we are needed now more than ever to assist users to weed though the gargantuan of information to come up with only the gold. Seeing this, it's imperative for librarians to change ways to provide service to users. Instead of waiting in the library, an aggressive approach of integrating our expertise into the academic community becomes necessary. Thus this study will show ways that the librarians can use to embed their services in the academic community outside of the library door and also bring awareness of what is required in order for this approach to be successful. In turn, library services will be automatically marketed to the academic community resulting in utilization of resources.

1.7 Conceptual Framework
The study designed a model that was inspired by Hardenbrook (2013) who devised ways to reach students online through embedded librarianship.

Fig. 1: **Embedded Librarianship Framework for IFM Library**
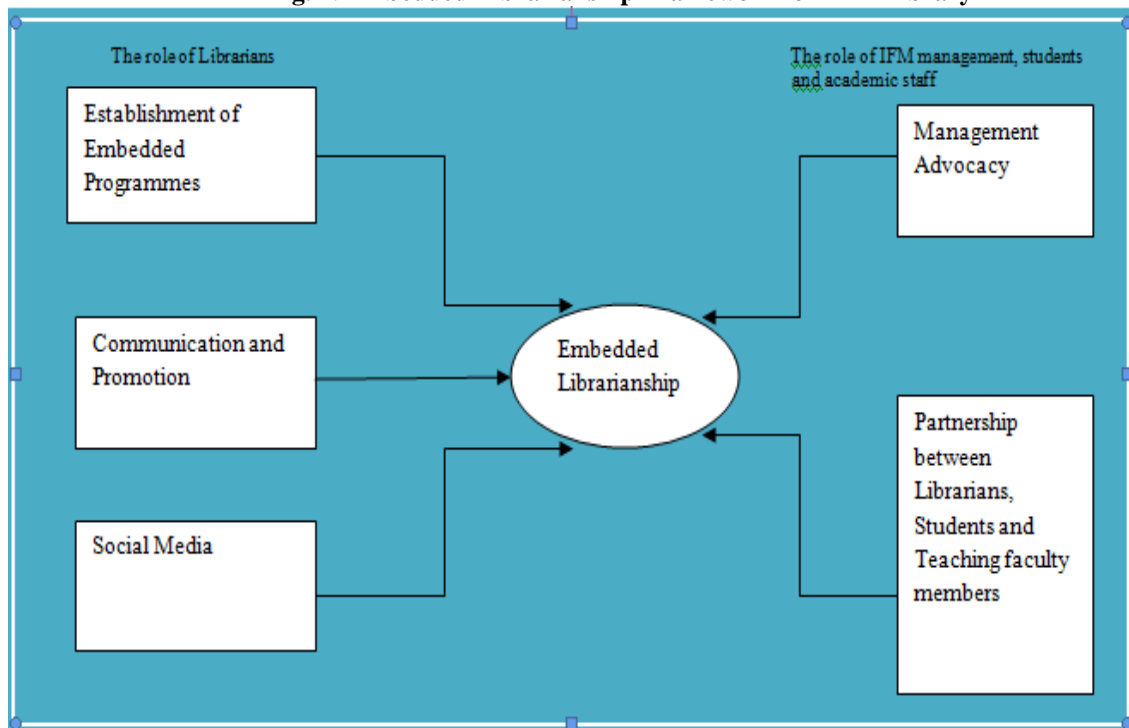
Hardenbrook (2013) emphasized on 'starting small and expand from there'. Thus based on this, an analysis was done of IFM library resources and librarians' skills, hence identifying three ways that embedded librarianship can be incorporated in service provision i.e. establishment of embedded programmes, communication and promotion and social media utilization. In order to be successful, IFM stakeholders have to be on board and cooperate with librarians to ensure embedded programmes are flourishing; through management support/advocacy and supportive partnership as seen in Figure 1. This model guided data collection and provided a framework for how embedded librarianship can be established at IFM library.

II. METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research approach was adopted for the study as it facilitated in-depth evaluation of the research questions resulting in a deeper understanding of the embedded librarianship concept. Moreover, case studies are very targeted and niche-specific. Hence, for this study, a case study was imperative and as a result facilitated identification of appropriate strategies that can be adopted through embedded librarianship by IFM library in service provision. Furthermore, non probability sampling was used through purposive sampling where by one director, two heads of department and four head of sections/senior librarians were selected to participate in the study. Purposive sampling allowed sample to be formed by respondents who fulfilled the objective of the study. Data was collected through interview (face to face) to obtain information from the library director; focus group discussion conducted with two head of departments and four head of section or senior librarians who are professionals to obtain their views on how to incorporate embedded librarianship at IFM library. Observation was also used to observe the environment and choose what will work depending on technology available and library staff capabilities. Content analysis procedure was used to analyze the data obtained.

III. RESEARCH FINDINGS
3.1 Ways to Incorporate Embedded Librarianship at IFM Library

The idea behind the embedded librarianship is to enable librarians to demonstrate their expertise as information specialists and to apply this expertise in ways that will have a direct and deep impact on the research, teaching, or other work being done. Through embedded librarianship, librarians move from a supporting role into partnerships with their clientele, enabling librarians to develop stronger connections and relationships with those they serve (Carlson and Kneale, 2011). Results from interview, focus group discussion and observation conducted at IFM Library, revealed that the following strategies can be used as a way to adopt embedded librarianship approach to service provision;

3.1.1 Establishment of Embedded Programs

Librarians' at IFM identified programs such as information literacy programmes, online search courses, citation and evaluation of internet materials to academic and students' seminars. The aim will be to provide knowledge to the users on how to find relevant information and evaluate the authenticity of the information obtained from the internet for research and academic purposes. These programs will also move the librarian from the library to the classroom whereby they will work hand in hand with academic staff to assist students' in their academic journey. However, a strong working relationship with the academic community has to be built so as facilitate sharing of similar goals, which in turn will enable the librarian to provide customized services based on the demand of the community. This first approach can also incorporate information literacy programs as means to overcome the limitations of orientation programs at IFM library whereby few students attend and the training is only limited to fifteen minutes and provided once to new students. As Carlson and Kneale (2011) reports, a page can be borrowed from the University of Rhode Island and the Community College of Vermont, among others, that have had librarians joining a classroom either physically or virtually and have reported stronger connections with students as a result, while other libraries, such as the Welch Medical Library at John Hopkins University, are developing "embedded liaison" programs. Embedded liaison programs situate librarians within the departments they serve to increase the frequency and depth of librarian-faculty interactions and for librarians to better understand the needs of the faculty through direct observation

3.1.2 Communication and Promotion

How do members of the organization learn that librarians are available to work with them? Through effective communication. This can be achieved through marketing of library services to the IFM community. Updating the library website, preparation of brochures and organization of short seminars will enhance users' knowledge of the librarians' availability and the unique services offered it was identified. Marketing is essential to any plans of librarians' re-invention of their services and in the adoption of embedded librarianship. As Nooshinfard and Ziaei (2011) explain the crucial need for marketing and promotion by noting that the changes in society have lead to creation of opportunities and threats for libraries; with the majority of people using search engines in preference to library resources has been the cause of alarm among librarians who see libraries in danger of losing their place as an information provider. Library marketing is critical for any information professional in order to spread the word about their library. It doesn't matter what library type it is, it doesn't matter how large or small the library is - you need to draw attention to your library, your services, your worth to your community, your administration, your staff, and your users (Sharma and Bhardway, 2009). Some of the ways to market and promote services include emails, the internet, newsletters, leaflets and brochures; use of library web page; use of library wall space and links to "help" services in all web pages so that users may get assistance.

3.1.3   Social Media

If we can't see them physically, then lets grasp their attention virtually. In this new era, everyone is in the social media in one form or another. Thus librarians identified various social media applications that can be used professionally to reach users and disseminate information through them. These applications include: Face book, YouTube, Research Gate, Goodreads, Instagram and even formation of a Whats App group to facilitate dissemination of current information by letting the users know new purchased books, answering users' questions via Face book and Whats App or post important videos like library orientation or how to search online resources tutorials on YouTube library designated channel. This will be a virtual marketing strategy to users who cannot come to the library which will pique their interest and raise their curiosity as a result. Ansraett et al…, (2012) support social media by claiming that Librarians should consider having a social media presence to keep current and allow interaction with patrons. This can improve collections, increase circulation, and promote events and encourage donors. Social media has become a way of life for millions of people and libraries must utilize this technology to stay current and relevant. Social Media allows an ongoing conversation between patrons and staff that can improve customer relations and ongoing feedback. Among social media sites suggested for any library system include Face book, Good reads, Google Hangout for hosting webinars and conferences, LinkedIn as a way to network and compare professional abilities between different library systems and agencies, which all tend to do things differently; and Twitter which will allow librarians' to broadcast and promote events at the library, announce new additions to collections, and help to engage patrons by allowing a conversation with users to name just a few.

3.2 Prerequisites' for Successful Embedded Librarianship Program at IFM Library

3.2.1   Management Advocacy

Library managers, information user group managers, and senior organizational leaders must support embedded librarianship in their own capacities and levels. Both groups have to work together for an embedded program to be successful and cooperation is paramount. As stronger relationships are build with customers, embedded librarians develop highly focused, targeted, specialized research and information results, often moving beyond what a library traditionally provides and toward a more integrated, analytical approach (Shumaker and Makins, 2012).

3.2.2   Partnership

Library staff and the teaching staff have to formulate a stronger partnership to facilitate the success of embedded programs for instance information literacy. This can be achieved through lecturers requiring their students to conduct their assignments by consulting research papers and citing them thus enhancing utilization of online scholarly journals that IFM library subscribes to every year instead of just coping and pasting from Google or from the lecturer's notes.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cooperation from the academic community is of great importance. Librarians at IFM library noted that cooperation is needed from management in terms of financial support and encouraging faculty members to work with librarians in order to ensure embedded programs are successful. Also, students have to be open-minded when it comes to learning from librarians. This in turn will ensure that the whole institution reaps benefits of embedded librarianship.

Training and development of library staff is a crucial recipe for embedded librarianship sustenance. Librarians have to be trained in order to keep up to date with new technology that debut its way into the scholarly community every day. Both long term and short term training are encouraged to make sure that librarians skills are sharp and at par with the current developments. This will provide librarians with expertise that will enhance their sureness in usage of ICT facilities, marketing skills and education provision capabilities.

Networking and sharing among librarians is paramount for successful embedded programs too. This will facilitate sharing of knowledge, expertise and experiences to grow the IFM library and take it to new heights. Sharing of resources virtually can also be implemented thus save funds and ensure that information that is not available at IFM library can be obtained from another library through networking. In short, no library has all the information that it needs, sharing through networking helps to bridge that gap.

V. CONCLUSION

Embedded librarianship at IFM library will enable librarians to flaunt their expertise and insert themselves into the academic community educational activities without waiting to be invited or consulted. Thus, embedded programs establishment, Communication and promotion and social media are some of the ways that IFM library can adopt embedded librarianship in its service provision. To implement these strategies' successfully; management support/advocacy and supportive partnership are paramount. Generally, embedded

librarianship is a way of standing up and being proud of being librarians at IFM library by raising its standards and define again its excellence.

Suffice it to say, embedded librarianship is a phenomenon that hasn't been incorporated in service provision in many of Tanzanian higher learning institutions or organizations. Hence, approaching it may be intimidating and introducing it to parent institutions may seem difficult as it's still a new model hence the pathways to embracing it and standards for success haven't been established thus not uniform across the board. Hence, once librarians and their academic community decide on their approach to embedding library services then the benefits will accrue as embedded librarianship is a powerful way to show the impact that librarians can and do have beyond the traditional functions of the library, and why librarians are needed now more than ever despite the developments in the millennial and digital age.

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