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T H E M E :

**LEVERAGING ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE AND BIG DATA
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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Preface

This book contains the Proceedings of research articles presented at the 3rd International Conference on ICT for National Development and Its Sustainability held from Tuesday 21st – Friday 4th May 2024 at the University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. The conference was organized by the Faculty of Communication and Information Sciences, University of Ilorin.

Over 50 research manuscripts were submitted for the conference. A keynote speech and two lead papers were presented at the conference. Apart from Nigeria, submissions were received from countries such as Niger, Malaysia and South Africa. All manuscripts were subjected to a double-blind peer review process. Before the review, every manuscript was subject to Turnitin plagiarism checker. Manuscripts with a **similarity index** of not more than 25% were processed for review. The articles which appear in this Proceedings are revised versions of the accepted manuscripts after the review process.

I wish to appreciate all who contributed in one form or the other towards making this Proceedings a success.

Thank you.

Prof. A. L. Azeez

Dean

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Navigating Inclusivity and Diversity in Nigerian Public Libraries: A 5IR Social Innovation Roadmap

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Abstract

This study investigates the role of social innovation in Nigerian public libraries, with a particular emphasis on advancing inclusivity and diversity in the context of the Fifth Industrial Revolution (5IR). By critically examining the current environment, including prevailing challenges, emerging opportunities, and strategic approaches, the paper provides valuable insights and practical recommendations for strengthening social innovation efforts. Findings reveal that while public libraries in Nigeria serve as crucial community centers, they face considerable hurdles such as inadequate resources, technological gaps, and resistance to innovation, all of which impede progress. However, the study also highlights promising pathways for leveraging digital technologies, deepening community involvement, and promoting inclusive and diverse services. Social innovation is presented as a powerful tool for addressing social issues and redefining the role of libraries. Key strategies include designing culturally responsive programs, building collaborative partnerships, and setting strategic objectives to guide innovation efforts. The adoption of sustainable practices is also emphasized to ensure long-term impact. Conclusively, the study highlights the important role of social innovation in transforming Nigerian public libraries into inclusive, diverse, and community-driven institutions in the 5IR era, capable of empowering individuals and fostering social equity.

Keywords: Social innovation, Nigerian public libraries, Inclusivity, Diversity, Challenges, Opportunities, Strategies, 5IR era.

1. Introduction

In recent times, Nigerian public libraries have experienced notable shifts influenced by the advent of the Fifth Industrial Revolution (5IR). This era, distinguished by the fusion of digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, and the Internet of Things (IoT), introduces both complex challenges and new avenues for advancing social innovation within library services (Adel, 2024). The integration of these technologies has reshaped the traditional operations of public libraries in Nigeria, prompting a necessary rethinking of how libraries respond to the evolving needs of society (Ajani et al., 2024). As these institutions transition into the digital age, they must confront the dual pressures of rapid technological advancement and the widening digital divide, particularly in under-resourced communities where access to infrastructure remains limited (PressReader, 2023). Despite these obstacles, the 5IR era presents fertile ground for social innovation to take root in Nigerian libraries. By embracing emerging technologies and nurturing strategic partnerships, libraries can redefine their roles as active, inclusive spaces for learning, creativity, and civic engagement. Initiatives such as makerspaces, digital literacy programs, and virtual



learning environments offer tangible ways to empower marginalized populations and promote equitable access to information (Buyannemekh et al., 2024). Social innovation, in this context, emphasizes the need for adaptive and user-centred practices that align library services with the changing demands of their communities. Through this lens, innovation is not only about technology adoption but also about cultivating inclusive, diverse, and participatory experiences (Vijayalatha, 2023).

Otike and Kiszl (2024) further emphasize that in technologically advanced societies, libraries serve as agents of positive transformation by investing in infrastructure, professional development, and community outreach. These investments enhance access to knowledge and promote social equity across different population groups. For Nigerian libraries to assume a similar role, a deliberate and strategic embrace of social innovation is essential. This involves creating forward-thinking solutions and services that address the country's unique challenges, using collaborative, technology-enabled approaches (Aithal & Maiya, 2023). The rise of 5IR represents a turning point in how societies produce, distribute, and consume information (Ziatdinov et al., 2024). However, many Nigerian public libraries continue to struggle to keep pace with these changes, underlining the urgency for a shift from conventional models toward more innovative practices (Ogah & Nwokolo, 2022). In light of this, a critical question emerges: how can Nigerian libraries harness the power of emerging platforms and methodologies to foster inclusivity, diversity, and accessibility? Acknowledging the transformative potential of the 5IR is therefore not optional it is a necessary step for libraries aiming to drive meaningful social innovation in service to their communities.

2. Landscape of Nigerian Public Libraries

Nigerian public libraries function within a dynamic ecosystem shaped by socio-economic realities, technological progress, and cultural diversity. Although these libraries remain crucial as knowledge centres and community anchors, numerous systemic challenges hinder their effectiveness in meeting users' evolving expectations. A significant number of public libraries in Nigeria operate in deteriorating facilities and under conditions of chronic resource inadequacy. Factors such as dilapidated infrastructure, insufficient funding, and restricted access to digital technologies severely constrain the delivery of contemporary library services (Barsha & Munshi, 2024). These infrastructural limitations compromise the ability of libraries to offer supportive environments for learning, collaboration, and innovation, thereby reducing their relevance in today's knowledge economy. A pronounced digital divide further complicates the operational landscape. This divide marked by disparities in technology access and internet connectivity is starkly evident in Nigerian public libraries, deepening existing socio-economic inequalities and limiting users' ability to engage with digital resources or participate in digital literacy initiatives (Ogunmodede et al., 2023). Bridging this gap is critical for ensuring equitable access to information and fostering digital inclusion. Another pressing concern lies in the maintenance of diverse and up-to-date collections. Budgetary restrictions and limited channels for acquiring new materials often result in outdated resources, weakening the libraries' capacity to provide timely and relevant content (Haque et al., 2023). This directly affects user satisfaction and undermines the libraries' mission of supporting lifelong learning. Furthermore, the shortage of professionally trained librarians and limited professional development opportunities pose significant barriers to service improvement.



The recruitment and retention of skilled personnel remain ongoing challenges, and the lack of continuous training inhibits adaptability in an era of rapid technological change (Donkor *et al.*, 2024). Strengthening the capacity of library staff through sustained investment in professional development is therefore essential to enabling responsive and innovative service delivery. In this context, inclusivity and diversity must remain central to public library operations across Nigeria. Libraries, as equitable access points to knowledge, have a moral and professional duty to serve all segments of society irrespective of socio-cultural or economic backgrounds (Panezi, 2021). Ensuring cultural relevance is essential in this regard. As Otolu (2022) observed, efforts are underway in many Nigerian public libraries to integrate the country's rich cultural heritage into collections, services, and outreach activities. Such initiatives not only validate the identities of diverse user groups but also ensure that library offerings resonate with their lived experiences. A culturally attuned library reinforces inclusivity by creating a welcoming environment for all users.

Equally important is the commitment to accessibility. Roberson *et al.* (2022) highlighted the increasing attention public libraries are giving to removing barriers for users with disabilities, both in physical spaces and digital environments. Prioritizing assistive technologies, offering accessible formats, and making structural accommodations are critical to ensuring that all individuals regardless of physical or cognitive abilities can fully benefit from library services. Through these measures, Nigerian public libraries can become truly inclusive institutions, capable of advancing social equity and fostering a shared culture of learning.

3. Concept of Social Innovation in Library Services

Social innovation represents a vibrant process characterized by the development and execution of fresh ideas, methodologies, or initiatives aimed at addressing societal challenges and fostering positive transformation (Palma, 2020). Within the domain of library services, social innovation takes shape through inventive approaches and interventions crafted not only to meet the evolving needs of library patrons and communities but also to confront broader social issues. This extends beyond the traditional functions of libraries, embracing endeavours that prioritize inclusivity, equity, and community empowerment. Libraries stand as crucial community hubs, providing spaces that are accessible to all and serving as repositories of knowledge and information (Ajani *et al.*, 2024). It is within this unique intersection that social innovation thrives. By embracing social innovation, libraries can leverage their inherent strengths to tackle intricate social problems, foster meaningful community engagement, and instigate impactful change.

In practical terms, social innovation within library settings encompasses diverse forms, ranging from the implementation of pioneering programs to the cultivation of strategic partnerships with local organizations and stakeholders (Lee, 2024). These initiatives are propelled by a dedication to addressing the multifaceted needs of library users and communities while advancing broader societal objectives. Furthermore, social innovation in libraries is not a standardized approach but rather a dynamic and context-sensitive process that adapts to the distinctive challenges and opportunities inherent in each community (Ajani *et al.*, 2024).



This necessitates libraries to adopt a flexible and responsive stance, continuously seeking innovative solutions and refining strategies based on feedback and evolving circumstances. Ultimately, through the embrace of social innovation, libraries can transcend their traditional roles and emerge as influential agents of positive change within their communities. By fostering strategic innovation, collaboration, and an unwavering commitment to equity and inclusion, libraries can assume a pivotal role in shaping a more vibrant, resilient, and equitable society.

4. Case Studies of Social Innovation Initiatives in Global Library Systems

The Green Library Initiative represents a significant facet of social innovation within library settings, emphasizing environmental sustainability and ecological responsibility. A prime example is the Edmonton Public Library's (EPL) commitment to implementing green practices, such as energy efficiency and waste reduction, alongside eco-friendly programming (Sahavirta et al., 2021). Through collaborative efforts with local environmental organizations and stakeholders, EPL has introduced initiatives like recycling programs and sustainable building practices. By embedding environmental stewardship into its operations, EPL not only contributes to broader sustainability objectives but also cultivates community engagement and raises awareness of environmental issues. The New York Public Library's (NYPL) Community Caregiver Resource Center initiative showcases the transformative potential of libraries as hubs for social innovation (Callahan, 2023). By acknowledging and addressing the needs of caregivers within the community, NYPL fosters social cohesion and support networks through strategic partnerships with local organizations. Offering tailored resources, support groups, and informative workshops, NYPL extends invaluable assistance to caregivers, thereby strengthening community bonds and solidifying its status as an indispensable community asset.

Schweizer (2018) noted that the Edmonton Public Library's (EPL) Welcome Baby initiative exemplifies social innovation in libraries by prioritizing early literacy and family support for marginalized populations. Through collaborative partnerships and targeted outreach initiatives, EPL delivers resources, workshops, and programs aimed at enhancing early childhood development and parental support. By addressing social determinants of health and well-being, including access to educational resources and community support, EPL's initiative fosters positive outcomes for children and families, while also reaffirming the library's role as a catalyst for societal progress. The Liverpool Central Library's Digital Inclusion Project demonstrates how libraries can utilize technology to drive social innovation and mitigate digital exclusion (Alabi, 2020). Through comprehensive digital skills training, access to technology resources, and support for online services, Liverpool Central Library empowers individuals to navigate the digital realm with confidence. By bridging the digital divide and expanding opportunities for education, employment, and social integration, Liverpool Central Library's initiative plays a pivotal role in fostering social and economic development within the community.

The Greenest City Initiative by the Vancouver Public Library illustrates how libraries contribute to social innovation through the promotion of sustainable practices and environmental stewardship (Teslenko, 2019). Through strategic partnerships with local environmental organizations and government agencies, the library provides resources, workshops, and programming focused on sustainability, waste reduction,



and green living. By actively engaging the community in discussions and actions related to environmental issues, the library not only raises awareness but also inspires collective action towards building a more sustainable and resilient city. The Homeless Connect program by the San Francisco Public Library serves as a prime example of libraries acting as catalysts for social innovation by addressing the needs of vulnerable populations, including the homeless and those experiencing housing insecurity (Winkelstein, 2017). Through collaborative efforts with social service agencies, healthcare providers, and community organizations, the library hosts regular events offering a wide range of services, such as housing assistance, healthcare, employment support, and legal aid. By providing a safe and welcoming space for individuals in need and facilitating access to essential services, the library plays a vital role in supporting community members facing homelessness and housing challenges.

The Indigenous Collections and Community Engagement initiative by the National Library of Australia demonstrates how libraries promote social innovation by preserving and sharing Indigenous knowledge and cultural heritage (Nakata, 2005). Through collaborative partnerships with Indigenous communities and cultural institutions, the library endeavours to digitize and preserve Indigenous materials, offer access to culturally sensitive resources and engage in community-led initiatives aimed at preserving and celebrating Indigenous languages, traditions, and stories. By acknowledging and honouring Indigenous perspectives and contributions, the library contributes to reconciliation efforts and promotes cultural diversity and understanding within society. These case studies exemplify the diverse ways in which libraries globally embrace social innovation to address social challenges, empower communities, and drive positive change. By leveraging their resources, expertise, and community connections, libraries play a transformative role in advancing social innovation and fostering a more equitable and inclusive society.

5. Opportunities for Social Innovation in Nigerian Public Libraries

Nigerian public libraries stand as pivotal hubs at the intersection of societal advancement, offering fertile ground for the growth and flourishing of social innovation initiatives. Often underestimated in their potential, these libraries possess an inherent capacity to act as epicentres of transformative change within their communities. By acknowledging and harnessing this potential, Nigerian public libraries emerge as beacons of progress, effectively addressing prevalent social challenges and nurturing inclusive growth. In today's swiftly evolving digital landscape, technology emerges as a powerful ally in the pursuit of expanded access and outreach. Embracing the digital wave, Nigerian public libraries can leverage technology to transcend physical limitations and broaden their impact across the nation. Awoyemi (2023) stressed that initiatives such as digitizing collections, offering online resources and virtual services, and utilizing social media platforms for interactive engagement enable libraries to dismantle barriers to access and provide individuals with unparalleled opportunities for learning and exploration. By embracing technology-driven solutions, libraries can play a pivotal role in fostering a more interconnected and digitally empowered society (Jutras, 2023). At the core of every thriving library lies a vibrant and engaged community. Recognizing the indispensable role of community involvement, Nigerian public libraries can cultivate deeper connections and meaningful participation among their stakeholders.



This involves forging collaborative partnerships, hosting inclusive events and workshops, and actively seeking input from community members to shape library offerings. By fostering a sense of ownership and co-creation, libraries empower individuals to actively shape their library experience, ensuring that services are responsive, relevant, and aligned with community aspirations (Williamset *al.*, 2015). Through inclusive and participatory practices, libraries emerge as dynamic centres of community cohesion, driving social unity and collective action. Makumbe (2020) stressed that Innovation flourishes in environments where creativity is nurtured and embraced. Nigerian public libraries, serving as hubs of innovation, possess the potential to spearhead groundbreaking solutions to entrenched societal challenges. From initiatives focused on literacy enhancement to those addressing environmental sustainability and economic empowerment, the scope for innovation within libraries is boundless. By fostering a culture of experimentation, collaboration, and ongoing learning, libraries incubate and scale innovative solutions that drive meaningful impact and societal transformation (American College of Clinical Pharmacy *et al.*, 2014). Through bold and visionary initiatives, libraries emerge as pioneers of change, shaping a brighter and more inclusive future for all Nigerians.

6. Challenges to Implementing Social Innovation

Despite the immense potential of social innovation within library settings, its implementation often encounters a myriad of hurdles that demand meticulous navigation and strategic planning. These challenges span various dimensions, encompassing resource limitations, resistance to change, and institutional barriers, among others.

Resistance to Change: Resistance to change permeates the library ecosystem at various levels, from frontline staff to organizational leadership and community stakeholders. Such resistance may stem from apprehension towards the unfamiliar, scepticism about the efficacy of novel approaches, or a reluctance to deviate from entrenched practices (Vitoet *al.*, 2014). Overcoming this resistance necessitates effective communication, stakeholder engagement, and the presentation of a compelling case for the merits of innovation.

Lack of Collaboration: Effective social innovation often hinges on collaboration and partnership-building across sectors. However, libraries may encounter obstacles to collaboration such as organizational silos, turf battles, and competition for resources. Building meaningful partnerships with government agencies, nonprofits, and other community entities requires concerted efforts in trust-building, relationship cultivation, and the alignment of shared goals for social impact (Ewejeet *al.*, 2021).

Institutional Barriers: Libraries may contend with institutional barriers such as bureaucratic processes, hierarchical structures, and entrenched cultural norms that hinder innovation endeavours. Addressing these barriers demands leadership commitment, organizational flexibility, and a readiness to challenge prevailing norms. Libraries must foster a culture of innovation that celebrates experimentation, embraces learning from failure, and champions continuous improvement (Hynes&Mickahail, 2019).



Resistance from Traditionalists: Traditionalists within the library profession may exhibit reluctance towards innovative approaches that challenge established practices or values. Persuading stakeholders of the value and potential impact of social innovation initiatives requires adept advocacy, evidence-based arguments, and meaningful stakeholder engagement. Libraries must bridge the gap between traditional and innovative practices by fostering dialogue, promoting collaboration, and fostering mutual respect (Fenget *al.*, 2023).

Evaluation and Measurement Challenges: Assessing the impact and efficacy of social innovation initiatives poses significant challenges due to the multifaceted nature of social change. Developing appropriate evaluation frameworks and metrics necessitates expertise, resources, and a commitment to learning and adaptation (Chopraet *al.*, 2024). Libraries must invest in robust evaluation methods that capture the diverse dimensions of social impact and guide decision-making effectively.

Sustainability Concerns: Ensuring the enduring sustainability of social innovation initiatives requires meticulous planning, resource mobilization, and institutional endorsement. Libraries must devise strategies for securing sustained funding, enhancing organizational capacity, and ingraining innovation into their core mission and operations. Sustainability hinges on effective leadership, stakeholder engagement, and proactive measures to address emergent challenges and opportunities.

Resource Constraints and Funding Limitations: One of the foremost obstacles libraries face in their pursuit of social innovation is the constraint of resources and funding limitations. Operating within tight budgets, libraries often struggle to allocate sufficient resources to innovative projects. Additionally, securing external funding for social innovation initiatives can be a daunting task, especially in environments where public funding for libraries is scarce. Consequently, libraries may encounter challenges in implementing and sustaining innovative programs, thereby impeding their ability to effectively address critical social issues.

Addressing Technological Gaps and Digital Divides: In an era increasingly defined by digital advancements, libraries must grapple with technological gaps and digital divides that hinder access to information and resources for specific segments of the population. Ylipulliet *al.* (2023) pointed that while digital technologies present opportunities for innovation and broader service access, not all communities enjoy equal access to technology or possess the necessary digital literacy skills to utilize it fully. To mitigate these disparities, libraries must invest in technology infrastructure, provide digital skills training, and ensure equitable access to digital resources. Nonetheless, bridging technological gaps and digital divides demands substantial resources and expertise, posing a significant challenge for libraries with limited budgets and capacity.

To tackle these challenges effectively and position themselves as catalysts of social innovation and positive change within their communities, libraries must confront these issues head-on. This may entail exploring alternative funding avenues, forging strategic partnerships, and prioritizing investments in technology and digital literacy initiatives. Despite the complexities involved, libraries have a distinct



opportunity to leverage their resources, knowledge, and community connections to address social challenges and advance equity and inclusivity for all.

7. Strategies for Promoting Inclusivity and Diversity in Nigerian Public Libraries

As Nigerian public libraries navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by the Fifth Industrial Revolution (5IR), it is crucial to adopt strategies that prioritize inclusivity and diversity to effectively serve the needs of all members of society. Here are some key strategies tailored to the context of Nigerian public libraries:

Foster Digital Inclusion: Recognizing the growing importance of digital technologies, Nigerian public libraries should prioritize initiatives that promote digital inclusion. This involves providing free internet access, offering computer literacy training programs, and ensuring that digital resources are accessible to all, especially in underserved communities where access to technology may be limited (Sanders & Scanlon, 2021).

Curate Culturally Diverse Collections: Nigerian public libraries should curate collections that reflect the rich cultural heritage and diverse interests of the Nigerian population. This includes acquiring books, e-books, and other materials in multiple languages and formats that represent a wide range of perspectives and experiences unique to Nigeria and its various ethnic groups.

Develop Inclusive Programming: Nigerian public libraries should design programming that celebrates diversity and fosters inclusivity within the community. This may include cultural festivals, storytelling sessions featuring Nigerian folklore, and workshops on topics such as ethnic diversity, religious tolerance, and gender equality (Akohet *et al.*, 2022). By offering inclusive programming, libraries can create spaces that embrace Nigeria's cultural diversity and promote social cohesion.

Provide Multilingual Services: Given Nigeria's linguistic diversity, public libraries should offer multilingual services to cater to patrons who speak languages other than English (Okonkwoet *et al.*, 2022). This involves providing signage, library materials, and staff assistance in major Nigerian languages such as Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, and others, to ensure that language barriers do not hinder access to library resources and services.

Engage with Marginalized Communities: Nigerian public libraries should actively engage with marginalized communities, including rural areas and urban slums, to understand their unique needs and challenges. This may involve conducting outreach programs, partnering with local community organizations, and providing mobile library services to underserved areas. By engaging with marginalized communities, libraries can ensure that their services are accessible and responsive to the needs of all Nigerians, regardless of their socio-economic status or geographic location (Mia, 2020).

Develop Culturally Relevant Programs and Services: Nigerian public libraries should develop programs and services that are culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of diverse



communities. This includes hosting cultural events, heritage celebrations, and educational programs that reflect the traditions, values, and interests of different ethnic groups across Nigeria.

Foster Partnerships with Diverse Stakeholders: Collaboration with diverse stakeholders, including community organizations, educational institutions, government agencies, and NGOs, is essential for promoting inclusivity and diversity in Nigerian public libraries (Okere& Daramola, 2023). By fostering partnerships, libraries can leverage resources, expertise, and networks to develop and implement initiatives that address the unique needs of diverse communities and promote social inclusion and equity.

8. Building a Roadmap for Action

Nigerian public libraries are endeavouring to maintain their relevance and significance within a constantly evolving society. It is crucial to formulate a strategic plan that outlines clear objectives and strategies for social innovation. By pinpointing critical areas of focus and devising sustainable approaches for long-term impact, Nigerian public libraries can effectively cater to the needs of their communities and instigate positive transformations. This blueprint will serve as a guiding framework to navigate libraries towards realizing their social innovation aspirations.

Assessing Community Needs: The initial step in crafting a roadmap for social innovation entails conducting an extensive needs assessment. This process aims to grasp the challenges, opportunities, and priorities prevalent within the communities served by Nigerian public libraries. Engagement with community members, stakeholders, and library personnel is vital to identify areas where social innovation can yield the most significant benefits (Phillips,et al., 2015).

Establishing Priorities and Objectives: Drawing insights from the needs assessment findings, Nigerian public libraries should establish distinct priorities and objectives for social innovation. Harlandet al. (2021) stressed that these priorities and goals must align with the library's overarching mission and vision, as well as the specific needs of the community. Examples of priorities may encompass endeavours such as promoting digital inclusivity, nurturing cultural diversity, addressing literacy gaps, or bolstering entrepreneurship and economic empowerment.

Forging Collaborative Partnerships: Effective social innovation in Nigerian public libraries hinges on fostering collaborative partnerships with a diverse array of stakeholders. These stakeholders may include government bodies, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and grassroots community groups. Libraries should actively seek out partners who can contribute expertise, resources, and support to advance their social innovation endeavours. Through collaborative efforts, libraries can harness collective strengths and maximize their impact on society.

Developing Sustainable Models: To ensure enduring impact, Nigerian public libraries must devise sustainable models for implementing and scaling social innovation initiatives. Alamet al., (2021) stressed that this necessitates exploring various funding sources, such as government grants, corporate sponsorships, philanthropic donations, or revenue-generating activities. Additionally, libraries should



invest in capacity building, staff training, and organizational development to fortify their ability to sustain social innovation efforts over time.

Monitoring and Evaluating Progress: Continuous monitoring and evaluation are indispensable for gauging progress towards social innovation goals and identifying areas for refinement. Nigerian public libraries should establish clear metrics and indicators to assess the efficacy of their initiatives. Feedback from stakeholders should be solicited regularly to inform strategic adjustments and optimize effectiveness. By embracing a culture of ongoing assessment and knowledge sharing, libraries can enhance their adaptive capacity and drive continuous innovation (Foronda et al., 2020).

9. Conclusion

The exploration embarked on a thorough examination of social innovation within Nigerian public libraries, with a specific focus on navigating inclusivity and diversity amidst the Fifth Industrial Revolution (5IR). Through a comprehensive analysis of the current landscape, challenges, opportunities, and strategies, the study aimed to offer insights and recommendations to foster social innovation within Nigerian public libraries. Throughout the investigation, it became evident that Nigerian public libraries serve as crucial community hubs, providing access to information, knowledge, and resources. However, they encounter various obstacles such as resource limitations, technological disparities, and resistance to change, hindering their capacity to effectively implement social innovation endeavours. Nevertheless, amidst these challenges lie significant opportunities to utilize technology, enhance community engagement, and champion inclusivity and diversity, thereby driving positive transformation within libraries. The concept of social innovation emerged as a powerful approach to addressing societal issues and advancing the mission of Nigerian public libraries. By crafting culturally relevant programs, cultivating partnerships with diverse stakeholders, and delineating clear priorities and objectives, libraries can develop a roadmap for action to steer their social innovation endeavours. Moreover, establishing sustainable models for long-term impact is imperative to ensure the continuity and success of social innovation initiatives. In conclusion, the study underscores the critical role of social innovation in Nigerian public libraries as a means to foster inclusivity, diversity, and positive societal change amidst the 5IR era. By embracing innovation, fostering collaboration, and demonstrating a commitment to community service, Nigerian public libraries can emerge as agents of social transformation, empowering individuals and fostering a more equitable and inclusive society for all.

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