

Library-Faculty Collaboration: Promoting Partnership for Sustainable Education

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Abstract

The pursuit of sustainable education demands a shift from traditional to collaborative models that leverage institutional strengths. This paper argues that strategic partnerships between academic libraries and faculties are a critical, yet often underutilized, engine for achieving this sustainability. The article explores the transformative potential of such collaborations. It moves beyond the conventional view of the library as a mere repository of books, repositioning it as an active pedagogical partner in curriculum development, digital literacy enhancement, and research support. The study outlines a practical framework for collaboration, including collection development, library literacy and user services. While identifying challenges such as communication gaps and resistance to change, the paper proposes actionable strategies for overcoming these barriers.

Keywords

Sustainable Education, Library, Faculty,
Library-Faculty Collaboration.

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State Chapter

Introduction

Academic libraries are the cornerstone of any academic institution, playing important roles in fostering education. As a powerhouse of information and knowledge, academic libraries contribute in promoting teaching, research and lifelong learning by providing access to relevant and current information resources, and support for student and staff (Abubarka, 2022). Education and library are two inseparable concepts; both being fundamentally related to co-exist with each other, none of them is an end in itself. Therefore, collaborative partnership is essential for sustainable development. Library collaboration involves libraries and related institutions working together to achieve common objectives, share resources and enhance services, this collaborative approach which can occur at different levels, is important for providing comprehensive and accessible information resources to meet the needs of faculty members, researchers, students and other type of users for their needs to be satisfied and also support sustainable education (Lisedunetwork, 2023). Atkinson (2019) emphasized the roles

academic libraries play in sustainable education through collaborative initiatives to include contributing to research, teaching and lifelong learning.

Library - Faculty collaboration is essential especially in an academic environment. It is through this kind of collaboration that information needs of the academic community specifically students, lecturers, researchers and other staff of the institution can be met. In a nutshell, libraries have always been at the center of activities of the university community of scholars and students who are engaged in seeking true knowledge by promoting research findings and complementing the requirements of the curricula. Fadehan and Ojo (2024) opined that this partnership is usually beneficial and often have positive impact on a number of areas of the academic community's learning process, from addressing intellectual property issues to fostering students' problem-solving and critical thinking abilities to transforming them into lifelong learners. They further noted that, this symbiotic relationship improves the faculty members' research and instruction as well as enhance the services provided by libraries.

Academic libraries are distinguished by their capacity to provide information resources that support the teaching, learning, and research of their respective institutions. By making sure that information resources are gathered, processed, arranged, distributed, and safeguarded to satisfy the information requirements of every university member, they have maintained their position as a crucial component of a university system. Books, printed and non-printed materials, magazines, maps, pamphlets, theses, movies, recordings, and any other information resources designed to meet the scholarly, intellectual, and individual needs of library users are typically examples of these information resources. The faculties on the other hand are made up of academics who are lecturers, researchers, those who are involved in teaching and learning in tertiary institutions of learning. Faculty members are central to effective collaboration in academic environments, particularly because of their disciplinary expertise, pedagogical knowledge, and direct engagement with students and research activities. One key characteristic of faculty is their role as subject specialists who possess in-depth knowledge of their fields. This expertise enables them to identify relevant resources, shape curriculum content, and ensure that collaborative initiatives, such as information literacy integration, OER development, and collection building, are academically rigorous and aligned with disciplinary standards (Swain & Pathak, 2024).

In addition, faculty members are experienced educators who design learning outcomes, develop assessment strategies, and facilitate student learning. Their pedagogical role allows them to integrate collaborative inputs from librarians into course structures, ensuring that skills such as information literacy and digital competence are meaningfully embedded in teaching and assessment (López-Hernández, Buckingham, & Strotman, 2023). Beyond their expertise,

faculty members contribute to collaboration through active participation and leadership. They help define academic needs, validate the relevance of library resources and services, and promote the adoption of collaborative initiatives within their departments. Studies show that faculty engagement and motivation are critical to the success of collaborative programmes, as their willingness to adopt new practices, such as open educational resources and integrated instruction, directly influences outcomes (Herbert, Clinton-Lisell, & Stupnisky, 2023). According to Ukaegbu and Okwu (2023) collaboration between university libraries and faculty is designed to meet the teaching and learning needs of the university usually involves improving access to library resources and providing special services to meet specific needs of faculty.

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of library–faculty collaboration in higher education, the current level of practice remains largely uneven and underdeveloped in many institutions. In several universities, particularly within developing countries, collaboration is still predominantly limited to traditional roles such as provision of information resources and occasional user education, rather than being systematically embedded in curriculum design, research processes, and digital learning initiatives. Moreover, these interactions are often informal, lacking clear institutional frameworks, defined roles, and sustained strategic direction. Challenges such as weak communication structures, limited funding, and resistance to change further constrain the effectiveness of such partnerships. Consequently, the transformative potential of academic libraries as active pedagogical and research partners is yet to be fully realized. While existing literature acknowledges the benefits of collaboration, there remains a gap in articulating structured and practical approaches for strengthening and sustaining these partnerships within the context of sustainable education. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the current

state of library–faculty collaboration and proposes strategies for enhancing effective partnership toward achieving sustainable education.

Sustainable Education

Sustainable education is a purposive education that aims at addressing the social, economic, and physical environment. Its intended learning outcomes are to equip the students with the knowledge skills, attitudes and value required to support a sustainable future. UNESCO, (2024) explained that sustainable education is also known as education for sustainable development. It sees education as the key to unlocking progress in all the global development goals, teaching individuals to make informed decisions and take action both individually and collectively to change society and protect the earth. Sustainable development is designed to equip individuals of all age with knowledge, skills, value and ability to tackle issues such as climate change, overuse of resources, and inequality that impact the wellbeing of people and the planet.

Sustainable education is an exciting new field that blends a range of pedagogical techniques to promote an understanding of the connections among the environment, the economy and society. It has the primary goal of harnessing the power of education to advance environmental literacy and civic engagement that prepares students for jobs that contribute to a more equitable and sustainable future (UNESCO, 2021). Sustainable education refers to an inclusive and effective education system that provide students with knowledge and skills needed to succeed. It entails qualified teachers, relevant curriculum, a good learning environment, fair assessment practices and focus on lifelong learning, sustainable education encompasses a student's creativity and promotes their overall development in every aspect including moral, intellectual, physical etc. (Ullah & Usman, 2023). The united nations recognizes the importance of education for a brighter

and more successful future, it strongly advocates for quality education to become a reality for everyone, this commitment is reflected in United Nations sustainable development goals, where quality education is an agent aimed at transforming the world by 2030. The focus is on inclusivity and fairness, equitable and standardized learning opportunity for all, supporting lifelong learning and knowledge (Boeren, 2017).

Collaborative partnership between Library and Faculty for a sustainable education

Collaboration between the library and faculty is widely recognized as a cornerstone for strengthening teaching, research, and lifelong learning in universities. It involves a purposeful partnership in which librarians and academic staff share expertise, resources, and decision-making to enhance student learning, advance scholarship, and sustain access to knowledge. Library–faculty collaboration is no longer limited to occasional resource sharing; rather, as Spangler and Casper (2023) note, it represents a strategic alliance aimed at improving the overall quality of education and research. Stöpel, Piotto, Goodman, and Godbey (2020) further emphasize that sustainable education depends on embedding information literacy, research support, and open knowledge practices into curricula through close cooperation between librarians and teaching staff.

In higher-education institutions, user education, library instruction, and bibliographic instruction programmes are integral to academic success. Many universities and research organizations subscribe, individually or on a consortium basis, to a wide range of electronic resources. Producers or vendors of these resources often organize training sessions for their effective use, while orientation and refresher programmes help learners build information-literacy competencies. Universities also periodically conduct workshops and orientation programmes for academic staff,

equipping them to maximize the use of electronic resources in teaching and research.

Beyond supporting teaching, libraries provide specialized expertise in areas such as research-data management, open-access publishing, copyright, and bibliometrics. Partnering with faculty integrates these services into research workflows, ensuring that scholarly outputs remain discoverable, reusable, and preserved for future study, key components of sustainable scholarship (OCLC Research, 2023). Likewise, joint development of Open Educational Resources (OER) and open textbooks reduces student costs, promotes equity, and enables the continual updating and reuse of learning materials, fostering a culture of sustainable teaching resources (La Trobe University Library, 2023).

Successful collaboration rests on trust, mutual respect, and clearly defined goals. Institutional support, such as curriculum committees, faculty-development programmes, and research-data policies helps move partnerships beyond one-off initiatives to long-term, embedded practices (ACRL, 2024; OCLC Research, 2023). In this way, collaboration between libraries and faculty becomes a dynamic, reciprocal relationship that enhances student learning, supports faculty research, and secures enduring access to knowledge. When formalized through policy, professional development, and shared assessment, it serves as a powerful driver of sustainable, high-quality education in universities.

Aspects of collaboration between academic libraries and faculties

Collaboration initiatives are co-operative efforts between libraries, librarians, educators, and other academic units aimed at enhancing education through the sharing of resources, expertise, and programs. Such initiatives improve access to information, reduce costs, and foster innovation in teaching, research, and learning. Within universities, collaboration between academic

libraries and faculties can take several forms, including the following:

Resource Sharing

Resource sharing refers to the mutual agreement between libraries and faculties to make available their resources in order to deliver better services to users. These resources may include document collections, technical facilities, staff expertise, and technological infrastructure. In contemporary academic environments, resource sharing has moved beyond traditional interlibrary loan systems to include collaborative collection development, digital resource sharing, and networked access to electronic resources. This shift is largely driven by increasing costs of information resources and the need to maximize access with limited budgets (Ratnayake, 2025). Empirical evidence suggests that resource sharing significantly enhances access to a wider range of scholarly materials while reducing unnecessary duplication of resources across institutions. It also promotes cost-effectiveness and strengthens institutional capacity by enabling libraries to collectively manage and utilize resources (Igbo & Imo 2017). Furthermore, collaborative collection development initiatives have been identified as a strategic response to budget constraints, allowing libraries to shift from ownership-based models to access-based systems that ensure broader availability of academic resources (Levenson, & Nichols Hess, 2020).

Despite these benefits, the effectiveness of resource sharing depends on clearly defined strategies and institutional commitment. Studies have shown that successful collaboration requires the establishment of formal agreements, shared policies, and governance structures to guide participation and ensure accountability among partners (Saunders & Corning, 2020). In addition, adequate investment in information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure is critical for enabling seamless access, retrieval, and delivery of shared

resources. Equally important is the development of trust, effective communication, and professional capacity among librarians and faculty, as these factors significantly influence the success and sustainability of collaborative initiatives. By adopting structured policies, investing in digital infrastructure, and fostering a culture of cooperation, academic libraries and faculties can strengthen resource-sharing practices, thereby improving access to information resources and supporting sustainable education.

Curriculum-integrated information literacy

Curriculum-integrated information literacy involves embedding information literacy instruction directly into academic programmes through purposeful collaboration between librarians and faculty members. Rather than being delivered as isolated or one-off sessions, this approach aligns information literacy with course content, learning objectives, and assessment tasks, thereby making it more relevant and meaningful to students' academic experiences. Contemporary research underscores the effectiveness of this integrated approach in enhancing students' ability to locate, evaluate, and use information critically. For instance, Aharony, Julien, and Nadel-Kritz, (2020) found that information literacy instruction yields better learning outcomes when it is incorporated into disciplinary teaching and supported through active collaboration between librarians and faculty. Similarly, Waltz, Moberly, and Carrigan, (2020) highlight that aligning information literacy competencies with curricular frameworks strengthen students' research capabilities and support the development of professional skills. The concept of embedded librarianship further reinforces this model by positioning librarians within courses or academic departments, thereby enabling continuous, context-specific engagement with students. Hartvig and Moring (2024) demonstrate that such

sustained involvement improves both student engagement and the quality of learning outcomes. In the same vein, collaborative teaching approaches, particularly co-designed assignments and co-teaching, have been shown to promote deeper learning and the development of transferable information skills (Flierl et al., 2020).

However, the successful integration of information literacy into the curriculum requires deliberate planning and strong institutional support. Early involvement of librarians in curriculum design processes ensures that information literacy outcomes are effectively aligned with course objectives. In addition, collaborative teaching practices, including joint assignment development, enhance the practical application of information literacy within disciplinary contexts. Continuous professional development for both faculty and librarians is equally important in strengthening pedagogical competencies and sustaining collaboration. Furthermore, the integration of information literacy into digital learning platforms, such as learning management systems, supports ongoing and flexible learning opportunities (Lockhart, 2021). Overall, adopting a curriculum-integrated approach to information literacy enables academic libraries and faculty to move beyond fragmented instructional practices and establish sustainable, structured learning experiences that significantly enhance student learning and contribute to the broader goals of sustainable education.

Digital Literacy

Digital literacy has become a fundamental competency in contemporary higher education, particularly as digital technologies continue to shape teaching, learning, and research practices. It extends beyond basic technical skills to include the ability to critically evaluate information, engage responsibly in digital environments, and apply knowledge effectively across academic

contexts. As higher education increasingly relies on digital platforms, students are expected not only to access information but also to interpret and use it critically within complex and evolving information environments. Recent studies highlight the significant role of digital literacy in shaping students' academic engagement and learning outcomes. For instance, Getenet, Cantle, Redmond, and Albion, (2024) found that students' digital literacy levels are strongly associated with their participation and effectiveness in online learning environments, influencing both their confidence and academic performance. Similarly, Nkansah and Oldac (2024) revealed that gaps in digital literacy skills remain a critical challenge in higher education, with many students lacking the competencies required to effectively navigate digital information systems and learning platforms.

To ensure the effectiveness of digital literacy initiatives, deliberate and collaborative strategies are required. First, digital literacy should be systematically embedded into the curriculum through joint planning between librarians and faculty, ensuring alignment with course objectives and learning outcomes. Second, the use of active learning approaches, such as project-based assignments, digital content creation, and guided evaluation of online sources, can enhance students' practical engagement with digital tools. Third, continuous professional development for both librarians and faculty is necessary to keep pace with emerging technologies and evolving pedagogical practices. In addition, institutions must invest in reliable digital infrastructure and provide access to appropriate learning technologies that support inclusive and flexible learning environments. By adopting these strategies, academic libraries and faculty can collaboratively foster digital literacy skills that enable students to critically navigate digital environments, thereby enhancing academic success and contributing to the broader goals of sustainable education

Open Educational Resources (OER)

Open Educational Resources (OER) have been widely recognized for reducing student costs and enhancing the quality of higher education. Originating from a UNESCO initiative on the impact of open courseware for developing countries, OER refers to teaching and learning materials that are openly licensed for free use, adaptation, and redistribution (Nwaohiri, 2021). Academic libraries can collaborate with faculties, students, educational institutions, and policy makers to promote and sustain OER initiatives. Through workshops, seminars, and information-literacy training, libraries support the adoption, evaluation, and integration of OER into course materials and library collections (Zaid, 2019; Miwinyimbegu, 2018). On the other hand, faculty members, as subject experts and course designers, they can contribute in creating, adapting, and integrating OER into teaching and learning. They can also promote the use of OER among colleagues. Their contribution could go beyond adoption; faculty can contribute through collaboration, quality assurance, and advocacy (Herbert et al., 2023). Such cooperation fosters equitable access to high-quality resources and reduces dependence on commercial materials (Adedoyin et al., 2023).

Scholarly Communication and Publishing Support

Libraries are vital pillars in scholarly communication, acting as facilitators, custodians, and educators within academic communities. They provide access to various scholarly resources, from print materials to electronic databases; ensuring researchers have the necessary tools to advance their work. Beyond mere access, libraries champion open-access initiatives, advocating for disseminating research findings to a broader audience. In most cases, libraries collaborate with faculty on copyright advice, journal selection, bibliometrics, and strategies for publishing in open-access venues. They may also run institutional repositories or university

presses, giving faculty sustainable platforms for disseminating scholarship (ACRL, 2024). First, libraries deploy and administer institutional repository (IR) platforms such as DSpace, EPrints, Fedora, Islandora, or Samvera, which serve as permanent online archives for faculty preprints, postprints, theses, conference papers, datasets, and grey literature. For instance, libraries at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Ahmadu Bello University, and the University of Ibadan have demonstrated this model by running DSpace-based repositories and partnering with African Journals Online (AJOL) and AfricArXiv to publish and disseminate locally produced scholarship. Through these concrete services, libraries transform from passive collectors of published works into active publishers and curators of their institutions' scholarly output, providing faculty with a sustainable, cost-free, and globally visible dissemination platform.

Faculty involvement is essential for the success of these initiatives. When faculties actively engage with library-supported publishing services, such as open access journals, repositories, and research data management, there is a greater likelihood of improved dissemination and long-term preservation of research outputs (Tenopir et al., 2020). In addition, faculty can support the promotion of open scholarship by adopting stakeholders to raise awareness about the importance of open scholarship and the benefits of alternative publishing models. Through their advocacy efforts, libraries seek to create a more inclusive and accessible scholarly communication ecosystem that benefits researchers, institutions, and society.

Assessment and Accreditation Support

The way the university library manages and support library resources reflects the priorities of the institution, the educational goals and methods of faculty, and the performance of students and graduates (Afolabi, 2014). Same author revealed that accreditation is awarded to higher education programs that meet the education

requirement to set standards. It centers on a review of a program's content and delivery that includes area such as relevance, coherence, challenge, assessment, staffing, quality assurances and resources. Many institutions and department had failed accreditation by National University Commission (NUC) just because the libraries failed to meet the standard for information materials in those disciplines. Men and Aliyu (2017) asserts that academic library collections are built to meet specific research and information needs of the institution's academic programs. He added that the curriculum serves as a frame upon which the library collection is built. This implies that the academic library is a pillar or bedrock to which any academic program must rely. Therefore, the library resources reflect the type of programs covered by the institution and so it facilitates effective teaching, learning, research, and community services of the parent institution. Hence, libraries and faculties jointly ensure a successful learning-outcome assessments and supply evidence for accreditation reviews.

Collaborative Collection Development

Collaborative collection development involves a coordinated effort between librarians and faculty to select, acquire, and manage information resources that support teaching, learning, and research. In this partnership, faculty contributes their subject expertise by identifying relevant and up-to-date materials, while librarians provide professional knowledge of collection management, budgeting, and resource evaluation. Libraries collaborate with faculty to develop and maintain library collections supporting the curriculum. By soliciting input from faculty regarding specific resource needs and subject areas, librarians ensure that the library's collection remains relevant and comprehensive. Additionally, libraries continuously evaluate the collection to identify gaps or areas for improvement, collaborating with faculty to address these

needs. This collaborative approach to collection development ensures that students have access to the resources they need to succeed academically and pursue their scholarly interests (Ashikuzzaman, 2024).

This collaboration enhances the quality and relevance of library collections, ensures alignment with curriculum needs, and supports accreditation requirements. It also promotes efficient use of limited resources by reducing duplication and encouraging shared access to materials across departments and institutions (Mubofu & Chiula, 2020). Faculty involvement is especially important in ensuring that collections reflect current disciplinary trends, while librarians facilitate

access through strategic acquisition models, including demand-driven acquisition and consortia agreements. To ensure successful collaboration, institutions should promote regular communication between faculty and librarians, involve faculty in collection review processes, and adopt data-driven decision-making based on usage statistics and user needs. In addition, clear collection development policies and institutional support are essential for sustaining collaborative efforts. Through these strategies, collaborative collection development can enhance the quality, accessibility, and sustainability of academic library resources.

Library-Faculty Collaboration Model

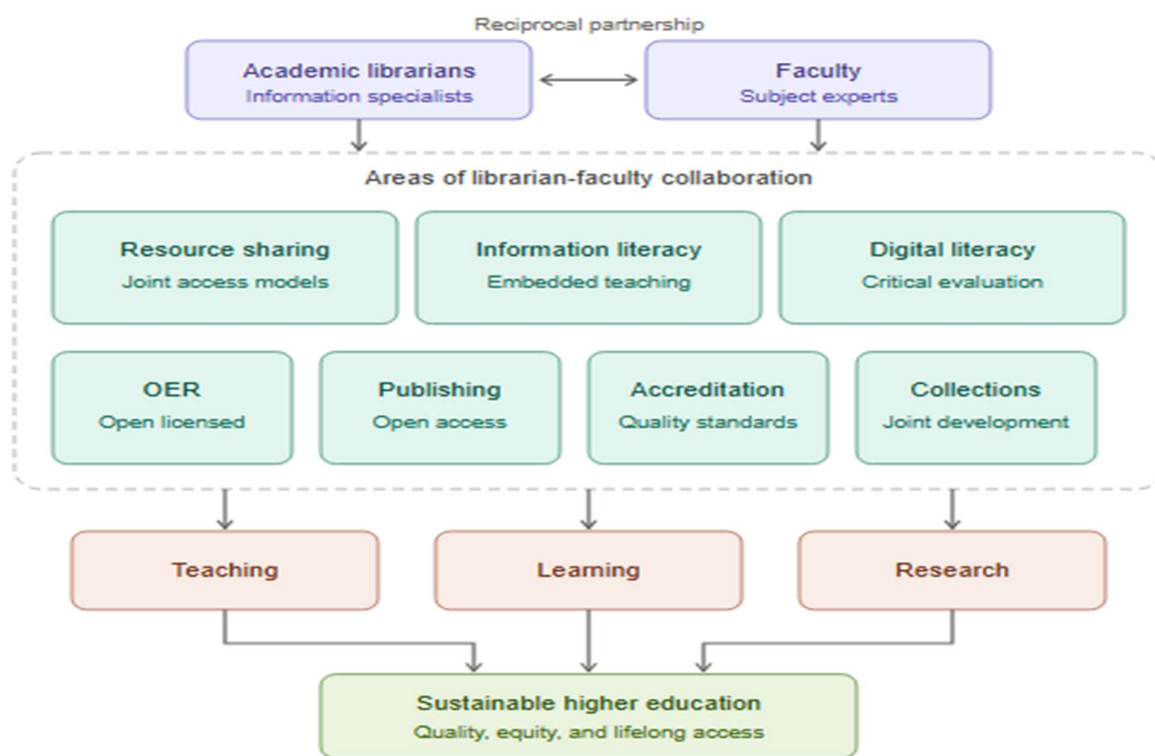


Fig. 1: Diagrammatic model of collaborative components and their interactions

Contributions of academic library collaboration to research, teaching and community engagement

Collaboration within academic libraries has long been a strategic goal for librarians, as their contributions significantly support

teaching, learning and research. Academic library collaborations enhance educational quality by sharing resources, facilitating information-literacy instruction, building relevant collections, streamlining research processes, and fostering new knowledge production. According to Atkinson (2019),

such partnerships enable the creation of integrated services that simplify research activities and improve both teaching and scholarly outcomes.

Collaborative efforts also make it possible for libraries to share costly databases, e-books, and other electronic resources, thereby enriching educational offerings and providing access to materials that might otherwise remain unavailable to individual institutions (Neetha, 2020). Through partnerships with faculty, academic libraries play a central role in supporting digital learning environment by integrating information literacy into the curriculum, adopting innovative educational tools, and adapting to evolving teaching methodologies (Dlamingi, Bethiweli, & Majenya, 2021).

By reducing duplication of effort and increasing efficiency in research activities, library collaborations free up time for more impactful work, ultimately improving the quality of education and research output (Roy & Habib, 2024). Libraries also provide enhanced support for researchers: through sustained collaboration, librarians become research partners, often co-authoring publications and contributing to the dissemination of knowledge beyond the traditional scope of librarianship (Borrego, Ardanuy, & Urbanu, 2018). These initiatives allow libraries to contribute to a wide range of research topics, expand access to expertise, and raise the profile of both the library and its parent institution. As Atkinson (2019) notes, collaboration increases institutional visibility and demonstrates the value of libraries to the wider university community and beyond.

Moreover, academic library collaborations make substantial contributions to community engagement. Libraries support civic and societal development by providing access to relevant information resources, sharing research outputs and data via institutional repositories, and co-hosting information-literacy training with public libraries. They also offer spaces for community events, foster

partnerships with local organizations, and build social capital through outreach initiatives. Such collaborations benefit both the academic institution and the broader community by expanding educational opportunities and addressing pressing social issues (Bangani, 2023).

Challenges academic libraries face in fostering collaboration for sustainable education

While collaboration between academic libraries and faculty is essential for advancing sustainable education, it is not without significant barriers and challenges. Atkinson (2019) observes that partnerships often encounter differences in organizational culture and working practices among participants. Achieving the cultural change needed for genuine collaboration may take considerable time, as some staff can be reluctant to adapt or may not fully appreciate the value of cooperative efforts. Others may fear a real or perceived loss of professional or institutional identity, or feel uneasy about working outside familiar professional boundaries.

Another challenge lies in the allocation of time and effort. Staff involved in collaborative projects may lack sufficient autonomy to prioritize partnership activities, particularly if they are expected to maintain their normal workload alongside new responsibilities. Professional disparities can also arise, especially when collaborators retain their traditional roles without clear recognition of additional tasks linked to joint initiatives.

At the departmental or institutional level, differences in strategic goals, structures, or policies can complicate partnerships. Maintaining a balance between respecting the priorities of each stakeholder and advancing shared objectives requires careful negotiation and trust. Moreover, collaboration efforts are often constrained by inadequate funding, which can limit access to technology, staff development, and the

creation of innovative programs essential for sustainable education.

These challenges underscore the need for strong institutional support, effective communication, and dedicated resources to foster a culture of collaboration between academic libraries and faculty. Without addressing these barriers, efforts to build enduring partnerships that sustain teaching, research, and lifelong learning may fall short of their potential.

Strategies for strengthening academic library collaboration towards achieving sustainable education

To maximize the impact of collaboration on teaching, research, and lifelong learning, academic libraries need to adopt deliberate strategies that foster sustainable partnerships with faculty and other stakeholders.

Embrace Change and Innovation

Academic libraries should cultivate a culture of flexibility and openness to change. Embracing change and innovation is critical for sustaining effective collaboration between academic libraries and faculty in contemporary higher education. The rapid advancement of digital technologies, evolving research practices, and increasing demand for flexible learning require both librarians and faculty to continuously adapt their approaches. This shift would lead to the transformation of academic libraries from traditional repositories of information into dynamic partners in teaching, learning, and research (ACRL, 2024). By adopting innovative approaches to service delivery, such as integrating digital tools, open educational resources (OER), and research-support technologies, libraries can position themselves as dynamic partners in achieving sustainable education. Both librarians and faculty must be willing to adopt new roles, engage in continuous professional development, and experiment with innovative approaches to teaching and research. Overall, embracing change and

innovation enables academic libraries and faculty to respond effectively to emerging challenges, enhance the quality of teaching and research, and contribute to the development of a more flexible, inclusive, and sustainable higher education system.

Secure Adequate Financial Support

Sustaining meaningful collaborations requires strong institutional commitment and financial backing. Securing adequate financial support is fundamental to sustaining effective collaboration between academic libraries and faculty. Many collaborative initiatives, such as resource sharing, digital learning support, open educational resource (OER) development, and scholarly communication services, require continuous funding to remain functional and impactful. Without stable financial backing, these initiatives often face limitations in scope, quality, and long-term sustainability. In practical terms, financial support is required for the acquisition and maintenance of information resources, including print and electronic collections. Academic libraries depend on institutional funding to provide access to up-to-date materials that support teaching and research. Faculty play an important role in this process by identifying priority resources and justifying their relevance to academic programmes, thereby ensuring that available funds are used strategically and aligned with institutional needs (Men & Aliyu, 2017). Therefore, appropriate authorities should allocate adequate resources for collaborative initiatives, including staff training, research support, technological upgrades, and the development of shared teaching materials.

Define Clear Aims, Roles, and Responsibilities

Successful collaboration depends on clarity of purpose. Clearly defining aims, roles, and responsibilities is fundamental to achieving effective collaboration between librarians and faculty. In many collaborative initiatives, lack of clarity regarding expectations and

responsibilities can lead to duplication of efforts, inefficiencies, and limited impact. Establishing shared goals at the outset ensures that both parties work towards common objectives, such as improving student learning outcomes, enhancing research visibility, or strengthening access to information resources. Clear aims also provide a framework for evaluating the success of collaborative activities (Roy & Habib, 2024). In practice, defining roles involves identifying the specific contributions of each partner within the collaboration. Faculty typically contributes disciplinary expertise, curriculum design, and assessment of student learning, while librarians bring specialized knowledge in information organization, research support, and digital resource management. When these roles are clearly articulated, collaboration becomes more structured and productive, allowing each party to focus on their strengths while working towards shared outcomes (Dlamingi et al., 2021). Therefore, libraries and faculty should work together to establish well-defined goals, roles, and expectations. Open and consistent communication, alongside formal agreements, helps align efforts and minimize misunderstandings.

Strengthen Relationships through Shared Experiences

Strengthening relationships through shared experiences is essential for sustaining effective collaboration between librarians and faculty. Trust and mutual understanding can be cultivated through joint activities such as co-teaching courses, participating in curriculum design, attending departmental meetings, and engaging in collaborative research. Such collaboration is built on trust, mutual understanding, and continuous interaction, which develop over time through meaningful engagement in joint academic activities (Atkinson, 2019). Collaboration is also strengthened through research and scholarly activities, including co-authorship, research support, and participation in

scholarly communication initiatives. These shared instructional experiences allow both parties to combine their expertise and foster mutual respect, ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes (Imo & Igbo, 2017; Stöpel et al., 2020). Therefore these shared experiences build rapport and reinforce the value of partnerships that enhance teaching, research, and overall institutional effectiveness.

Develop and Implement Collaboration Policies

A formal collaboration policy can serve as a framework for institutionalizing library–faculty partnerships. Such policies should articulate the importance of collaboration as central to sustainable education, outline procedures for initiating joint projects, and ensure accountability. Developing and implementing clear collaboration policies will ensure that partnerships between librarians and faculty are structured, consistent, and sustainable. In many institutions, collaboration often occurs informally, which can limit its effectiveness and continuity. Formal policies provide a clear framework that defines expectations, standardizes practices, and aligns collaborative activities with broader institutional goals (Atkinson, 2019). Well-developed and effectively implemented collaboration policies should provide a strong foundation for coordinated, accountable, and sustainable partnerships that enhance teaching, research, and institutional development.

Conduct Regular Assessment and Continuous Improvement

Periodic evaluation of collaborative efforts is essential for measuring impact and identifying areas for improvement. Conducting regular assessment and promoting continuous improvement are essential for sustaining effective collaboration between librarians and faculty. Assessment provides a systematic way of evaluating whether collaborative activities are achieving their intended goals,

such as improving student learning, enhancing research support, and ensuring access to relevant resources. This will involve the collection and analysis of relevant data, including user feedback, resource usage statistics, and learning outcomes. Without ongoing evaluation, it becomes difficult to identify gaps, measure impact, or make informed decisions for improvement. Libraries should establish clear metrics, such as student learning outcomes, research output, or community engagement indicators, to assess the effectiveness of partnerships and refine strategies accordingly.

Conclusion

In conclusion, collaboration between academic libraries and faculty is a cornerstone for advancing sustainable education. By fostering equitable access to resources, strengthening teaching and research, and promoting lifelong learning, such partnerships play a vital role in creating inclusive and future-oriented universities. When adequately supported with funding, clear policies, and continuous assessment, academic library collaborations can become powerful engines for innovation, equity, and resilience in higher education, ensuring that knowledge remains a shared asset for generations to come.

Recommendation

It is recommended that higher education institutions give priority to, and invest substantially in, collaborative initiatives that bring together academic libraries, faculties, and other key stakeholders in order to maximize their contributions to sustainable education.

Institutional quality assurance units should lead the regular monitoring and evaluation of librarian–faculty collaboration initiatives. This involves developing clear performance indicators, such as levels of faculty engagement, use of library resources in teaching, and impact on student learning, and

collecting data through surveys, usage statistics, and feedback mechanisms. Librarians should provide data on resource utilization and service delivery, while faculty contributes insights on teaching effectiveness and student outcomes. They should also produce periodic evaluation reports and share findings with academic departments and library management to inform decision-making.

University management should establish and enforce formal policies for library–faculty collaboration. This includes creating institutional frameworks that define goals, roles, and expected outcomes for collaboration across teaching, research, and service. Management should ensure that libraries are fully integrated into institutional strategies for teaching, research, and community engagement, with adequate funding, policy support, and opportunities for joint innovation.

Faculty members should take active responsibility for initiating and sustaining collaboration with librarians in their teaching and research activities. This includes working with librarians to integrate information literacy into course design, recommending relevant resources for collection development, and engaging in open educational resource (OER) creation and use.

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