

PERSONNEL ISSUES IN THE 21ST CENTURY LIBRARIANSHIP

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MAIDEN CONFERENCE OF NIGERIAN
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Preface

When the Nigerian Library Association (NLA), Abia State Chapter was established on the 12th of November 1991 following the creation of Abia State from Imo State, little did it know that it will take the Chapter twenty one good years to organise its maiden conference. The maiden conference happened at a time when the National body of NLA had just celebrated her 50th anniversary golden jubilee. In the western world, life begins at forty. In Nigeria and in fact in our own circumstance, life for us begins at fifty. Little wonder then that for the Abia State Chapter, it waited patiently for the fiftieth anniversary of the national body before it could organise its maiden conference. This singular act gave it a lift to achieve one aspect of the fifth objective of the NLA .viz to promote and encourage bibliographical study, research and library cooperation. Promoting and encouraging research and scholarship come by way of organizing conferences where eminent scholars and others will come together to exercise their academic franchise by exploring and exploiting the scholastic terrain with the primary objective of contributing to knowledge. Knowledge comes through research and what we have here in this book as outcome of rigorous research are being presented to us as knowledge.

Within the last one or two decades, the information and knowledge industry has been bedeviled by what can be described as the 'ninth wonder of our time' the Information and Communication Technology (ICT). For us in this industry, we have had to wrestle with ICT in order to remain relevant on our job and in the main in the 21st century. ICT as it were, has dominated most themes and sub-themes in librarianship. The burgeoning proliferation and impact of ICT is not only remarkable but indeed infectious. This infection caused by the ICT virus has impacted a great deal on the psyche of the digital immigrants and the digital natives (no thanks to Prensky) - a mania known as ICT-mania. The profound dominance of ICT as a current and ongoing theme in librarianship has led the Chapter to take a second look at the information system with particular emphasis on the people in the trilogy (people, hardware and software).

Who are the people being referred to here? Issues concerning librarians as managers of information have over the years been taken for granted or as it were, neglected. That perhaps necessitated a refocus from hardware and software (ICT) to librarians. The theme of this research piece was beautifully couched as **Personnel Issues in the 21st Century Librarianship**. A good number of papers

were received and presented at the conference, but only fifteen (15) of them were adjudged well enough by the Editors for inclusion in this scholarly piece. These papers are excellent contributions of scholars covering all the sub-themes of the maiden conference. Essentially, the papers will open the eyes of readers to the vagaries and vicissitudes inherent in our profession, the journey through our professional career as well as us the professionals.

I wish you a happy reading.

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later obtained from Loughborough University, United Kingdom). He has taught tens of courses in library schools across the country and has supervised many research students in various levels and in different universities. He is a scholar that describing him may be endless.

UGAH Akobundu Dike is currently the University Librarian, Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi. He has rose from a paraprofessional status in academic libraries since 1986. He started working in Nigerian Defense Academy (NDA) Library, Kaduna and later came to Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Library Umudike. In 2010 he was appointed Deputy University Librarian by his former employer (NDA), where he set up and supervised a state-of-the-art hybrid library funded by TETFUND as a special intervention. A couple of months ago, he was appointed to what he is currently. There is no doubt that Dr. Ugah has worked in every department and unit of an academic library. He has three degrees and two diploma certificates (DLIS, BLIS, PGD-ICT, MLS, PhD) to his credit. He is a chartered librarian and an active member of the NLA. He has over thirty (35) researched articles, four (4) papers in conference proceeding and has compiled books of abstract to his credit.

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The Nigerian Librarian in the Information Age: The Demands, Competencies and Dilemmas

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Abstract

The focus of this study is on the Nigerian Librarian in the information age. It highlights the changing role of libraries as a great determinant of information dynamics which also determines the nature of demands on the librarians. The paper discusses the demands, competencies and dilemmas that confront the librarian within the context of information services in Nigeria. It delineates the librarian within the service industry into the professionals, paraprofessionals and support staff. The paper also classifies user groups into professional, institutional, geographical and access. It concludes that the Nigerian librarian must strive hard, the deficiencies of third world countries notwithstanding, to rise up to the occasion by playing a significant role in information services delivery in the information age.

Keywords: Nigerian Librarians, Information Age, Demands, Competencies

Introduction

Information explosion, mooted several years ago, has never been more real than now just as the importance of information in science and technology, research and development, in planning and decision making has remained crucial and overarching. Individuals, organisations, agencies and other groups have also, over the years, preoccupied themselves with the various ways and means of storing and retrieving it for use. In the process of doing this, infrastructure for its storage, retrieved and communication grew sophisticated, thus rendering traditional libraries and documentation centres no longer the major or sole sources of classified, stored knowledge and information. The sum total of this sophisticated infrastructure is what we now regard as information and communications

technology (ICT). ICT has so revolutionized our traditional practice of librarianship and documentation that the ripple effect has had tremendous impact on both the user and the information worker.

Many things have changed: scholarly communication, new media have added value to interactive communication as well as provided new means of accessing information to support teaching, learning and research, (Rapple, 1997); use of print resources is decreasing, use of video and other media is on the decline, overall circulation is decreasing, in-house use of library resources is also rapidly on the decline, (Troll, 2001). The traditional catalogue cabinets with all the catalogue cards are also fast becoming anachronistic. The print reserves are hardly bothered about again. But, beyond these changes, the user population is also on the decline something akin to an empty banking hall while the queue is long at the Automatic Teller Machine (ATM) points outside the bank. The user is out there, away from the library, consulting Google, which has become the new library. It is a future such as this painted above that led to the following dilemmas raised by Troll (2001):

- Whether the user will still return to the library
- Whether users will continue to appreciate the organisation that librarians provide in meeting their needs
- Whether the upcoming generation of scholars, scientists and clinicians will have the information seeking skills needed to locate quality information.
- In the context of the Nigerian librarian, this paper now discusses the following issues, namely
- Demand made on the librarian in the provision of information resources and his preparedness to satisfy the demands.
- His competencies for the new information age; and
- His dilemmas over the build-up of requisite infrastructure to do the work; institutional support; knowledge background, skills acquisition and training for the new age.

Delineating the Librarian

In very general terms, a librarian is any one engaged in information services. According to St. Clair (2001), "...information services can be thought of as any work that has anything to do with the identification, capture, organisation, storage, retrieval, analysis, interpretation, packaging, and dissemination of information..."

It is instructive to understand that information service can be limitless in its reach. It is also necessary to understand that the librarian is only a sub-set of

the many that are engaged in information service. To the end-user, anyone seen working in a library is easily dubbed a librarian. But, because of the range of work he has to do it is only appropriate to put him in outline, in perspective. Traditionally, there are three classes of workers who are engaged in information service. These are the professional, the paraprofessional and the support staff, albeit, each with the respective duties.

The professional librarian. The professional librarian is at the apex of those engaged in information service; he has specific requirements demanded of him. Professionally, he should exhibit sufficient "interplay of knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes required to do a job effectively from the point of view of the performer and the observer", (St. Clair, 2001). This is to say that he is expected to be competent. Academically, at least within the Nigerian context, he is a holder of a bachelor's degree in library and information science with a master's or doctorate in the same field, most preferably. A subject field background, carried up to bachelor's level, it is an added advantage. These lofty credentials placed the professional librarian in good stead to do the work of information service, especially when such attributes of organisation, analysis, interpretation and packaging of information are called to play. Naturally, such a librarian is at the management level depending on the age of the library.

The paraprofessional librarians. Here the paraprofessional has the term "librarian" added for two reasons: (a) to satisfy the end-user who regards all as librarians; and (b) to balance the grammar an adjective must have a noun to qualify otherwise, I wouldn't now know if a paraprofessional is really a librarian in the Nigerian context. In effect, he is related to the professional librarian in a secondary or supplementary capacity. But, he is competent to carry out some functions associated with information services, namely, capture, storage, retrieval and dissemination of information, if and when sufficiently trained. Academically, and in the Nigerian context, he possesses a sub-degree qualification in library and information science such as a diploma in librarianship, ordinary diploma or certificate in the same field. He plays significant roles in information services especially when traditional librarianship is involved cataloguing, preparing print materials for use, and answering basic reference queries. Modern information service requires that he should be information conscious and aggressive in its acquisition and dissemination.

The support staff. This category of information workers are as amorphous as their job titles. In 2004, the ALA Survey of Librarian Salaries sought to know the most frequently used job titles for library support staff. Amazingly, thirty-seven commonly used job titles were identified, some of the titles varying with the

libraries depending on whether such libraries are medium-sized public libraries, large public libraries, two-to four-year college libraries or even university libraries, (Davis, n.d). Ten of such titles are instructive here: administrative assistant, computer specialist/associate, archivist, webmaster library supervisor, computer technician, library assistant, circulation assistant, AV/Media services supervisor and network administrator. The academic qualification can also be diverse, in the Nigerian content, from first school leaving certificate to secondary school certificate. Others possess in addition professional certificate such as computer proficiency certificates, secretarial studies and other technical and vocational certificates. It is also not unusual that some of them possess qualifications beyond the school certificate. They function in various aspects of information services, namely, circulation, interlibrary loans, as computer technicians/technologists, technical services (catalogue cards preparation, photocopying, photography/illustrations, printing, book binding, etc). In their own ways, these support staff contribute, directly or indirectly to information services.

The User Groups

Let us take a cursory look here at the user the groups or individuals who hanker after this information, and who place demands on the librarian. Gwang (2011) has given a simplified classification of the user communities, categorizing them according to -

- a. Professional or vocational characteristics
- b. Institutional affiliation
- c. Geographical location and
- d. Some restrictions in terms of access.

Within these categories are engineers, accountants, farmers; students in tertiary institutions and lower institutions, users in riverine and arid areas and similar regions; the physically challenged, women, refugees, etc. The arrow of information and technologies for its communication points forward, and people of all walks of life have become aggressive in their quest for information. These and more are the users that need to be satisfied in their information needs, thus placing greater burdens on the Nigerian librarian in the information age.

Demands on the Librarian

The changing role of libraries determines the nature of information

dynamics, the economy of information will also determine the nature of demands on the librarian.

- i. No doubt, there is a new global environment for the library and information itself. As pointed out in the introduction, there is a geometric increase in the quantity of information extant. The user naturally demands of the librarian a rapid response to the capture of this knowledge for his own use. The library is transiting from a library centre to an information centred entity. The 21st century Nigerian librarian has a demand on him to respond to the change. But, this will involve financial inputs in making the change, and it is necessary to provide the funds to respond to the exigencies of the time.
- ii. The modern library is steadily moving from a paper-based environment to a predominantly digital interface, employing research engines, online databases, data mining etc. This development has thrown up a new wave of information seekers who are largely student or professional of young age. The nature of information the search is for is immaterial. This category of users is surrounded by computers and digital media, they like interactivity and conveniences and are comfortable with multi-tasking IT; and imbued with high expectation (<http://b2training.blackboard.com>). This group of users expects services and resources where and when they can find them. They, therefore, demand that the librarian should be able to link them up with information resources as appropriate and not necessarily leave them to their wild fancies and wild goose chase. They need the expertise of the librarian in the analysis and interpretation of information.
- iii. The changing information world points forward in the direction of the library moving from an institution to a library which is an information provider with IT-skilled specialists who function in a digital, electronic (i.e, automatic) milieu. The demand on the librarian is that he should jettison the traditional concept of the library block filled with print materials and move on to finding the information itself. The user demands that he should be shown the item information needed and not necessarily be given a look to book for the information. In this case, we need a librarian with skills and vision to access the information in the interest of the user.
- iv. There are demands on the librarian to change his operational equipment and services. The traditional microform equipment, photocopies, catalogue cards, the kardex, etc should yield place to hardware, software and systems.
- v. The user community in academic institutions universities, polytechnics,

- colleges of education, etc. make their demands on the librarian asking for
 - A proactive librarian;
 - A librarian who would break away from insularity and form consortia with other modern libraries/sources of information if only to expand the information reach of the user;
 - A librarian who would reach out to students to provide demonstration and other instructional sessions in dorms... or provide office hours in academic departments, either on his own or in cooperation with professors with whom they are working on courses, (Rapple, 1997). It is not out of place if the librarian the information specialist within the institution goes the extra mile to assist teaching staff to develop teaching materials, providing them with electronic library, especially as found in CD-ROMs and online databases.
- vi. There are other users those with professional and vocational characteristics, those living at the regional fringes, women (the elderly and child-bearing age) all these make their demands on the librarian. These are the types of users who are to be sustained with appropriate information to achieve the millennium development goals. All yearn for information to break away from poverty and disease, to have the right information at the right time to stand ahead of the competitor.

Competencies of the Librarian

The competencies of the Nigerian librarian in the information age are discussed here under the following headings (a) IT competencies (b) Professional competencies and (c) Personal competencies

a. **IT competencies.** As the arrow of information points forwards, it is expected that there is now (or going to be) a preponderance of digital libraries over traditional print-based libraries. The corollary, therefore, is that the librarian must have the required skills (IT competencies) necessary for assessing, processing information in a requisite format. Such a competent librarian is expected to have the thirteen (13) key IT competencies needed for modern information services, namely, IT basics, word processing, electronic mail, Internet and intranet, graphics, presentation and publishing, spreadsheet, project management, design, development and administration of databases, systems maintenance and programming, (Aman and Norliyana, 2002). This is a tall order for a librarian but they are a desideratum for him, if he must fit into the times.

Choi and Rasmussen (2006) carried out a study on current practice and staffing patterns of academic and research libraries, and identified job

responsibilities within each of six specific categories of tasks. Fifteen (15) percent of the job responsibilities (tasks) identified was grouped in the category of technology. These tasks include websites, digitizing/converting, technical support, system administration/maintenance, data conversion, system analysis/testing, interoperability, open source software development, usability testing and digital library technology. (Choi and Rasmussen, 2006). It is desirable that the Nigerian should exhibit competence in these areas of information technology.

b. **Professional competencies.** In modern information age, it may not be necessary again to classify librarians, in stricto sensu, as special, academic, public, school, government, etc librarians since all of us must possess similar characteristics and competencies. Information is the one hot commodity all users chase with vigour and passion. The responsibilities special or academic librarians possess same also the public or government librarian owes the clientele. Hence, competencies must be comparable. The Special Libraries Association (SLA) drew up a code of competencies which a (special) librarian must possess in order to be up and doing in information services, not just for the information age but for all times. (The full range of these competencies is given as an appendix at the end of this paper).

At the risk of repetition, competence is given another definition as a combination of skills, knowledge, and behavior patterns vital to organisational success, personal achievement, and career development; (Ramos, 2007), (<http://b2trainingblackboard.com>). Professional competence on the part of the librarian should include: librarian's knowledge in the areas of information resources, information access, technology management and research plus the ability to apply them in providing library and information services.

c. **Personal competencies.** This is treated cursorily here since the full range is given as appendix. But, above all, the librarian should have such competence that will enable him to:

- Assess information needs of clients
- Design and market value-added information services and products to meet identified needs
- Apply appropriate information technology to acquire, organise and disseminate information
- Use appropriate business and management approaches to communicate the importance of information services to senior management.
- Plan, prioritise and focus on what is critical
- Provide leadership

(See. Appendix)

The Dilemmas of the Librarian

Quite often, the Nigeria librarian appears to me like a child chasing the grasshopper without the whip. How does he do the work well when he does not have the tools? No one gives what he does not have! If he has deficiencies arising from the training he received, how does he fill the gaps? If he has all the knowledge but lacks the financial back-up for doing the work, how does he build or support the information service.

i. The most fundamental dilemma stems from the educational preparation at the LIS school with curricula brimming with gaps in the courses offered. In example, in a survey conducted by Choi and Rasmussen (2006), respondents were asked to describe aspects of their position for which they felt least prepared. The following technical aspects were listed:

- Overall understanding of the complex interplay of software
- Lack of vocabulary to communicate to technical staff
- Knowledge of web-related language and technologies
- Web design
- Digital imaging and formatting
- Digital technology
- Programming and scripting language
- Basic systems administration

These are at the heart of modern information services and incidentally, they are IT-related courses lacking in almost all programmes of LIS education in Nigerian library and information science schools. In other words, the Nigerian librarian is ill prepared for the demands of information services in the 21st century.

ii. The library schools curricula create their own dilemma for the librarian. Gwang (2011) states that professional knowledge required of the information professional should include: information psychology, sociology of information, information organisation management and information engineering. He listed characteristics of each of these areas. Our LIS schools have LIS curricula that do not impart sufficient training in the areas of psychology of the user, his information needs; the dynamics and politics-cum-economy of information; knowledge management, etc. These are not sufficiently emphasized in the curricula of LIS schools in Nigeria that I have come

across.

- iii. The other dilemma stems from the picture the librarian cuts for himself in the process of information delivery. Ochogwu (2007) identified the Nigerian librarian under the category of those who are passive, reactive or assertive in their professional practice. The passive librarians concern themselves with acquisition and processing of information resources while paying minimal attention to the user. The reactive librarian gives no time to the user, cares less for his questions, and does not bother about those who visit the library. The assertive group constitutes an insignificant minority. They are proactive and care to diagnose (or analyse) the needs of the user and render customized services. The looming picture or impression is the slow, sluggish and nonchalant attitude to professional duties inconsistent with the demands of the information age. Visit any Nigerian library academic, public, etc. and observe the information worker. He cares less about who enters the library; he does not seek to know your information needs.
- iv. There is also the dilemma of an inactive information seeker community. In our universities and related tertiary institutions we have a crop of information users who have natural aversion for the libraries and these are in the majority. Many spend four to five years in the university without registering with the library let alone visiting it throughout the period. The faculty equally looks down on the library with the usual cliché; there is nothing in the library. A syndrome of "an empty banking all" referred to above is played out. They stay out the library, delude themselves that they have all their answers in the Internet with Google and Amazon as the alternative library. The dilemma here for the librarian is how to bring back the user to the library, sit him down to teach him the art of information retrieval, how to read his books and organise his work. The throne of information services belongs to the librarian, after all.
- v. The other dilemma before the librarian is information infrastructure, in its modern context the computers, connectivity, interoperability, etc. A few libraries that the researcher has visited have insufficient number of computers, have very low bandwidths to facilitate rapid information flow and retrieval. Oftentimes the computers are quickly assembled to tide over programmes accreditation by the National Universities Commission (NUC).
- vi. Associated with the dilemma just above is the general conception that a digital library is after all a costly venture, perhaps costlier than a print-based library on the contrary. Because of this the librarians are on the horns of a dilemma the funding agency does not provide money for print-

based library on the grounds that libraries are going digital nor does he provide money for an electronic library because it is assumed to be a costly venture.

- v. Finally, the dilemma of the librarian resides here: if and when he can deliver information with modern technologies, he suddenly discovers that there is no electricity supply from the national grid or the private electricity generator has malfunctioned or the diesel is too costly or out of stock. Either way, he is a failure even if he has all the professional knowledge. One last dilemma is the shortage of manpower for an effective information service. Operating a modern information system requires specialised staff "to select, structure, offer intellectual access to, interpret, distribute, preserve the integrity of and ensure the persistence over time of collection of digital works so that they are readily available for use by a defined community or set of communities", (Shiri, 2003). When this specialised staffs are not readily available in the right number and place, the librarian is in a dilemma.

Conclusion

The arrow of information points forward with the possibility of further and more sophisticated technologies for its communication being discovered in future. Mankind is at the centre of a new age the information age. The momentum of the age has speed and mass, inestimable. Information is at the cutting edge of research and development, science and technology, teaching and learning, of our civilisation. The librarian is at the apex to direct its capture, organisation, analysis, packaging, retrieval and dissemination. There should be no excuse for the librarian to back down or away from this responsibility. The Nigerian librarian must strive hard, the deficiencies of Third World countries notwithstanding, to rise up to the occasion, scale the hurdles, and play a significant role in information services delivery in the new information age. He must be more assertive than restive or passive. The user must be enticed back to the library (virtual or physical) to be properly taught the rubrics of effective information search, retrieval and use.

Finally, the Nigerian librarian must break away from insularity and form consortia with other librarians and information systems. By so doing he will not be seen as a failure, a square peg in a round hole.

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Appendix

Competencies for (special) librarians by the Special Libraries Association.

Profession Competencies

The special librarian...

- has expert knowledge of the contents of information resources, including the ability to critically evaluate and filter them
- has specialised subject knowledge appropriate to the business of the organisation or client
- develops and manages convenient, accessible and cost-effective information services that are aligned with the strategic direction of the organisation
- provides excellent instruction and support for library and information service users
- assess information needs and designs and markets value added information services and products to meet identified needs
- uses appropriate information technology to acquire, organize, and disseminate information
- uses appropriate business and management approaches to communicate the importance of information services to senior management
- develops specialised information products for use inside or outside the organisation or by individual clients
- values the outcomes of information use and conducts research related to the solution of information management problems
- continually improves information services in response to changing needs in an effective members of the senior management team and a consultant to the organisation on information issues

Personal Competencies

The special librarian ...

- is committed to service excellence
- seeks out challenges and sees new opportunities both inside and outside the library
- looks for partnership and alliances
- creates an environment of mutual respect and trust

- has effective communication skills
- works well with others in a team
- provides leadership
- plans, prioritizes, and focuses on what is critical career planning
- has personal business skills and creates new opportunities
- recognises the value of professional networking and solidarity
- is flexible and positive in a time of continuing change.

Source: Guy St. Clair as indicated under references pp. 70-71.

See also: Mila M. Ramos as indicated under reference.

Personnel Skills Requirement for Enhanced Public Library Services in the 21st Century

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Abstract

Public libraries are under serious threat due to the increasing demands of achieving higher level of performance in the areas of speed, cost and quality. They are confronted with many challenges posed by the modern day environment, most of which stemmed from technological innovations and information explosion. Unlike the scenario in the developed countries of Europe and the United States, the public libraries in the developing countries of Africa are mostly serving as reading and study rooms for students, who in the majority of cases use their own materials. However, even though financial crisis has been established as part of the problem, possession of inadequate 21st century information handling skills could be a more serious problem hampering the quality of the services rendered by the public libraries. This literature based opinion paper therefore discussed the need and the various skills required for 21st century library services provision. It discussed the crucial issues for library profession in the 21st century and also emphasized the need for skills update among library professionals.

Keywords: Public Libraries, Library Personnel Skills, 21st Century Information Skills, Information Technology.

Introduction

The processes in library services provision generally had since the 19th century witnessed some tremendous changes resulting from information explosion and most importantly, the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in information processing and use. This change resulting from

ICTs application to information processing processes had paved way for emergence of various new forms of information services provision as well as diversified means of communicating same. Furthermore, the exposure of users to various kinds of information from different sources and in various formats in this 21st century has equally altered their needs as well as their information seeking behaviour hence the traditional roles of the libraries are thereby being modified to meet up with the 21st century information services demand.

Public libraries, which are the focus of this paper, are under serious threat due to the increasing demands of achieving higher level of performance in the areas of speed, cost and quality. For instance, Ukachi (2010) states that we are no longer just encumbered with the role of collection development in the conventional approach of acquisition of paper based materials and their processing but also building digital collections and, managing them. She further states that we are expected to navigate through the quantum of information provided especially by the Internet, sift them in the form of indexing and also, circulate them to users.

The 21st century public library services system does not compulsorily require users to appear physically in the libraries before their information needs are met rather, services are rendered to them even from remote places by means of e-mails, outreaches, etc. It is also worthy to note that these library roles' modification aimed at meeting the evolving change in the information seeking behaviour of the users can only be successfully achieved when the library personnel possess the necessary skills required for performing the new tasks. Thus, Kinengyere and Tumuhairwe (2009) states concerning academic libraries that, libraries will continue to be dynamic in the coming years, because as the needs and expectations of the academia evolve, so too does the expertise and services of the LIS community and the profession.

In a survey study carried out by Aissa (2000) on the situation of public library services in Nigeria, the result shows that public libraries services have declined dramatically over the past few years due to the effect of both the economic and political situation in the country. It is believed that the financial crisis has affected the structure and maintenance of the building, the size, the contents of the collections and the overall provision of services hence, the main library activity now is just to serve as reading and study rooms for students, who in the majority of cases use their own materials and do not consult the library collections. Nonetheless, even though financial crisis has been established as part of the problem, possession of inadequate 21st century information handling skills could be a more serious problem hampering the quality of the services rendered by the public libraries. It is also imperative to know that today's environmental

pressures are forcing libraries to focus on accelerating technology, innovation, technical complexities, social and legal issues, competencies and skills of staff. It is therefore demanding that the personnel in the public libraries just like their counterparts in the academic and special libraries have to act in a proactive manner to support the 21st century information demand.

However, for a better understanding of the topic being discussed, this paper is subdivided into the following sections;

- Ø The concept and general overview of the public library
- Ø Crucial issues for the library profession in the 21st century
- Ø Personnel skills requirement for the 21st century library services provision
- Ø Need for skills update among library professionals and,
- Ø Skill Enhancement path for library professional

The Concept and General Overview of the Public Library

A library in the first instance is an established learning and social institution with the sole responsibility of selecting, acquiring, organizing, interpreting, and disseminating information and information materials meant to satisfy the information needs of the people. Libraries, according to Abdulkarim (2010), reflect the intellectual development, educational and cultural needs and aspirations of the society and therefore remain the greatest treasures of human intellect serving as a communication link between knowledge and its users. Public libraries on the other hand is described by Saleh and Lasisi (2011) as a place built for the collection of books and other printed resources alongside the personnel to provide and interpret such resources as required to meet the information, research, educational, recreational, cultural and aesthetic needs of the varied users. Ordinarily, public libraries are seen as democratic institutions, essential for the socio-economic well-being of the people. They are opened to everyone who lives within a particular geographical area, on the equal basis of equality of access to all, regardless of age, sex, race, religion, nationality, language, educational attainment, economic and employment status or social status. Whilst other types of libraries are meant for definite group of users, public libraries are not restricted to any group or category of users. In the context of this paper, public library could be defined as locally based service organisation set up to meet the needs of the local communities and to operate within the context of the communities while contributing to the creation and maintenance of a wellinformed and democratic society. They are meant to serve primarily as a local centre of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to their users with the aim of

empowering them in the enrichment and development of their lives and that of the communities.

Basically, the functions of the public libraries could be broadly classified into three, namely- information provision, literacy enhancement and public education functions. Information provision functions entails making anticipated needed information as well as actual needed information available to the community of users. Literacy enhancement functions on the other hand has to do with educating the people on the means and processes of searching and accessing information in satisfying their information needs, while public education functions has to do with enlightenment activities such as in the areas of health, agriculture, politics, etc. Public libraries are established to stimulate imaginative thoughts and expand personal horizons while making the empowerment of citizen, and provision of access to a common cultural heritage a reality. According to Saka and Akangbe (2012), public libraries offer two main kinds of service, i.e., provision of information sources for knowledge and pleasure, and provision of answers to a variety of questions. These according to the authors are exclusive of their other special services such as provision of Braille, special recordings, inter-library loan, etc. ICMA (2011) reiterating the functions and benefits of public libraries reports that in 2009, 169million people in the United States visited a public library to find work, apply for college, secure government benefits, learn about critical medical treatments, and enjoy access to the Internet. On the contrary, Udeze (2009) reports that in Nigeria, mostly students' use the public libraries as reading rooms to prepare for their examinations. This situation, though attributed to unavailability of library resources as a result of poor funding, could also by extension imply that the personnel working in these libraries lack the essential skills required for effective information and services provision.

Crucial Issues for the Library Profession in the 21st Century

The 21st century has ushered in a lot of changes in the way and manner in which library and information services are carried out. The adoption of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as well as the utilization of social media for information communication and networking purposes has radically erupted transformations in the entire information handling processes. In the public libraries, this infusion has significantly created the need for changes in the tools and roles of libraries requiring new information technology skills in addition to traditional library skills. It can be argued that the most crucial element in

effective information services delivery in this 21st century is having the right staff with the appropriate information technology skills in place. Obviously, the traditional public library system which was centered on provision of information and information services to the clientele on physical visits to the libraries is gradually being eschewed. Hence, Titangos and Jan (2006) document that library profession is at a crossroad in the 21st century as traditional library service appear to be on the decline while new technology based services are on the rise.

The role of the library personnel comprises at least three major working areas: to offer services to those users who want to be guided to the most suitable information resources; to provide research assistance for those who prefer to conduct searches themselves and only turn to librarians in case their repertoire of search and retrieval techniques did not lead to satisfying results; and to closely collaborate with Information Technology (IT) departments that design new and enhance existing systems (Kena, 1998). Pinfield (2004) summarises the crucial services of the library personnel in the 21st century, which he terms roles of electronic information environment librarians, as follows:

- Multi-media user being comfortable with a wide range of formats
- Intermediary role having a good knowledge of sources and user requirements
- Enabler proactively connecting users with information they require
- Metadata producer creating records of information sources in a variety of schemas
- Communicator formally and informally liaising with users
- Team player working with colleagues in library, IT specialists and the users
- Trainer/educator taking on a formal role to teach information skills and information literacy
- Evaluator sifting free and paid for resources on behalf of users
- Negotiator dealing with publishers and suppliers
- Project manager leading on development projects to enhance the library service
- Innovator not just following the routine but also looking at improved ways to deliver the service
- Fund-raiser working for greater income from the instituting body and beyond.

However, according to Alford (2011) there are three critical issues to which the profession of librarianship and the librarians uniquely need to respond to in this 21st century. These are;

- a) Information technology
- b) Information literacy and
- c) Information service.

Information technology. The 21st century librarian is expected to be extensively acquainted with the application of information technologies and also possesses the varied relevant skills necessary for their optimal utilisation in information handling processes. The current developments in this era are directly affecting the knowledge, competencies and skills requirements of the information professionals. These changes are occurring at such a fast pace that each day new skills and approaches are required to handle the information and unfurl the new ideas. The changing perception of users and the technological advancements have forced the library and information professionals to enhance their knowledge and acquire new competencies, skills and develop themselves in accordance to the new environment to avoid becoming obsolete and outdated. Thus, it has become imperative to have generic and traditional skills in addition to acquisition of ICT skills, which must be continuously updated.

Information literacy. The term information literacy is usually credited to a non-librarian, Paul Zurkowski. He used it in a 1974 report entitled *The information service environment, relationships and priorities*. As Bruce (1997) notes, rapid and widespread acceptance of the concept of information literacy since the release of the ALA's 1989 final report has led to renewed emphasis on information literacy in all communities. Today the meaning of information literacy has broadened considerably and is representing a convergence of interests in the need to educate those who must live and work in our information society. Hence, information literacy now remains a principal concern for librarians. This is so for information professionals because of the equity in information accessibility and utilization imperative of librarianship which other professions are not known for. Promoting information literacy, both formally and informally therefore has to be a pervasive concern of librarianship in 21st century society. This is not just for educational librarians. It is also for public librarians in their day to day client service provision. Fostering an information literate citizenry is no longer a new concept for public librarians as quite a number of public libraries in countries like the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, etc are already providing such services.

Information services. There is a popular misconception that all information can be found on the web with ease, and that they are reliable and free too. It is also believed that users may be satisfied with inferior outcomes from information searches they make on the net. This necessitated Downie's (1999) comments that

the television advertising campaigns by IBM, AOL, Microsoft and others, all add to the public's perception that the only requisite intermediary comes in the form of a mouse. The above statement was countered by Negroponte (1997) who emphasized the provision of individualized, value added and well promoted service. He believes that there should be intermediaries in the form of information experts to assist in sifting and generating useful information from the available excess information in circulation. The following two contradicting U.S. national newspaper advertisements in 1999 also buttress the relevance of the information experts in the era of information overload. The first one was placed under a forest of banners and carries the quotation that "we are drowning in information and starved for knowledge". The full page advertisement then states that "to benefit from information, first you have to find it. Then interpret it. Then act. PeopleSoft Enterprise Resource Planning software helps you plan, measure and improve. Enterprise-wide, world-wide, fast, and flexible; tailored to your world" (www.peoplesoft.com). The other full page advertisement from Merrill Lynch Mercury Asset Management was placed under a photo of masculine fingers over a keyboard with the headline, *Not everyone can turn a wealth of information into wealth*. The text reads:

Never before has investors had so much information at their fingertips. But information is useless without the time and expertise to turn it into wisdom. It takes more than a PC to do that it takes expert people. At Merrill Lynch Mercury, we have a formidable team of managers. They are committed to gathering extensive information, completing the in-depth analysis and making the most informed decision, with one simple aim to help investors achieve their goals.

Indeed the rapid development of information technology and communication system has brought a revolutionary change in the organisation and management of information. In this era, information is being treated as an economic resource, a marketable commodity and as a social wealth. The librarians are required to play active and obvious roles in the processing and communication of information. According to Mazumda (2007) libraries are facing new challenges, new competitors, new demands, new expectations and a variety of information services from users. This requires librarians to be more acquainted with the skill of handling new technologies related to collection, processing and dissemination of information.

Personnel Skills Requirement for the 21st Century Library Services Provision

Skills are the learned capacity to carry out pre-determined tasks with the

minimum outlay of time and energy. According to Ukachi (2010) skills are abilities or proficiencies required of a person in position to plan and execute an action geared at accomplishing some tasks or achieving some goals. It is worthy to note that Changes in the provision of information brought about through the emergence of electronic information resources have created subsequent changes in the skills needed by information professionals. Information professionals are now expected to be aware of and capable of using emerging information communication technologies, as well as having essential communication skills. The activities aimed at actualizing the basic goal of libraries which has always been the satisfaction of the information needs of the library users through the provision of various forms of information resources, have evolved and transformed over the years. In the 21st century, librarians are required to work both independently and as a team to deliver service-oriented and user-centered applications, instructions, programmes, projects and services. There abound innovative new services apart from overcoming distance and other communication barriers. Consequent upon these, librarians are required to have knowledge and operating skills in the utilization of these resources and facilities. Fisher (2004) categorizes the skills required for this era into three broad groups, namely;

Generic skills. These comprises the communication skill, flexibility, adaptability, assertiveness, self-confidence, creativity, innovation, analytical skills, problem solving, decision making, service attitude, customer relationship, improving one's learning and experience, presentation skills, stress management, time management, interpersonal, group skills, working with difficult people

Managerial skills. These includes local and global thinking, planning and organizational skills, finance management skills, managing change, team building, decision making, leadership, negotiation skills, consumer management skills (user need analysis, information seeking and behavior analysis), project management, people management, stress management, time management, resource management.

Professional skills. These skills are further sub-divided into:

- i) **information technology skills** - This include hardware/ software and networking skills, presentation skill, library automation skill, database creation skill, general internet skills, intranet skill, networking skills, desktop publishing skill, content development and digitization skill, web based services and virtual learning skills
- ii) **information literacy skills** - this has to do with the ability to locate, evaluate and use effectively needed information. Information literacy forms the basis for lifelong learning and enables learners to master content and extend their investigations to become more self- directed,

thus assuming greater control over their own learning. Promoting information literacy, both formally and informally thus, has to be a pervasive concern of public librarians in this era.

- iii) ***technical professional skills*** - such as, information resource management skill, system development skill and, metadata standards skill which require librarians to describe the content and attributes of any particular item in the digital library.
- iv) ***knowledge management skills*** - this is required for managing organisational knowledge to solve the organisational problems. It includes managing tacit as well as explicit knowledge.

Summarily, the skills required of public library personnel to be relevant and function effectively in this 21st century can generally be categorised into:

- (a) ***Information literacy / ICT skills***: these skills are required for innovativeness and to function effectively as Search Intermediaries, Information Technology Facilitators, Interface Designers, Knowledge Managers, Sifter of Information Resources, etc. it will also aid the librarians in multi-media and presentation activities to the people.
- (b) ***Training skill***: this is needed to train users on how to effectively utilize the various library resources. For librarians to optimally function as Information Literacy Educators, End-User Trainers and also carryout general library user education effectively, this skill is an underlying factor.
- (c) ***Good interpersonal and communication skill***: because library activities involve service providers (librarians) and users with different socio-economic, cultural and religious backgrounds and orientations, the librarians are required to possess this skill to be able to know how best to approach each user. This skill will also equip the library personnel to enter into collaborative ventures with other external groups and institutions in pursuit of shared goals and also enhance their library services marketing prowess. It will also facilitate their effective utilization of social networking and media tools.

Need for Skills Update among Library Professionals

The present IT based environment is demanding new job requirements, new roles, adequate competence and different kinds of skills from the professionals which would help them to develop new product and services in response to new developments. It is also worthy to note that the existing staff must be trained

continually for sustainability in the global competition market as skills and competencies once acquired cannot guarantee lifetime survival in this constantly changing electronic environment. The need to be effective in the 21st century electronic information environment demands that public libraries personnel just like their counterparts in the academic and special libraries, should possess the 21st century information navigation skills. According to Raina (2000), there is need for skills update by library professionals based on the following three main factors which has propelled serious transition since the dawn of the 21st century.

- Ø The transition from paper to electronic media as the dominant form of information storage retrieval and dissemination. Convergence of different media, such as text, graphics, and sound, into multimedia resources, has direct impact on this transition.
- Ø Increasing attention on accountability, with focus on quality customer services, performance measurement, bench marking and continuous improvement. In addition, shrinking financial resources have direct bearing on this shift.
- Ø New forms of work organization such as end-user computing, work-teams, downsizing, reengineering, outsourcing etc.

Skill Enhancement Path for Library Professional

Considering the upsurge of new library roles emerging spontaneously as a result of the adoption of IT facilities in information handling processes, a librarian in the 21st century is expected to possess the necessary skills relevant for effective services provision. To achieve this, library professional need to develop and constantly update their knowledge and skill in utilizing these facilities. According to Singh and Pinki (2009), the skill development and training can be directed in two levels. These are;

Basic level. In this level, importance is given in developing necessary professional skills require for a library professionals to render services to users by using different Information Technology tools.

Advanced level. In this level, areas like designing and architecture of computer networks system, developing web pages and databases as well as developing application programming packages, troubleshooting of IT related tools, etc. are included. They further suggest the following steps to be adopted for the skill enhancement of library professional:

- Ø Library science school should introduce skill-based curriculum. Providing more provision of specialization.
- Ø Timely updating the syllabus and the facility of well-equipped computer

laboratory to cope with the frequently changed technological environment are highly necessary.

- Ø Short term courses for skill enhancement of library worker should be arranged by different professional associations and universities.
- Ø Different seminars, workshops, conferences etc. should be organized by different professional organisation and opportunity should be made for the professionals in participating in such seminars, workshops, etc.
- Ø The professionals should be highly encouraged in developing their professional skills by participating in advanced studies, research programmes, etc.
- Ø Provision should be made for the library personnel to interact with the different professionals and experts who are working in such developed digital borderless libraries.

Conclusion

Public library personnel need to be responsive to the changes brought about by technological innovations and digital revolution and substantially embrace the utilisation of information technologies in their information handling processes. They need to acquire the necessary new skills relevant for effective information services provision and be responsive to dynamic changes as they occur in this knowledge age. The traditional skills must be improved upon if the public library personnel are to remain relevant in the new information environment. They should bear in mind that they are not just information empire builders, but information estate managers and distributors.

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Chartered or Certified: The Issues at Stake in Librarianship in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper discusses chartership of librarians in Nigeria and the issues at stake. It conceptually analyses chartership and provides some brief information on it in the United Kingdom and Nigeria. The study highlights the criteria for membership and examines chartered status, eligibility and levels of membership. The benefits of chartered status for librarians include among others, that they must possess defined librarianship competence recognized by the public, community and government as well as reinforce their commitment to code of ethics. Chartered status implies the highest standard of professionalism. The issue of conferring the same level of chartered status on all categories of librarians was considered inappropriate without consideration of their professional practice. The paper therefore recommends that there should be other benchmarks, a framework for qualification and levels of chartership. The paper concludes that since chartership is a gold standard of professional practice there should be progression from one level to another.

Keywords: Chartered, Certified, Registration, Professional Librarian

Introduction

Chartership is not a new professional qualification in Nigeria. In fact, some professional bodies or societies confer chartered status on their member in recognition of their competence, skills, excellence and outstanding contributions to their professions. Such professional societies include accountancy, engineering, management, marketing and so on. Although, a legacy of western civilization and education, it is fashionable to have pre-nominal titles and post nominal letters appended to people's names. Either as sobriquets or epithets they represent titles which place such people in the strata of class distinction from others. Sometimes they are valued either as a mark of excellence in their vocation as in chartership or a mark of recognition in society as in nobility and chieftaincy. More importantly, some represent a mark of academic achievement as in professorship. In whichever circumstances, Nigerians have been known over the years to revel in having titles attached to their names either as prefixes or suffixes.

In the field of library and information science in Nigeria, chartership is relatively new despite the fact that librarianship has enjoyed a fascinating history that spanned over 50 years. The discipline remained for so many years a quasi-profession which had no charter or in our circumstances law that *prima facie* established it as a profession. Thus, it was not until 1995 when the Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria Act was enacted that the issue of chartership, certification and registration of librarians in the country began to take its roots. The Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) is the body empowered through legislation to confer chartered status on professional librarians working in the country. It performs this statutory function by determining who a librarian is, certifying him or her, registering him or her to practice the profession in Nigeria as well as inducting successful candidates as chartered librarians.

The *American Heritage College Dictionary* (1991) defines charter as a document outlining the principles, functions and organisation of a corporate body. It follows therefore that the LRCN Act 1995, as a charter, is the document issued by law defining its privileges and purposes. On the same note, the same dictionary defines the term certify as to confirm formally as true, accurate or genuine". It also means to "guarantee as meeting a standard". To register is to make an official list which in this case is the list of practicing librarians in the country. The LRCN as a professional body works in tandem with the Nigerian Library Association which is the professional association of librarians in the country.

The Nigerian Library Association (NLA) came into being in 1962 and has as

its main objective as "to bring library science practitioners and professionals together to share a common goal". Ezeani, Eke and Ugwu (2012) argue that although this objective hinges on professionalism and the library profession, there is more to professionalism in librarianship than that. Practitioners in the field include professional librarians, paraprofessionals, technical and support staff. Since a professional librarian is referred to as a Bachelor's or Master's or Doctorate degree holder in library and information science, the LRCN thought it necessary to distinguish between them and the diploma holders who are paraprofessionals. This singular reason prompted the body to start the process of registering practicing librarians in the country. In doing this, it has so far between 2005 and 2012 registered, certified and chartered a total of 2,661 librarians as follows: 536 in 2005, 1,177 in 2011 and 948 in 2012 in the first, second and third induction ceremonies (ircn.gov.ng/Registered_librarian_20...).

The Problem

Recent developments in the profession of library and information science in Nigeria especially with the on-going registration of librarians point to the fact that chartered status is being conferred on individual librarians and librarians-in-training for the sake of registration and not as a professional qualification for high standard of performance in the public service. It would appear that such conferment is palpably not in line with international standards in the western world as it would appear now as an all-comers thing. Unlike LRCN practice, Chapman (2006) affirms that all candidates for chartership must work with a mentor and demonstrate their Personal Professional Development Plan (PPDP) portfolio that they must meet in addition to academic qualification or professional practice. Similarly, recognition is not granted to the other practitioners in the field such as paraprofessionals who contribute immensely to the growth of the profession. The levels or categorisation as obtained in similar chartered bodies are not considered in chartership of librarians as presently done in the country. Before now such certification and title designations were not in vogue even among the pacesetters and those following them who made remarkable impact on the profession. However, given the new positive context in which individuals have to be LRCN registered and certified to call themselves chartered librarians and practice as such in the country, the following questions arise: Are chartered or certified statuses as currently being conferred clearly understood by librarians and the public? Is it an all-comer's thing or does it requires additional qualifications (on the job training and experience) for one to qualify for chartership? Does such conferment present

professional value and excellence on the conferees as strongly as it could like their compares in other professions? Since chartered status is a professional qualification in recognition of competence, leadership and outstanding contributions to their professions, why are students or librarians-in-training conferred on the same level of chartered membership with professional librarians and library instructors? Why are there no levels of membership?

It is thus against this backdrop that this study has become increasingly necessary to reinvigorate and redefine the chartered or certified status in order to strengthen public understanding and perception about chartered librarians' (CLN) professional excellence as well as to raise their profile.

Charter: A Conceptual Analysis

Reitz (2004) defines charter as a legal document recording the franchise or granting of specific rights to an individual or corporate body by a governmental authority such as a legislature or sovereign. *The American Heritage College Dictionary* (1997) describes it as a document issued by a sovereign legislature, or other authority, creating a public or private corporation, such as a city, college, or bank and defining its privileges. A royal charter is a formal document issued by a monarch as letters or patent, granting a right to power to an individual or a body corporate. They were, and are still, used to establish significant organisations such as cities (with municipal charters or universities). Royal charters are granted by the sovereign on the advice of the Privy Council. Originally, a Royal Charter was the only way to incorporate a company. Today, new charters are normally reserved for bodies that work in the public interest (such as professional institutions and charities) and which demonstrate pre-eminence, stability and permanence in their particular field (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_charter).

From the start, chartership symbolized legitimacy, but it also recognized other qualities. These include professionalism and competence in public service, the pursuit of excellence and adherence to clear moral and ethical values. In addition, the charter defines the profession's scope of practice and professional qualification (www.esp.or.uk>Home>News and events_Frontline magazine).

Professional qualifications in the United Kingdom, Nigeria and elsewhere are generally awarded by professional bodies in line with their charters. These qualifications are subject to the country's directive on professional qualifications. Most, but not all, professional qualifications are chartered qualifications and follow on from having been admitted to a degree. Now, who are the professionals? The New Webster's Dictionary (2004), describes a professional is an expert, trained in

a specialized body of knowledge, and certified competent to carry out the given profession's job. The Report of the Monopolies Commission on the supply of Professional Service 1970 defines a professional person as one who offers competence and integrity of service based upon a skilled intellectual technique and an agreed code of conduct. Such a professional person according to Garmony Tennant and Winsch, (2009) enables clients to do something, which they are unable to carry out themselves and clients will on their part employ professionals on the basis of their:-

- (i) qualifications (through which they are members of a profession)
- (ii) competencies and skills (including their knowledge and experience) and
- (iii) trust/ethics (professionals will look after their clients interests unlike in a commercial relationship).

According to Reitz (2005) Librarians are professionally trained persons responsible for the care of libraries and their contents, including the selection, processing and organisation of materials and the delivery of information, instruction, and loan services to meet the needs of its users... In the United States the title is reserved for persons who have been awarded the M.L.S or M.L.I.S degree or certified as professionals by a state agency. Whereas the LRCN defines librarians as professionally trained persons who have the requisite registrable qualifications recognized by the body to enable them practice in Nigeria; the Occupational Outlook Handbook (2010) and Gorman (2000) define a librarian as "a person who earns a master's level education at an accredited school and receives on-the-job training...".

In this study, library and information professionals, who are also known as the librarians, are the men and women who have been trained and certified to practice as librarians. The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) in the United Kingdom and the LRCN are two of the professional bodies that register, certify and charter librarians.

Brief Information on Chartership in UK and Nigeria

In the United Kingdom, the origin of chartered status for librarians dates back to some 114years ago following the founding of the Library Association (LA or LAUK) in 1877. In 1898 the Association was granted a Royal Charter. The merger of the Library Association and the Institute of Information Scientists founded in 1958 led to the formation of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) in 2002. This is the leading professional body of librarians, information specialists and knowledge managers in the United Kingdom. Membership is not compulsory for individuals to practice, but members can work towards Chartered Membership which entitles them to the post nominal letters

(MCLIP) and subsequently toward Fellowship (FCLIP). CILIP is empowered to oversee and improve all aspects of professional practice through its work in education, maintaining a framework of universally recognized qualifications and providing a wide range of opportunities for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) (CILIP, 2012).

CILIP reviewed its qualifications framework in 2002 but launched it in 2005. It consists of four levels viz certification, chartership, revalidation and fellowship. Certification provides recognition from the association for library and information work by para-professionals. Those who gain admittance to the Register of Certified members are entitled to work towards Chartered Membership. (See Table 1) Chartership is CILIP's standard for information professionals and members who are entitled to use post nominal letters and describe themselves as qualified library and information professionals (CILIP, 2012). According to Chapman (2006) candidates for chartership must work with a mentor and must demonstrate through their portfolio that they meet the required criteria.

Chartership: CILIP's Four Levels of Professional Qualifications

S/N	Level	Post Nominal Letters	Beneficiaries
1.	Certification	(ACLIP) meaning Certified Affiliate of CILIP	This is for paraprofessionals that have worked in library and information full time for two years or equivalent. Successful applicants are admitted to the Register of Certified Affiliates Members.
2.	Chartership	(MCLIP) stands for Chartered Membership of CILIP	This is considered the gold standard for library and information professionals. Successful applicants are admitted to the Register of Chartered Membership.
3.	Revalidation		This is for chartered members who wish to gain evidence and recognition of their commitment to personal professional development.
4.	Fellowship	(FCLIP) stands for Fellowship of CILIP	This is the highest level of professional qualification awarded by CILIP, given to Chartered Members who have been on the Register of Chartered Membership for six years or longer.
5.	Honourary Fellowship	Hon FCLIP or FCLIP (hc) stands for honorary fellowship	A qualification akin to an honorary degree is granted to a small number of people who have rendered distinguished service to the profession.

Adapted from CILLIP: Information professionals job profiles (<http://www.infoprofessional.co.uk/jobprofiles/librarian.aspx>).

Chartered status for librarians working in Nigeria started with the charter of the LRCN, a parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Education which was established by Act 12 of 1995. The Council is charged with the general duty of:

- Determining who librarians are;
- Determining what standards of knowledge and skill are to be attained by persons seeking to become registered as librarians and reviewing those standards from time to time as circumstances may require;

- Securing in accordance to the provision of this Act the establishment and maintenance of a register of persons entitled to practice the profession and the publication, from time to time, of the lists of such persons;
- Maintaining discipline within the profession in accordance with this Act; and.
- Performing such other functions as may be conferred upon the Council by this Act.

Put succinctly, the mission statement of the LRCN is:

to pursue the attainment of professional excellence by determining who are librarians; the standard of knowledge and skills required for registration and practice; guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for libraries, and maintenance of professional discipline among librarians. (Lrcn.gov.ng/Registered_librarian_20...)

Chartership: Criteria for Membership

Chartership is not an academic qualification but recognition of the highest standards of professional practice. The individual makes a commitment to continued professional development (Watson, 2005). In most chartership, it is expected that candidates must have a bachelors or master's degree in their professional discipline. In addition to this, candidates must acquire at least two years of professional practical experience on the job. Similarly, candidates should be willing to conduct their business in accordance with ethical and moral principles. Candidates for chartership are expected to be active members of their professional association. Chartership is a fulcrum upon which the candidate embarks on enduring education and life-long learning. In addition to these, candidates for charter must be able to demonstrate:

- an ability to reflect critically on personal performance and evaluate service performance,
- active commitment to continuing professional development.
- an ability to analyse personal and professional development and progression with reference to experiential and developmental activities;
- breadth of professional knowledge and understanding of the wider professional context.
- adequate knowledge of the profession both theoretically and practically.
- ability to embrace change and all that come with change, and,
- competencies and skills necessary to survive in a changing world. (Www.clip.uk/charteredmem...)

Charter Status, Eligibility and Levels of Membership

Chartership is a professional qualification conferred on members of a professional body in recognition of their competence, leadership and outstanding contributions to their profession. Chartered status is more than earning the right to have post nominal letters such as (MCILIP) or (CLN) appended after one's name. Membership of chartered bodies opens up new career opportunities and gives members the skills and approach needed to develop their roles and make good job applications. Thus, members also add value to their profession as well as their organisations. With chartered status they can also advocate effectively on behalf of their services.

Chartered status in all professions point virtually to the same thing. Phil Gray, the Chief Executive of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists says it is 'substantially a hallmark of quality and excellence for the profession'. He further remarks:

We have a long and credible history with our chartered status but it's not something that is just embossed in a coat of arms, it has a living and dynamic quality that continues to be renewed by what we, and our members, do to promote professional standards and effective practice (Gray, 2009, as quoted in Limb, 2009).

The public and other professions have similar perception of what chartership means. The requirements that chartered institutions apply to applicants can be fairly extensive. One of the most important requirements these professional bodies apply is the on-going education of their members. By requiring their members to continue their education, these institutions maintain the integrity and currency of the services offered by all of their members.

Eligibility for chartered status varies from one profession to the other. In the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP) individuals become eligible for chartered status as they graduate from a CSP approved programme, register as a physiotherapist and become a qualified member of CSP. To become a chartered psychologist with the British Psychological Society (BPS), members must be graduates and have completed a BPS-accredited postgraduate professional training course, plus any required period of supervised practice, or have a research doctorate in psychology (Limb, 2009). There are three categories/levels of registration for engineers. They are engineering technician (EngTech), incorporated engineers (I Eng) and chartered engineers (C Eng). Graduate engineers tend to aim for either incorporated or chartered engineer status. However, it is possible to progress from engineering technician to incorporated and

then to chartered engineer. For chartered status the fastest route for engineers is from an accredited MEng degree. To become an incorporated engineer, the traditional route is from an accredited bachelor's degree in engineering or technology, but it is also possible to start with an HND, HNC or foundation degree and pursue further learning. For a B Eng degree holder there are several options such as:

- completing an accredited M.Sc before starting work.
- taking the Engineering Council's MSc in professional engineering offered through universities designed to be studied while in employment
- submitting a technical report, based on engineering experience and demonstrating an understanding of engineering principles.
- sitting Engineering Council examinations.(en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chartered_Eng...).

For CILIP members, chartership is just another staging post on a continuum. There is a progression through chartership and revalidation to fellowship. It is basically a more formal process to demonstrate lifelong learning and show your progression (www.cilip.org.uk/charteredmem...).

In Nigeria, the journey towards becoming a chartered librarian starts with the attainment of required academic qualifications in library and information science which could be a first or postgraduate degree or its equivalent as determined by the LRCN. This is followed by obtaining, paying the required registration fee, completing and submitting the registration form. Consideration of application and verification of credentials, notification of qualified applicants and induction of registered librarians are performed by the LRCN. Successfully registered librarians are expected to pay some certain amount of money which is determined by the Council for the induction (Lrcn.gov.ng/Registered_librarians_20...). From all the charterships mentioned here, it is clear to note that in addition to academic qualification evidence of years of professional practice is also a prerequisite. This is not emphasized by the LRCN.

Benefits of Chartered Status for Librarians

Like their engineer counterparts, chartered librarians should among other benefits:

- possess defined librarianship competence that employs value.
- receive an internationally recognised certificate or badge of competence benchmarked and transferable with standards applicable in other parts of the world.

- being recognised by the public, community, industry and governments as professionals and responsible contributors to the well being of the Nigerian society.
- have demonstrated library and information science competence and commitment to professionalism which has been formally assessed by the LRCN and tested by their peers and senior professionals in their area of practice.
- have access to the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) Register of Chartered Librarians, Nigerian Library Association Register as well as the Register of the State or Branch Chapter.
- have reinforced their commitment to the Code of Ethics of Professional Practice of Librarians; and,
- have confirmed their commitment to excellence and currency of knowledge by updating their competencies and skills through Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

Other benefits include:

- being more employable with greater responsibilities and faster promotions
- being appropriately placed on the job with higher remuneration
- having greater respect whether it be in the boardroom or in a court of law, and
- access to a network of similarly qualified and experienced experts in the field of library and information science.
([Www.engnnessaustralia.org.au/profe...](http://www.engnnessaustralia.org.au/profe...))

Implications of Chartered Status

Chartered status for library and information science professionals implies that they should exhibit:

- Highest standards of professionalism
- Leadership in the profession
- Up-to-datedness and expertise in the profession
- Quality service delivery, and
- Ability to undertake independent practice.

The Issues at Stake

Chartered membership is the second level of professional qualification awarded by CILIP and is considered the gold standard of professional practice for information and library professionals. For the LRCN which is the professional body

empowered by law to register, certify and charter librarians in the country, the following fundamental issues are at stake here. They are:

- What is LRCN's definition of chartered librarians?
- What are the levels of chartership in LRCN's framework of qualification?
- How do the conferee and the public perceive chartered status of librarians in the country?

The expectations of qualifying programmes in library and information Science embodied in various curricular frameworks require that the LRCN should see the need to define chartered status. This has become necessary since the more usual trend for professional bodies to confer chartered status is only after individuals have shown evidence of professional development at a point beyond initial academic qualification. It is quite evident from the discussions so far that chartership should not be an all-comers thing. Making it an all-comers thing lowers the standards and the public perception of it. The question which LRCN needs to address is the rationale of conferring the same level of chartered status on a professor of library and information science or a practicing librarian with over twenty years of service with a librarian-in-training or student. The need to perceive chartership as a gold standard for professional practice was re-enforced by the Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission, Professor Julius Okojie, who cautioned against "making chartered status of librarians an all-comers thing" at the third induction ceremony of librarians. Given the implications of chartership the conferees should perceive their chartered status as a call for Continuing Professional Development as well as a gold standard for professional practice.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby made to consolidate the gains of chartership while at the same time make it more meaningful to the professionals as well as to the public:

- There is need to reflect all the changes that have taken place within the profession, and within its regulation and education.
- There is need to have other benchmarks now to assess the level of new librarian-in-training, graduates and the preparedness of the individual to enter the profession and make a career out of it.
- Chartered status should be made to reflect a reward for something addition, for ongoing development of professional excellence not only in

- academics but more importantly on the job.
- Librarianship as a career is a journey. Individuals have to continue to learn professionally throughout their working life to meet their clients' and service changing needs as well as embrace fresh career opportunities in chartership.
 - There is need to generate a framework for qualifications and such should be in line with other chartered bodies as CILIP with four levels earlier mentioned viz certification, chartership, revalidation and fellowship. Additional level of associateship should be included to take care of students.
 - The whole professional journey of librarianship should be carefully re-examined in order to make sure that recipients have the maximum benefits from the chartered status. Chartership should be used as a real signal of a higher order of excellence as people move through their career pathway.
 - By charting the future course of chartership LRCN provides the opportunity to strengthen the profession through how chartered status is used. This could mean revisiting the 'unique selling point' of chartered status in a way that would most clearly benefit users (clients) and best position the profession in times of significant change.
 - There is no doubt whatsoever that some changes, perhaps in the method or route by which LRCN confers chartered status may be inevitable over time, given the nearly 17 years the Act came into force. The time to do that is now.
 - There should be associateship to provide recognition of the work performed by paraprofessionals and successful candidates should be entitled to use post nominal letters as (AALN) meaning Associate Affiliate Librarians. There should also be Certified Affiliate Librarians for bachelors degree holders.
 - Those who are so recognized shall have their names in the Register of Associate Affiliate Librarians and Register of Certified Affiliate Librarians.
 - Revalidation of Chartered Membership should be carried out every five years.
 - Full commitment to the course of high standards of professional practice for a revalidated chartered member should be rewarded after ten years of uninterrupted service.
 - Advocacy and public awareness programmes should be organized to

enlighten the public about the charter, benefits and professional values derivable and attached thereto.

Conclusion

LRCN's major policy focus is to improve all aspects of professional practice through its work in education and registration of librarians for chartered status. In carrying out this noble task, it should develop and maintain a framework of universally recognised qualifications, create levels of chartership in which individuals' progress from one to the other as well as provide a wide range of opportunities for Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The beauty of chartered status is that it is no longer what one makes of it but the gold standard of professional practice. It is an opportunity for one to showcase one's teaching skills and professionalism and set one's own curriculum. Such provides one the leverages and ambition to be the master of one's own universe.

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Recruitment Variables in the Employment of Library and Information Professionals in Academic and Research Libraries in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examines librarians' perception of recruitment variables in the employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries in Nigeria. The survey research design was adopted for the study. The study population consisted of librarians (professionals) working in academic and research institutions libraries in Abia State. A four-point-scale or modified Likert questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. Data were analyzed using mean scores, frequency table and a percentage chart drawn from the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 16.0). A decision was adopted, which stipulates that any variable with a mean of 2.50 and above will be accepted (A) while the variables with a mean below 2.50 were considered rejected (R). From the findings, this research, amongst other things, shows that educational qualification, work experience, nationality/locality issues (which essentially require equal opportunity for all applicants), age, membership to professional bodies in the LIS profession and ICT skills are areas of consideration during the employment of library and information professionals. In addition, the researcher made seasoned suggestions that would aid the recruitment and employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries in the future.

Keywords: Employment, Recruitment Variables, Library and Information Professionals, Academic and Research Libraries

Introduction

Librarianship today is a highly complex profession requiring specific and detailed knowledge of many kinds. The ultimate aim of a library is to provide maximum satisfaction to its clientele (Nkiki and Yusuf, 2008). The complicated services which a modern library renders, "do not organize and run themselves, but must be modified, improved and extended in the light of changing conditions" (Ansari, 2003). This can be done when one who knows the objectives and potentialities of the library is employed. Staff is the very important element of an organisation. The development of an organisation is largely dependent on the competent and trained staff. This has led to the quest for every library to be staffed with persons of good academic background, professional knowledge, competence, and a service attitude, amongst others (Dhimen and Rani, 2005).

In recent times, it has been observed that internal and external job recruitment advertisements for librarian positions in academic and research institutions in Nigeria lay emphasis on the variables of educational qualification, work experience, age, research and publication, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skill, membership of relevant professional bodies, sex, marital status, locality, and referee report as essential components of the curriculum vitae accompanying application letters for employment into their libraries. But, no one knows the extent to which these variables are employed to weigh the suitability of job applicants for the professional vacancies in academic and research libraries. Besides, the view of practicing library and information professionals in the context of what, or to what extent, some of these variables should be considered in recruitment exercise for librarians in Nigeria is scarcely available in the literature. To this end, this paper sets out to determine the extent to which the afore-listed recruitment variables are considered in the employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries in Nigeria.

The Objectives of the Study

Generally, this study examines librarians' perception of recruitment variables in the employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries. But specifically, the objectives of this research are:

1. To examine the extent to which recruitment variables are considered in the employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries.
2. To show the preferential scale of the very important recruitment

variables that should determine the employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries.

3. To make suggestions that will aid the consideration and recruitment of library and information professionals in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Employment is remunerated work. The conception of employment by an organisation is a necessity for organisational success. It embodies the process of inviting applicants, screening their curriculum vitae, referee report - though not often utilized in Nigeria - and selecting the best of the applicants (Nwachukwu, 2006). Similarly, a lot of research has been conducted on recruitment and recruitment variables (Barber, 1998; Breugh, 1992; Breugh and Starke, 2000; Rynes, 1991; Wanous, 1992). Cole (2002) posits that the term recruitment simply narrows down at employment through the selection of the most qualified applicant. Hence, recruitment is an exercise that has stages that essentially include advertising of vacant positions. Cole (2002, p. 183) further opines that application letters and curriculum vitae are crucial submissions of applicants during job recruitment and their content is an adjudging factor in the employment of prospective employees in every organisation.

The library, just like any other organisation, is established with a view to achieving a set of goals. Academic and research libraries in particular are the engine houses of knowledge through research. The American Library Association's (ALA) (2006) roundtable summit presents that:

The iconographic power of a college or university library expresses a purpose not just to collect, but also to organize, preserve, and make knowledge accessible. ... In its placement and prominence, the academic and research library conveys its integral role in supporting higher education's core missions of research and education. This defines the central and indispensable place of academic and research libraries in higher institutions of learning and research. As a result, staffing is a crucial factor for the actualization of their pursuit. Like other organisations, these libraries require the services of good personnel, particularly the professionals, to direct and ensure performance of the specialized works of the different departments or units. These persons therefore are expected to possess sufficient ability to meet the libraries' requirements and justify their professionalism (Kaushik, 2006).

Now, who are the professionals? Drawn from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a professional is an expert, trained in a specialized body of knowledge,

and certified competent to carry out the given profession's job. In this case, library and information professionals, who are also known as the librarians, are the men and women who have been trained and certified to practice as librarians. In the Nigerian context, the Librarian's Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) posits that a librarian, who must be certified a professional by her, must be one who has been trained and awarded a bachelor's degree in library science or library and information science. (www.lrcn.gov.ng). It is on this note that the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) (2011) posits that the core mission of library and information professionals is to facilitate access to information for all for personal development, education, cultural enrichment, economic activity and informed participation in and enhancement of democracy.

Attempting to have a framework to look at as the study proceeded, theories in management science were examined and this research chose the Signaling Theory of Recruitment, adopted from the Signaling Theory that was propounded by Michael Spence in 1974. While the signaling theory in general can be defined as the means of conveying to employers the possession of job related skills in a market of symmetric information, the signaling theory of recruitment provides a concise knowledge on employee and employer communication of terms, requirements and process of selecting an employee towards employment. Thus, the later which is the emphasis here, provides a concise knowledge on employee and employer communication of terms, requirements and process of employment. It concludes that the employer would always provide information to guide prospective employees in their interest to secure a job while prospective employees would find employers information helpful in deciding whether to proceed in application process of job or not.

In the long and short of review of literature for this study, it has been shown that job recruitment variables are sine qua non for employment in academic and research libraries. An investigation into some Nigerian daily newspapers shows that educational qualification, work experience, age, research and publication, Information and Communications (ICT) skill, membership of professional bodies, sex, marital status, locality, and referee report are some recurring variables that are required of applicants seeking employment into any academic ranks in academic and research libraries in Nigeria. The columns of the advertisements showing the requirement for prospective applicants to professional vacant positions in academic and research libraries has the same requirements. Already, it is common knowledge that librarians in academic and research institutions are on academic and research status. Researchers have agreed that academic credentials like educational qualification, experience (years of previous work and varying skills possessed),

research and publications and age are job recruitment variables considered in the employment of librarians who seek appointment in academic and research environments (Shaffril and Uli, 2010; Mishra, 2009; Lloyd, 2007; Shultz and Adam, 2007; Steffen, et al., 2004; Ansari, 2003, p.98-99; McBey and Karakowsky, 2001; Beile and Adams, 2000; Paliwal, 2000). To this therefore, this research shall find out the perceived thrust of librarians in Nigeria, particularly in Abia State, to key recruitment variables examined in the employment of library and information professionals and match it with the literature.

Methodology

The survey research design was adopted for the study. The study population consisted of librarians (professionals) working in academic and research institutions libraries in Abia State. The institutions - selected purposively - are Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Library Umudike, Abia State University Library Uturu, Abia State Polytechnic Library Aba, Abia State College of Education and Technical Library Arochukwu and National Root Crops Research Institute Library Umudike. The total number of librarians found in these institutions is (27) and as such constituted the population of the study. This entire population is therefore used purposively without sampling.

Table 1: Distribution of Study Population per Institution

S/N	Institutions	No of Librarians
1	Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Library Umudike	7
2	Abia State University Library Uturu	4
3	Abia State Polytechnic Library Aba	8
4	Abia State College of Education Technical Arochukwu	2
5	National Root Crops Research Institute Library Umudike	6
	Total	27

Source: Staff report from each of the libraries.

A four-point-scale or modified Likert questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was fielded to all librarians of the libraries under study. Each questionnaire was comprised of ten (10) variable items. But each variable gave lead to other sub-variables, amounting to twenty-four (24) question items, which respondents were required to respond to based on a scale of: to a very great extent (weighed 4), to a great extent (weighed 3), to a small extent (weighed 2) and, to a very small extent (weighed 1). On the whole, data instruments were administered and collected by hand. Data were analyzed using mean scores,

frequency tables and a percentage chart all drawn from the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 16.0). A decision was adopted based on this calculation: $4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 10/4 = 2.50$. The decision was that any variable with a mean of 2.50 and above will be accepted (A) while the variables with a mean below 2.50 were considered rejected (R).

Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings

The data collected from the questionnaire are presented and analyzed using mean counts and frequency tables. The presentation and analysis are done bearing in mind the objectives of the study. Out of twenty-seven (27) copies of the questionnaire distributed, twenty-four (24), which is 89%, were completed, returned and found valid for analysis.

Table 2: Distribution and Return Rate of Instruments

S/N	Institutions	Distributed	Returned
1	Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Library Umudike	7	7
2	Abia State University Library Uturu	4	3
3	Abia State Polytechnic Library Aba	8	8
4	Abia State College of Education Technical Arochukwu	2	2
5	National Root Crops Research Institute Library Umudike		
	Total	27	24

Nevertheless, the presentation and analysis are done together for all institution. Thus, the analysis shows the population as general rather than per institution.

Objective one: To examine the extent to which recruitment variables shall be considered in the employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries.

Table 3: Distribution of Librarians' Perception of Recruitment Variables in the Employment of Library and Information Professional

Variables	Sub-Variables	4	3	2	1	M	D	GM
Educational Qualification	Degrees in LIS	21	3	0	0	3.9	A	
	Degrees outside LIS plus PGD in LIS	2	10	8	4	2.4	R	
	Diplomas in LIS (e.g. OND, HND)	4	6	7	7	2.3	R	2.9
Work Experience	Not for all grades of applicants	7	2	4	1	2.2	R	
	For all grades of applicant only applicable for higher grades applicants	9	7	2	6	2.8	A	
		12	5	2	5	3.0	A	2.7
Age	Produce evidence of age	11	4	3	6	2.8	A	
	Belong to a specified age bracket	6	4	4	10	2.3	R	2.6
Research and Publications	Possess articles in journals	7	6	6	5	2.6	A	
	Show conference papers	6	7	4	7	2.5	A	
	Show books/chapters in books	3	7	4	10	2.1	R	2.4
ICT Skills	Possess diploma in ICT	4	7	6	7	2.3	R	
	Proficiency cert in ICT	4	7	7	6	2.4	R	
	Show practical use of ICT	10	4	4	6	2.8	A	2.5
Membership of Prof. Bodies	Certification with LRCN	5	7	6	6	2.5	A	
	Certification with NLA	9	6	1	8	2.7	A	2.6
Sex	Preference for males	2	2	1	19	1.5	R	
	Preference for females	1	2	2	19	1.4	R	1.5
Marital Status	Preference for married	0	1	4	19	1.3	R	
	Preference for singles	2	3	3	16	1.6	R	1.5
Nationality/Local	Preference for indigenes	1	2	7	14	1.6	R	
	Equal opportunity for all applicants	20	2	2	0	3.8	A	2.7
Referee	Important	13	7	3	1	3.3	A	
	Not important	2	2	1	19	1.5	R	2.4

Table 3 above shows that respondents accepted that educational qualification is an area of consideration in the employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries. Specifically, respondents accepted that emphasis should be placed on degrees (first, second, third degrees) in library and information science (LIS). Hence, applicants who possess degrees in LIS are shown accepted for employment while applicants who possess degrees in other disciplines

added with a post graduate diploma (PGD) in LIS and those of them who possess only diplomas in LIS (OND, HND) are considered rejected for employment by respondents.

Work experience is another area agreed to be considered in the employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries. But, respondents rejected the notion that every applicant should have previous work experience in the field of librarianship. Instead, respondents accepted that (i), all applicants need not to have a work experience before they are granted employment in academic and research libraries, and (ii), work experience should only be stipulated for applicants seeking appointments into the higher grade positions.

Age is another variable considered in the employment of library and information professionals seeking appointment in academic and research libraries. While respondents accepted that all applicants should show evidence of age, they also rejected the notion that job vacancies in academic and research libraries should be specified for applicants of a particular age bracket.

On research and publication, the grand mean (GM) column shows that the culmination of the sub-variables attesting to the main variable rejected the requirement of research and publications as one of the considerations to be placed during the employment of library and information professional in academic and research libraries. However, respondents' view on the sub-variables accepted that applicants should possess and show evidence of articles in reputable journals and in conference proceedings. But, the respondents rejected the view of showing evidence of books published or chapters contributed in scholarly books.

Furthermore, respondents agree that the acquisition of ICT skills is to be considered for librarians seeking jobs in academic and research libraries. Particularly, respondents accepted that librarian applicants should be able to show practical use of ICT facilities relevant in information collection, organization, preservation, retrieval and dissemination. So, possessing diplomas or proficiency certificates in ICT as criteria to be considered in the employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries was rejected.

The respondents further agree that membership of professional bodies in the field of librarianship is important for the consideration of librarian applicants for employment in academic and research libraries. Thus, respondents accepted that applicants to professional positions in academic and research libraries should show evidence of certification with Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) and also belong to Nigeria Library Association (NLA).

As to whether sex of applicants is to be considered during recruitment of

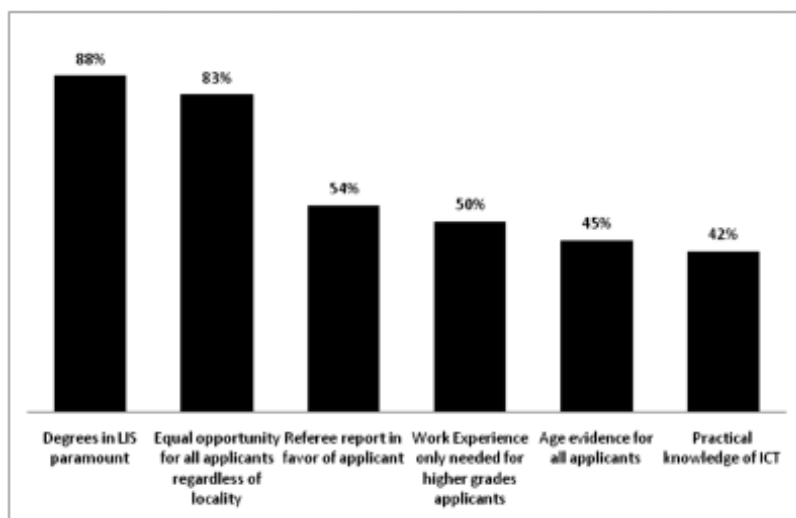
librarians, respondents rejected it, submitting that no preference should be given to sex of applicants. The same decision holds for marital status of applicants.

But, on nationality or locality of applicants, respondents see it as a variable to be considered during recruitment of librarians, but specified that its consideration should be on ensuring that all applicants, irrespective of locality or nationality, should be given equal opportunity. Meanwhile, the issue of referee's reports in favor of applicants is accepted to be important.

In sum, vis-à-vis the main recruitment variables, this study has shown that respondents agree that educational qualification (2.9), work experience (2.7), nationality/locality (2.7) (which essentially require equal opportunity for all applicants), age (2.6), membership to professional bodies in the LIS profession (2.6) and, ICT skills (2.5) in flat order should attract more consideration, either positively or negatively, during the recruitment and employment of library professionals in academic and research libraries than the requirements of research and publication (2.4), refereeing (2.4), sex (1.5) and, marital status (1.5). So, while it can be said that the findings of this study are in line with literature (Shaffril and Uli, 2010; Mishra, 2009; Lloyd, 2007; Shultz and Adam, 2007; Steffen, et al., 2004; Ansari, 2003, p.98-99; McBey and Karakowsky, 2001; Beile and Adams, 2000; Paliwal, 2000), this study has also added to existing literature on this subject matter by specifying the core look-out in each recruitment variables and also makes a page for variables like membership to LIS professional bodies, refereeing, sex and marital status, which are scarcely listed in the literature as recruitment variables in the employment of librarians.

Objective two: To show the preferential scale of the very important recruitment variables that should determine the employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries.

Table 4: Percentage Distribution of Respondents' Preferential Scale of the Very Important Recruitment Variables Required in the Determination of Employment of Library and Information Professionals in Academic and Research Libraries



NB: The researcher's decision on each sub-variable was 40% and above. It is culled from the scores for the legend 4 (to a very great extent) in the SPSS percentage result of each sub-variable.

Table 4 above shows the percentage distribution of respondents' scale of variables (per sub-variables. See Table 3) preferentially. Responses from respondents show high importance to degrees in LIS, equal opportunity for all applicants, referee reports, work experience, age and ICT practical skills. That is to say that, to a very great extent, all applicants for librarian positions in academic and research libraries should:

1. be ones who have obtained degrees in LIS as a core discipline
2. be given equal opportunity irrespective of nationality or locality
3. obtain a referee report in their favor
4. show evidence of work experience if they are seeking appointments for higher grade positions
5. produce evidence of age
6. establish knowledge of ICT by a practical show of it.

Objective three: To make suggestions that will aid the consideration and recruitment of library and information professionals in Nigeria.

This study has examined librarians' perception of recruitment variables in the employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries and do suggest that, one, since librarians enjoy academic status in academic and research institutions, involvement in research and publications is paramount in their contribution to knowledge. Hence, while the recruitment and employment of the lower cadre librarians (e.g. assistant librarians) should be on

the promise that they would certainly engage in research and publications, employers of librarians should insist that higher cadre librarians seeking appointment in academic and research libraries show evidence of research and publications spread across reputable journals, conference proceedings, books and chapters in books before they are considered for employment. By this, their academic status with other academic colleagues become matched rather than pronounced.

Two, since the world is increasingly encouraging gender equality, rejecting the notion of gender preference in this study is sustained. This is same for marital status. Even though anecdotal investigations suggest that the unmarried people (singles) have more time for their job than the married, it is not a social justification to displace the married people in jobs and refuse them employment. After all, a business columnist (www.businessday.com) has submitted that married people appear more responsible to their jobs than the unmarried. Be that as it may, the rejection of the notion to give preference to marital status should, in both fronts, be sustained by employers of library and information professionals.

Three, it is true that Nwachukwu (2006) has found no relationship between the millions of referee reports submitted to organisation with staff recruitment in Nigeria. But, it is suggested that the trend continues. Refereeing, if valued by Nigerians, would go a long way to describe the suitability of an applicant. It is true that most Nigerians have known that employers pay little or no attention to applicants' referee reports and as such forge most of the referee reports themselves. Yet, if the days will come when these reports will be examined critically by employers, it will be seen that many applicants would be disqualified for employment simply because the referee identity and contact is not real or the referee is ignorant of the application, et cetera. As a result of these possible anomalies, this research dispels the poor response of respondents in favor of refereeing librarian applicants and therefore suggest that employers of librarians in academic and research libraries should encourage applicants to submit their referee's contact address and reports and thus be committed to utilize them in the determination of employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries.

Conclusion

Manpower is the most vital and powerful of all the resources of any organisation. A library can have an excellent collection of documents, plenty of online resources and a beautiful and comfortable building, but if it does not have a well-trained, competent staff, it will lose its value, given the fact that the users

using the library will not be served properly. This has led to the quest for every library to be staffed with the persons with good academic background, professional knowledge, competence, a service attitude, amongst others. This research has identified ten recruitment variables which are recurrently listed in Nigerian job advertisements for librarians as key areas of consideration for employment. Drawing the perception of librarians on the ten recruitment variables, the researcher has submitted his findings and has made seasoned suggestions in this paper that aid the recruitment and employment of library and information professionals in academic and research libraries in the future.

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Making a Successful Career in Librarianship: The Issues at Stake

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Abstract

The article discusses the issues at stake in librarianship that go beyond being chartered or certified. While it is desirable to be certified or chartered, there are certain issues when taken into consideration and practiced will justify being certified or chartered. Such issues, essentially for those who wish to make successful careers as academic librarians or work in academic libraries, include vision, technical skills, public relations, leadership, computer and multi-media skills and the ability to initiate and conduct research. The paper concludes that these issues, though relatively independent of one another, must blend together to bring about productivity, efficiency and smooth operations of the library system.

Keywords: Career in Librarianship, Librarians, Academic Libraries.

Introduction

It is good to be a chartered or registered librarian. It is in fact a requirement by law that to be recognized as a librarian you must meet certain criteria. Some of these are spelt out in the document establishing Librarian Registration Council. Of course, one must have undergone relevant courses in the Library Schools and obtained specified qualifications to be registered. But there are some basic issues at stake that go beyond being certified or chartered. To some issues at stake could be salary, fringe benefits, tenure and what have you. But to the researcher me the issues are concerned with education and training. Some believe that the issues are in areas of experience and being up-to-date with the latest development in the field of library and information science. However, the issues at stake are that the process of library operation or systems requires certain knowledge and techniques at various levels and stages. The ability to apply these knowledge, methods and techniques in the performance of specific task in the library is what makes the difference and ensures a successful career in

librarianship. These skills form the bedrock upon which the success of the library depends and the basis on which other library duties or operations are performed. Some of these basic requirements include vision, technical skill, effective public relations, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) competence, conceptual and research ability. These requirements, though relatively independent of one another, blend together to bring about productivity, efficiency and smooth operations in an academic library systems and self-fulfillment for the librarians.

The purpose of this research, which derives from the author's experience and those of other librarians, is to provide insight to the new entrants into the profession and the prospective librarians, what it takes to make a successful career in librarianship. For those already in the system, it would be a refreshing reminder of what is expected of them in the modern library system, as it would spur them towards improving on those requirements they already have and acquiring those they presently lack.

Basic Requirements for Effective Career Performance

Vision: Vision is the ability to project your future and that of the library with great imagination and precision. Vision is the energy you need to move your library to next level. Where there is no vision, progress will be retarded. To be visionless is to be motionless. Any library career that begins with vision and managed by wisdom will be successful. If you have no plan on hand to move the library forward and to the next level, it is due to lack of vision. Your vision defines your limit because as far as you can see is as far as you can go. Without vision, there will be limitations and mediocrity. Vision is the ability to see beyond the present limiting circumstances and tap into the future possibilities. It is the power for accomplishment. Vision incorporates conceptual skill, which is the ability to understand the complexity of the library system and where your own unit, department, experience, ability and so on fit into. This vision, coupled with knowledge and experience, permits one to act according to the objectives of the library as a whole.

Technical skills: One of the most important skills is technical skill which incorporates the ability to catalogue library and information materials in the process of building a library catalogue. A library catalogue is an organised set of bibliographic records which represents the holdings of a library, a subset of a library or a group of many libraries (Lasisi, 2004). The catalogue is a record of the entire holdings of a library. It is an index to the library collection. It is meant to

facilitate the location and retrieval of library and information materials on a particular subject or subject areas by a known author, title or subject. Just as the library catalogue is the key, foundation and heart of the library, so is the cataloguing skill to the library profession. Cataloguing skill is central to library profession and forms the foundation upon which other skills needed in the library rest. Cataloguing skill is the ability to 'technically read' a document and be able to describe it so that the user can identify the documents distinguishing it from any other item and distinguishing one edition or version of a work from other editions and versions of the same work. Cataloguing skill also include the ability to follow internationally acceptable standards to describe a book and make them available for local use as well as ensure uniformity that will facilitate exchange of documentation. It includes the ability to use the AACR2, DDC, LCC, UDC and other tools. It also includes online cataloguing. Lasisi (2004) describes cataloguing as the art of describing books and non-book materials, pointing out important bibliographic information about the materials such as the author, editor, title, publisher, place of publication, date, and the subject.

Classification generally is the arrangement of books and non-book materials in a logical order according to their degrees of likeness. It is a scheme, for arrangement of books, and other materials in a logical sequence according to the subject on the shelves and in the subject catalogue. Classification include determining the subject heading of a book, journal, or other information materials, assigning the subject headings, classification numbers using accepted international standards.

Public relations: Public relations is the deliberate, planned and sustained efforts to promote in the public mind a favourable feeling towards a corporation, institution, product or person (New Standard Encyclopedia, 1994). Rao and Chandra (1993) define it as the deliberate, planned and sustained efforts to establish and maintain mutual understanding. Within the library context, it reflects the sum of the library's internal and external relations within the staff on one hand (internal) and with the students, faculty members, administrative staff and technical staff and the community at large on the other hand. Working in an academic library today, calls for men and women of pleasant personality, and high moral and intellectual standard coupled with vigorous academic and intellectual training. Librarianship is service to the community and the enrichment of human life. Librarianship manifests itself in reference service, selective dissemination of information, reading guidance, advisory service, loan services, current awareness services, information search, retrieval and provision from various sources including

print and non-print media, the Internet, electronic databases, and so on and it is in these areas that the library staff makes contact with the library users. These call for a person who enjoys working with people and has the natural capacity in relating cordially with people.

If the library staff must perform his or her duty satisfactorily, he or she must possess element of public relations. It includes the every action or attitude of the staff towards the users. Public relation skills of the staff must secure for the academic library maximum goodwill and understanding. The library staff must know how to get along with people, which is a modern day necessity. Public relations concern every library staff from the highest ranking librarian to the lowest. The need for public relations in a library relatively makes it seminal to recall the assertion of Emezi (1972) who opines that the thoroughness with which the cleaner does his job, or the slip-shod manner in which the librarians answer reference queries, or the manner of approach of the porter or the security staff, goes a long way to make up the image of the library.

Leadership ability. There are a few things on which the world agrees without dissention. One of them is that the success or failure of any organization is dependent on the quality of its leader. Leadership is so important that it has been the subject of research through the ages. Leadership is quite different from being in power. Before you can be reckoned as a leader, you must be able to make people accept and follow you willingly (not with force) and contribute their best to the organisational goals in accordance with their maximum capability. Real leadership is more than having authority; it is more than having technical training and knowledge and following proper procedures. Real leadership is being the person others will gladly and confidently accept and follow, in good time as in hardship.

A leader mentors his workers, depends on goodwill, not on authority; inspires enthusiasm, not fear; and shows 'how'. A leader must have the ability to negotiate, communicate, influence, and persuade others to do everything necessary to accomplish set goals. The most competent men and women are those who can competently organize and secure the cooperation and assistance of other people to accomplish goals and objectives. Some of the leadership qualities include: encouragement of feedback by finding out what your colleagues and subordinates think about your style; be a listener, when your colleagues and members of your staff speak to you about their work related worries, hear them out. Great leaders are great listeners; develop your communication skill by taking complete responsibility for how you are heard. Always rephrase and communicate your

message to make it sound positive, be a people's person. An integral part of developing leadership skill is to learn to respect colleagues (junior or senior) and their collective and individual capabilities. Let your colleagues and subordinates take decisions on certain issues as they relate to their areas of expertise or responsibilities, trust them with their work, do not be a watchdog' lead by example. Your colleagues and subordinates must believe in you and in your integrity.

Computer and multimedia skill: One of the much talked about developments is the increased use of computer and other information technologies in academic libraries (Ugah, 2005b). Most of the libraries in Nigeria today are computerized. This has been confirmed by Idowu and Mabawonku (1999). They further revealed that research and university libraries are at the forefront in the use of computers and information technologies.

Whoever aspires to work and be relevant in a library must have computer skills because it is the foundation on which other information technology fundamentals are built. A look at today's library job requirements shows that they place emphasis on computer competence. It is only with computer skills that an aspiring librarian can retrieve and deliver information contained in CD-ROMs, the Internet, electronic databases and other electronic sources. Computers are having tremendous impact on acquisition, storage, processing, retrieval, access and dissemination of information. Resources are not just confined to traditional texts, rather new information resources are being produced in combination of texts, graphics, video, and audio sounds animation and virtual reality. Our libraries must therefore be ready to handle and utilise the computers properly to the advantage of the library users (Ugah, 2005 a and c). This implies that the aspiring librarians and those already in the profession, need to acquire all the necessary knowledge and skills relevant to the understanding and utilisation of concepts and terminologies in computers and multimedia. There is no doubt in the fact that the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is rapidly transforming the content and services of libraries and information centers worldwide. Most printed bibliographic sources are being converted into CD-ROM databases or accessed directly online. The combined effect of computers and telecommunication technologies is increasingly moving the society into a paperless one and the global village due to the advent of Internet, which has increased the usefulness of computers in the libraries.

It is important to note that most library automation revolves around the cataloguing and bibliographic control functions (Lasisi, 2004). The current trend

today is that most libraries are moving away from the traditional or manual cataloguing as they are embracing the new technologies. Oketunji (1998) provides an in-depth study of AACR2 and the relevance of library automation showing how the use of computers has affected conventional practice in the technical services of the library system.

Research: According to Sonaike (2004) research is the threshold to knowledge. It is the process of discovering and uncovering new facts or information. Library research as defined by Onye (1998) is a diligent, critical, inquiry or investigation directed to the discovery of facts by a careful scientific investigation of aspects of library theory and practices. Alkeleri (1998) added a new dimension to the concept of scientific research in librarianship, which he describes as a process by which librarians can acquire more accurate knowledge and understanding of libraries and librarianship. As teaching and learning have continued to move in the direction of planned enquiry and discovery learning, librarians according to Onye (1998) must be able to do research and make the results available for further investigation and use. He re-echoed the call for research oriented professional librarian in academic libraries.

Those aspiring to work in libraries must of necessity have research ability. Research activities are beneficial to the practice of librarianship and research components can strengthen several areas of operation such as reference, cataloguing, and collection development activities in the library (Black and Leysen, 1994). Furthermore, researches sharpen the skills and broaden perspective for daily services that provide and produce beneficial effect on other aspects of job assignment. Noble (1989) re-echoed the significance of the age-old adage of 'publish or perish'. This is a universal phenomenon because getting published is considered an indicator of quality and status of a librarian working in an academic library. The potential rewards are enormous and they include promotion/tenure, recognition, discipline, growth, challenges, income and communication (Matejka, 1992). Hill (1987) contributing to the issue argues assertively that in order to fulfill their role properly, librarians are expected to be teachers, administrators, researchers and authors. Schuster (1990) identifies a point, that the imperative to publish grips mid-career academics more tightly than in times past and to earn promotion will require publications. Alkeleri (1998), Onye (1998), and Sonaike (2004) in their various submissions, outline the research skills needed and the process of conducting research in librarianship. They also discussed the various types and aspects of research interests and the management of research process.

Conclusion

The issue at stake in librarianship is not only being chartered or certified. The issue as it were is how you are prepared to fit into current developments in librarianship as outlined in this paper. Librarianship is getting sophisticated day by day and you must move with the times to remain relevant in the present scheme of thing in the field. The issue at stake calls for more than the basic academic qualifications and experience, and being registered or certified. You must have the vision and other requirements which include technical, public relations, leadership, computer, multimedia and research skills. These skills though relatively independent of one another, blend together to bring about productivity, efficiency, and smooth operations in an academic library systems.

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An Appraisal of Emerging Role of Librarians in the Digital Era

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Abstract

This study examines the level of adaptation of the emerging role of librarians in the digital era. Librarians' role in information and library services delivery is central to library patrons' satisfaction. The emergence of information and communications technology has yet placed additional roles upon the librarian's shoulder. Though the issue of ICT based library services has enjoyed wide publicity, it is not common knowledge whether it has also enjoyed high patronage by librarians. This study therefore investigates the level of involvement of librarians with the emerging digital information roles and services. The study covers Abia State Polytechnic Library, Aba. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Frequency tables and percentage counts were used to analyze data. The study shows that librarians are not adequately playing their role in the digital era even though they are aware of the emerged role. The study reveals that the emerging digital information services have also found little place in the librarians' itinerary of service provision. This is due to such factors as lack of the requisite skills and adequate ICT tools. Other challenges, such as factors that militate against the librarians' digital role performance were itemized to include administrative bottlenecks in the availability, access and use of the ICT facilities. The researcher recommends training and re-training of library and information professionals, upgrading of library science curriculum to accommodate changes in the field, and adequate funding for provision of the digital tools and services, as the way forward.

Keywords: Librarians, Digital Era, Emerging Roles of Librarians, Librarians and ICT Competencies

Introduction

The traditional and age - long role of librarians has been the provision of information services using primarily books. Any library that was adequately stocked and staffed would ultimately meet the needs of its patrons. Libraries today are not just about books, they are about information. The 21st century has however brought a lot of dynamism to the library and information world. This has been orchestrated by the emergence of information and communications technologies. The ICT - enabled library and information services make widespread use of computers, CD-ROMS, telecommunication channels, Internet, etc. These digital tools have provided librarians the opportunity to offer value -added information services to their users. The effect of this innovative system is far reaching, which include among others wider access to information, easy integration of various library activities, provision of speedy and easy access to information, provision of personalized and current information, and provision of access to remote users.

Such terms as virtual library, paperless, digital, and on- line libraries are all suggestive of the paradigm shift from paper-full library to virtual library. Other fallouts of the digital era are digital facilities for their management and utilization, new services direction, new knowledge and sophisticated library users. The sophisticated library users according to Ramos (2007), are students born from 1981 - 1999, surrounded by computers and digital media, they like control, interactivity and convenience, prefer digital sources. They are also nomadic- expecting services and resources when and where needed. Obasi (2012) captures it thus: the ICT era is characterized with the emergence of the internet as the largest repository of information, the changing role of library and information professionals from intermediaries to facilitators, shift from physical to virtual environment, and the emergence of new and innovative ICT based library and information services.

It is also common knowledge that the digital era has expanded the role of librarians in information provision. The expanded role spans from the librarian being simply an information provider to a knowledge navigator and from a person who assist users in finding information in a place called library to someone who needs to provide information services and instruction regardless of time, place or format (Obasi 2008). Ezeani, Eke and Ugwu (2012) also comment that professionals working in technology oriented libraries need continuous grooming by acquiring core competencies and new skills so that they never become obsolete in the fast changing environment. Anderson (1997) cited in Obasi (2008) asserts that librarians are indeed the most appropriate professionals to lead the team of people in finding answers to challenges in the digital environment of electronic

information and the internet. Many studies have revealed that academic libraries have embraced these new technologies though to varying degrees. It is however doubtful that librarians are adequately and strategically functioning in this digital environment with its accompanying digital tools. This is what this study sets to find out.

Research Objectives

The broad objective of this study is to investigate the extent librarians have adapted to their new and expanding roles occasioned by the adoption and application of ICT in library and information services.

Specifically, the objectives of this study are to find out:

1. the extent the librarians are aware of their expected role in a digital environment
2. the extent librarians in the library under study, are carrying out their expected roles in the digital era
3. the extent the librarians are aware of the information services that have emerged in the digital era
4. whether the librarians possess digital skills and competencies commensurate with the emerged digital information services
5. efforts made by the librarians with regard to acquiring digital skills
6. challenges faced by the librarians in the digital environment and possible strategies for the way forward.

Literature Review

By far the most important factor in the success of any library is the training and support of those involved. In a traditional library setting, the librarian's role is central in providing library and information services without which its resources remain untapped. In like manner, in a digital environment, without librarians (who will serve as access points to these digital tools) the availability of digital library resources becomes an effort in futility. Ramos (2007) comments that technology for generating and sharing information will be useless if there is no way to locate, filter, organize and access it. Benson (2001) observes that libraries need more than a simple internet connection to utilise the power of the internet. He further posits that it takes only creative librarians to remove technological barriers and to design innovative system that make it easier for patrons to find and retrieve the information they need. The librarian is the one who is exposed to the world of knowledge and the keys to unlocking them. He is always there to mediate when

patrons run into difficult; he could search on-line for patrons who are not computer literate. The librarian could as well shape poorly -defined queries so that the actual need of the user is elicited and subsequently met.

Collation and preservation of legitimate materials for sharing among libraries and for consultation by users is another crucial role librarians could play in the digital era. It is pertinent to note that all digital information is to be accepted as being valid. This is because internet publishing is characterized with unfiltered information some of which lack legitimacy. It is the place of the librarian to always scrutinize information, select only those that meet legitimate standards, collate and preserve them for users and for a farther reaching impact, for leverage and resource sharing among libraries. Benson (2001) further offers standard guidelines to access digital source: author, reviewer, content validation (with information in the field), target audience ,and imprint.

With the mass of undifferentiated information in the internet, users may be at loss in differentiating between what is needful and what is not, whereby making the search process time-consuming and tiring. Asheim in Katz (1987) while buttressing the role of librarians in assisting users select the information which best satisfies their specific need said that since overloading (of information) can be an inhibiting factor in the search of information, control of the flow, not just of the nature of the content, is the librarian's responsibility. As an educator in a digital environment, the librarian can train patrons on Internet use, tools and search engines, on line data bases and catalogues, e-journals, use of web-based instruction and on line tutorials. The librarian should be an innovator, a website designer and manager. He can design the library's web page, evaluate information resources to be linked to the site; create awareness of library services on the web. As digital information broker for print and e- media, the librarian will be able to identify, retrieve, repackage and provide e access to digital information sources. (Ramos, 2007). McMillan (1999) cited in Burke (2001) presents a manifesto for the librarian in the digital era:

We have new roles to fill. While the format of our resources may change, while access to information may change, while style of service may change, the vision of high quality, service-oriented, information centres still fits the library's mission. We will serve our user community if we incorporate this into the digital library. These submissions have called for a paradigm shift for librarians in the performance of their library services.

Competencies Expected of Librarians and their Importance in the Provision of Digital Information Services.

Digital information usage competencies deals with the level of appreciation of digital knowledge and accompanying practical skills needed in a digital environment. They include of following:

- Digital concept: Optimal competencies in handling digital information should begin with the understanding of digitisation especially as it relates to information work. This knowledge will place the librarian in a position to be well-grounded, in-depth and thorough while using digital tools in the provision of information services.
- Digital Networking: Understanding the fundamentals of digital networking will enhance the use of network resources in the provision of information services to users and for the professional advancement of librarians. The skill and knowledge are necessary in developing both local network and the Internet.
- The Web System: The web resources are quite enormous. It is imperative for the librarians to be conversant with how to locate information on the web at minimal time, how to develop website and design home pages. The competent librarians would have knowledge of the various search engines and their capabilities in locating information. He will also be adequately disposed to making his own intellectual contribution to the world of knowledge through the web.
- Using digital equipment: The computer (both the hardware and software) is the main tool of digital operations. Onwubiko (2006) posits that library and information professionals who want to make a difference in the hitech information superhighway era must acquire computer and internet literacy. He further stresses that the proactive and forward looking librarian should have some knowledge of system administration, maintenance, development, and system use.
- Knowledge of digital information services: In the digital environment, arrays of information and information services abound. Knowledge of these services and how to access them will place libraries and librarians in a position to meet the need of every information seeker. They will also be able to access information or its sources with a view to providing qualitative services to library patrons. The librarian's ability to provide quality services lies also in his recognition of the shift of emphasis from data and information to knowledge management.
- Knowledge of the benefits of digital information services: Librarians should

be aware of the enormous benefits of the digital environment. They should know the advantages of the digital media over the print media and maximally utilize same to solve their clients' information needs and their own professional needs. Librarians should as well know certain limitations of digital information and how to surmount them.

Methodology

The study adopts the descriptive survey design. The study covers Abia State Polytechnic library, Aba. The population of the study was made up of the librarians and library officers in the polytechnic library. The total number of this category library staff in the Polytechnic library is fifteen (15). But because one of the staff in this category was not available during the period of data collection, only fourteen (14) was used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire with items derived from the research questions. Thus, fourteen (14) copies of the questionnaire was distributed to the respondents and returned, representing 100 percent return rate. The instrument was reviewed by an expert in the field. Data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages.

Data Analysis

(A) Demographic Information

Table 1: Demographic Information of Respondents

S N	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	Number of Librarians and Library Officers in the departments:		
	Circulation	4	28.5
	Serials	2	14.2
	Reference	3	21.4
	Technical Services	4	28.5
	Administration (Poly Librarian)	1	7.1
2	Gender:		
	Male	6	42.9
	Female	8	57.1
3	Educational Qualifications:		
	BLS \ B.SC (ED)Library Science	11	78.5
	MLS	3	21.4
	PhD	-	-
	PGD (LIS)	1	7.1
	HND	3	21.4
4	Years of Practice as a Librarian:		
	1-5	7	50
	6-10	3	21.4
	11-20	4	28.5
	20 and above	-	-
5	Computer Literacy:		
	Diploma	5	35.7
	Certificate	3	21.4
	None	7	50.0

Table 3: Respondents' Reasons for their Non Performance of Digital Roles

S\N	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	Not aware of the digital roles	1	7.1
2	Do not possess the skills to perform digital roles	3	21.4
3	Lack of ICT facilities	7	50.0
4	Lack of access to the ICT tools	5	35.7
5	Being comfortable with traditional method of library services	-	-

From Table 3 above, 7 (50.0%) respondents said it is lack of ICT facilities. Meanwhile 5 (35.7%) respondents gave the reasons of lack of access to the facilities. Only 3 (21.4%) of the respondents confessed not being aware of these emerging digital roles.

(C). Analysis based on research question three and four

Research questions three and four were designed to elicit the librarians' responses on their level of awareness of digital information services and the actual performance of the services. Table 4 below shows the results.

Table 4: Frequency Distribution of Librarians Knowledge of Digital Information Service and Actual Performance of the Services

S\N	Items	Awareness of the services	%	Performance of the services	%
1	Internet services	13	92.8	4	28.5
2	E – Mail services	13	92.8	7	50.0
3	CD-ROM search	10	71.4	3	21.4
4	On line search services	12	85.7	7	50.0

5	Computerized SDI services	9	64.2	-	-
6	Computerized CAS	7	50	-	-
7	Resource sharing	10	71.4	-	-
8	Knowledge sharing	10	71.4	-	-
9	Computerized library services	12	85.7	2	14.2
10	OPAC	7	50	-	-
11	Local Area Network Services	12	85.7	6	42.8

From Table 4 above, it is evident that respondents are aware of the emerging digital information services. But in terms of providing these services, many of the respondents, admitted not being able to provide the services. The worst hits are computerized selective dissemination of information (SDI) services, computerized CAS, resource sharing services, knowledge sharing, and online public access (OPAC) services. Sequel to this, the research sought to know why respondents cannot provide digital information services. Table 5 below shows their responses.

Table 5: Reason for Non Provision of Digital Information services

SN	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	Not aware of such digital Information services	1	7.1
2	Lack of skill to provide the services	1	7.1
3	Lack of adequate IC T facilities	2	14.2
4	Lack of adequate time	1	7.1
5	Lack of access to the digital tools	2	14.2
6	Lack of Interest in Digital library services	-	-

Thus, Table 5 shows that respondents have little or no reasons for their non provision of digital information services.

(D). Analysis based on research question five

Research question five is aimed at investigated the efforts made by the respondents in acquiring skills to function in the digital era. As result, Table 6 below shows the result.

Table 6: Effort at Acquiring ICT Training

SN	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	Certificate in ICT	5	35.7
2	Diploma in Computer	3	21.4
3	Workshops and Conferences (ICT)	9	64.2
4	Tutored by Colleagues	2	14.2
5	Teaching One self	6	42.8
6	No ICT training yet	1	7.14

All the librarians, except 1 (7.14%), have made effort to acquire ICT skills. The varying ways they have employed to acquire ICT skills are: undergoing certificate courses in ICT 5(35.7%), obtaining diploma degrees in ICT 3 (21.4%), attending workshops and conferences 9 (64.2%), personal development 6 (42.8%) and tutorial assistance from colleagues 2(14.2%).

(E). Analysis based on research question six

Research question six elicited responses on the challenges librarians face in the digital era and the possible strategies to adopt to enhance their role performance in the digital era. Table 7 shows the results.

Table 7: Challenges Librarians Face in the Digital Era

S\N	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	Lack of adequate ICT skills	11	78.5
2	Lack of Training Opportunities	8	57
3	Lack of adequate ICT tools	10	71.4
4	Lack of Maintenance of ICT tools	6	42.8
5	Lack of knowledge of Librarians' emerging role and services in the digital era	9	64.2
6	Lack of access to the digital tools	5	35.7
7	Administrative bottlenecks in the availability, access and use of ICT facilities	7	50
8	Network fluctuations and service failure	7	50
9	Lack of adequate number of ICT librarians	4	28.5
10	The ever-changing and emerging digital tools (overdose)	3	21.4

Table 7 show the respondents agreeing to the array of challenges librarians face in the digital era, with lack of adequate ICT skills having the highest number of respondents i.e. 11 (78.5%). Interestingly, the problem of digital information overdose received the least number of respondents i.e. 3(21.4%). This implies that the librarian is comfortable with rapid changing and emerging digital tools and services. Meanwhile the possible strategies to adopt to enhance their role performance in the digital era are shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Possibilities for Role Performance Enhancement

S/N	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1	Self –Sponsorship to ICT conference and workshops	8	57.0
2	Organisations' Sponsorship to ICT conferences and workshops	13	92.8
3	Provision of adequate ICT facilities	11	78.5
4	Collaborating with other Librarian to keep abreast of developments	7	50.0
5	Involving Librarians in library ICT planning and implementation	11	78.5
6	Uninterrupted subscription and maintenance of Digital services & tools	10	71.4
7	Encouraging and motivating innovative and creative librarians	12	85.7

From the Table 8 above, a list of possible solutions and strategies to adopt towards enhancing librarians' digital roles are shown with their frequency counts. The best of the solutions and strategies, as attested to by respondents, is sponsorship and attendance to ICT conferences and workshops 13 (92.8%).

Discussion of Findings

The emergence and application of information and communications technology (ICT) has necessitated the creation of new and additional roles which library and information professionals have to play. Some of these roles, librarians are already used to performing them in the traditional domain, some others are entirely new. Therefore because of the paradigm shift of the service environment from physical to virtual, it becomes expedient that librarians know and master the emerged role with the accompanying digital services.

This study has shown a high level of awareness of the existence of the emerged role of librarians in the digital era but a low level of the librarians' performance of such roles. Though the respondents were reticent in identifying their reasons for not performing the digital roles, their responses from an item in the questionnaire

on challenges provide a clue. Many of the respondents 11 (78.5%) indicated lack of requisite skills to handle the digital tools and provide digital services.

The same pattern of findings was observed for the emerged information services. Words were not matched with actions. In other words, there is a low level of provision of digital information services in the academic library not necessarily because the tools are not there (even though they are inadequate), nor access not allowed for them yet (as is the case presently in this library), but because of lack of adequate skills. It is pertinent to mention here that the librarians were asked to indicate their ability to perform such digital functions in or outside their library.

In terms of effort made by the librarians to acquire skills to function effectively in the digital era, the study reveals that their efforts both individually and cumulatively are not enough and therefore needed to be beefed up. Many of the respondents do not have adequate training on ICT. Some of the respondents said they teach themselves while some said their colleagues teach them ICT skills. A good number who indicated attendance to conferences and workshops may not have attended those meetings more than once or twice. This is because sponsorship to conferences and workshop in this institution is not easy to come by because of harsh economic situation in the institution.

The study actually reveals that there are problems which militate against the librarians' optimal functioning in the digital era \environment. The high point of the problems is lack of adequate skills and competences. There is also the revelation that librarians are not bordered by the information over load, a characteristic feature of the digital environment. As solutions, librarians suggested sponsorship to conferences and workshops, adequate ICT facilities (which of course will allow for practicing with them), encouraging and motivating innovations and creativity not stifling or slaughtering it in the altar of bureaucracy.

Conclusion

Libraries today are not just about books; they are about information. Traditionally, librarians are in the forefront of information and they will continue to be there but through altered and information technology driven means. They must however be thoroughly equipped by reason of the necessary skills and competencies to function in this new environment. This study reveals that the librarians under study are quite aware of the technology driven role and its accompanying services which have and are still emerging in a digital library environment, but inadequate skills and competences have debarred them from fitting well in these emerged role and services. It is therefore strongly

recommended that library managers create the enabling ICT environment for the librarians to function.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made.

1. Effort should be made by academic libraries management to secure sponsorship to conferences and workshop for library staff.
2. Librarians should demonstrate strong enthusiasm toward ICT issues by exploring training and sponsorship opportunities.
3. Library schools should focus on areas relevant to the changing times and environment and inculcation of modern skills to fit properly into this digital era.
4. Librarians should be very adaptive to the ever changing and increasing digital technologies.
5. Academic libraries should have fora where librarians who have gone for one training or the other should share their knowledge with colleagues.

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Delivery of Information Literacy Instructions by Personnel in Nigerian Academic Libraries: Current Contexts and Future Pathways

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Abstract

An integral aspect of personnel issues in the 21st century librarianship is the pattern of information service delivery to users, especially information literacy (IL) instruction. This is based on the fact that library and information personnel (LIP) are expected to inculcate IL skills in students so as to position them as lifelong and independent learners. However, in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, IL is yet to take firm root due to various factors as the reviewed publications revealed. This paper examines the state of IL in Nigerian academic libraries, proposes a curriculum for IL instructions and includes strategies which LIP should adopt in repositioning IL in Nigerian tertiary educational system.

Keywords: Information Literacy Instruction, Academic Libraries, Nigeria

Introduction

It is no longer debatable that Library and Information Science (LIS) is undergoing rapid transformation and transition, of which the destination is not yet known. It is the responsibility of Library and Information Personnel (LIP), the practitioners, to put it on the right track. This depends on the nature, approach and methods of service provision by the practitioners in their various domains to users. An integral aspect of personnel issues in the 21st century librarianship is the pattern of information service delivery to patrons, especially information literacy (IL), which is the major factor LIP are contributing towards the growth, advancement and sustainability of education across the globe. IL is an aggregate of skills, abilities, and competencies which information users need to possess to be able to determine their information needs, develop and apply information search

strategies, access and use all forms of information resources in line with ethical issues associated with information utilization. It is a set of skills that are essential for 21st century students and necessary for active participation in the knowledge economy.

In Nigeria, many LIPs are yet to brace up to the realities of the 21st century with reference to service delivery. Those shouldered with the responsibility of delivering IL instructions to students are not living up to expectations, as they still apply traditional approach in its delivery. This is not healthy for the contemporary direction tertiary education is heading to due to sophistications in information and communication technologies (ICT), especially the Internet. The question is 'do LIP have the IL skills to be able to impart the same to users?' A teacher cannot teach what s/he is not familiar with. According to Issa (2012), personnel, especially professionals, are the foundation for effective and efficient library and information services. Rather than becoming non-useful and irrelevant, the educational and guiding roles of librarians are now more important than ever, such that librarians now need new and updated education to fulfill their roles, in this case the delivery of IL instructions to users. In that direction, Dastgerdi (2009) affirms that today's information users still need librarians for a variety of reasons, such as increasing amount of information and continuous information updating; array of media and formats for information; lack of confidence in accuracy of information; need to evaluate information resources according to professional standards; scattering of information in different electronic and print sources; and users' need for knowledge of different types of information resources and search strategies. These are issues that are embedded in IL. Thus, the proliferation and explosion of information necessitated the concerns about information literacy, which LIP in tertiary institutions are expected to deliver to their patrons, mainly students. There are cases where students, both undergraduates and postgraduates, will write and submit assignments, term papers and seminar papers with evidence of poor IL skills, lack of understanding of information ethics and without documenting the sources of their information. Even when they do, set guidelines and styles were never adhered to, thus, neglecting the essential bibliographic elements. In addition, part of the major reasons why postgraduate students stay longer than necessary in their programmes was as a result of lack of IL skills. Thus, bearing in mind the gains and benefits of IL skills in the society, there is a need for LIP to reposition themselves to be able to deliver result-oriented IL instructions to students. Be that as it may, this paper examines the practice of IL in academic libraries in Nigeria, proposes a curriculum for IL instructions, and makes recommendations

with a view to charting a course on the future direction.

Information Literacy and Information Literacy Instruction

Over time, the concept of IL has evolved in the light of changing demands in the information needs of societal members. While bibliographic instruction and user education have been emphasized in the past, information literacy is now the new focus. Instead of simply teaching students how to use the library catalog, physical collections, and primary sources, students are taught how to critically apply IL skills for information search and utilization so as to emerge as lifelong learners (Matthews, 2007).

Nilsen (2012) quoting Spenser sees IL as the ability to identify, locate, evaluate, organise, and effectively create, use and communicate information in order to address challenges. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (2003) defines IL as:

... an intellectual framework for identifying, finding, understanding, evaluating and using information. It includes determining the nature and extent of needed information; accessing information effectively and efficiently; evaluating critically information and its sources; incorporating selected information in learner's knowledge base and value system; using information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose; understanding the economic, legal and social issues surrounding the use of information and information technology; and observing laws, regulations, and institutional policies related to the access and use of information.

The information literate students, which are the focus of LIP, are individuals prepared for lifelong learning, because they always find the information needed for any decision or task at hand. IL is for all disciplines, for all learning environments and for all levels of education. In 2000, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) of the American Library Association (ALA) released the information literacy competency standards for higher education, with performance indicators and outcomes to guide personnel in academic libraries while delivering IL instructions. The standards and performance indicators are shown in the table below:

Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education	Performance Indicators
<p><i>Standard One</i> IL student determines the nature and extent of the information needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. IL student defines and articulates the need for information. b. IL student identifies a variety of types and formats of potential sources for information. c. IL student considers the costs and benefits of acquiring the needed information. d. IL student re-evaluates the nature and extent of the information need.
<p><i>Standard Two</i> IL student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. IL student selects the most appropriate investigative methods or information retrieval systems for accessing the needed information. b. IL student constructs and implements effectively designed search strategies. c. IL student retrieves information online or in person using a variety of methods. d. IL student refines the search strategy if necessary. e. IL student extracts, records, and manages the information and its sources

<p>Standard Three IL student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. IL student summarizes the main ideas to be extracted from the information gathered. b. IL student articulates and applies initial criteria for evaluating both the information and its sources. c. IL student synthesizes main ideas to construct new concepts. d. IL student compares new knowledge with prior knowledge to determine the value added, contradictions, or other unique characteristics of the information. e. IL student determines whether the new knowledge has an impact on the individual's value system and takes steps to reconcile differences. f. IL student validates understanding and interpretation of the information through discourse with other individuals, subject-area experts, and/or practitioners.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> g. IL student determines whether the initial query should be revised.
<p>Standard Four IL student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. IL student applies new and prior information to the planning and creation of a particular product or performance. b. IL student revises the development process for the product or performance. c. IL student communicates the product or performance effectively to others.
<p>Standard Five IL student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. IL student understands many of the ethical, legal and socio-economic issues surrounding information and information technology. b. IL student follows laws, regulations, institutional policies, and etiquette related to the access and use of information resources. c. IL student acknowledges the use of information sources in communicating the product or performance.

(Source: www.acrl.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/strndards/standards.pdf),

(NB: IL in the table means Information Literate)

These standards and performance indicators have various outcomes, which space

may not accommodate in this paper, but is available in the website. The outcomes are for evaluation purposes to ascertain the success of information literacy programmes. IL instruction is a recent variant of a succession of similar and overlapping terms that includes bibliographic instruction, library instruction, use of library, user education, and library research instruction. However, IL instruction has overtaken the rest due to developments in ICT and the shift in the information seeking behaviour of users to the online environment. The ability to teach information literacy skills presents a challenge to library personnel in both undergraduate and postgraduate education in the 21st century. Students enter tertiary institutions with diverse experiences and learning styles. Many may not have used libraries in their secondary schools. Some may appear to be confident using popular search engines such as Google because they have computer skills. Majority of others may not be computer literate and have not used the computer before. No matter the situation, it is the responsibility of librarians to inculcate IL skills in the students if there are enabling environment in their institutions.

There are two major curriculum models for IL instruction. They are the compartmentalized curriculum model and the distributed curriculum model (Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2003). In the compartmentalized or separate curriculum model, students enroll in a course dedicated to the development of IL skills. Compartmentalized courses are often taught by library personnel. Collaboration between library faculty (personnel) and discipline-specific faculty is often missing in the compartmentalized model (Trail and Hadley, 2010). In an integrated or distributed curriculum model, IL skills are embedded into the curricula of discipline-specific courses. According to The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (2003), this model allows students to “understand the importance of information literacy within their chosen fields”, allows for broader and higher-level research opportunities, and “engages faculty members by making them partners in IL instruction”. However, in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, the usual practice is the compartmentalized model.

State of Information Literacy Instruction in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria

IL has not been accorded its rightful position in the curriculum of higher education institutions in some African countries (Ojedokun, 2007), of which Nigeria is not left out. In addition, information literacy skills have not taken the desired firm root among students in Nigerian tertiary institutions (Rasaki, 2008; Issa, Amusan and Daura, 2009). This is as a result of many factors. Instead of putting necessary factors in place for the delivery of IL instruction, libraries and their services are neglected in the educational system of Nigeria by the various

governments and administrators of tertiary institutions. In tertiary institutions in Nigeria, there are several cases where IL courses are taught as zero credit courses (Ogunmodede and Emeaghara, 2010), in many others as an optional course under the whims and caprices of academic departments to decide whether their students will offer it or not (like Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State), and few as credit-bearing course.

However, in a devastatingly understated depiction of the silent contest over the status of IL in tertiary institutions, Stubbing and Franklin (cited in Coonan, 2011) note that 'academic departments are always very supportive of the idea of enhancing students' information literacy skills, but are reluctant to fully embed these competencies into the curriculum'. This finding echoes a theme that appears over and over again in the literature of library and information research, that there is simply "no room in the curriculum" for information literacy. Yet if high-level information handling skills are crucial to the academic mission, and if IL is fundamental to learning in all contexts, why does IL not form a significant element in the mainstream academic curriculum of tertiary institutions in Nigeria? A number of reasons for this issue, echoing many previous findings in the literature were identified. Among these reasons are the following:

- Lack of understanding of IL by administrators and lecturers'
- Confusion of IL with ICT competency; and
- Student misconceptions that they know how to search the Internet, therefore they believe they are information literate (Coonan, 2011).

Badke (2010) goes further, claiming that IL has been rendered "invisible" within the academia by a number of causes:

...because it is misunderstood, academic administrators have not put it on their institutions' agendas, the literature of information literacy remains in the library silo, there is a false belief that information literacy is acquired only by experience, there is a false assumption that technological ability is the same as information literacy, faculty culture makes information literacy less significant than other education pursuits, faculty have a limited perception of the ability of librarians, and accrediting bodies have not yet advanced information literacy to a viable position in higher education.

The lack of understanding noted in both quotations can be traced to a conflict of perception around the nature of information and how to handle it. This conflict has led to a separation between the functional and intellectual aspects of the term 'information'; and within this conceptual conflict, IL has become

reductively aligned with low-level, functional or basic skills. The confusion of information literacy with IT competency identified both by Badke and by Stubbings and Franklin offers an example of this reductive alignment. It is an issue that has been addressed well, clearly and often in library literature. The Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (2000) recognises that information technology skills are 'increasingly interwoven' with IL, but that IL 'have broader implications for the individual, the educational system, and for society' and that IL abilities 'may use technologies but are ultimately independent of them'. Bruce (cited in Coonan, 2011) describes the distinction between IL and IT literacy as "the difference between the intellectual capabilities involved in using information, and the capabilities required for using technologies that deliver or contain 'information'".

Personnel in Nigerian academic libraries engage in library tour, orientation sessions and use of library training (Baro and Zuokemefa, 2011), instead of a holistic IL programme. The delivery of IL requires a contemporary approach. To equate it with teaching students how to use a library is as short-sighted as assuming that driving a car simply requires that a person knows how to step on the gas pedal (Badke, 2010). The study by Idiodi (2005) identifies parallel lines in the theory and practice of IL in Nigeria and other countries with established IL traditions. In an empirical investigation by Madu (2010) in Nigerian federal universities, the findings show that most staff and students surveyed had no clear understanding of what IL is all about. That of Ntui, Ottong and Usoro (2012) reveals that the surveyed tertiary institutions in Nigeria paid inadequate attention to IL programmes. Barriers such as lack of interest by the management of tertiary institutions, lecturers and students; inadequate human resources to handle IL instruction; and lack of facilities were identified by Baro and Zuokemefa (2011) as obstacles to IL programmes in Nigeria. Best practices in information literacy instruction suggest the collaboration between library personnel and departmental faculty members (Buck, Islam, and Syrkin, 2006; Martin and Rader, 2003). But this is not the case in Nigerian tertiary institutions, as afore-stated.

A Proposed Curriculum for Information Literacy Instruction in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions

After assessing the IL programmes of some tertiary institutions in the USA, UK, Canada, and Asia, and bearing in mind the information environment of the 21st century Nigeria, the following content of IL is proposed, subject to expansion, for delivery to tertiary students in Nigeria:

- Academic Libraries: overview, resources and services;
- IL: overview, historical development, and competency standards for higher education;
- Information sources;
- Information retrieval systems and information access tools;
- The digital age and the Internet;
- Reading strategies, studying habits and communication skills;
- Issues in information ethics intellectual property, censorship, intellectual freedom, open access, copyright, plagiarism, citation and referencing;
- Time management.

The choice of the subheadings is based on the skills which tertiary education students are expected to possess so as to function optimally, not only in the contemporary Nigerian society, but also across the globe. A careful evaluation of the subheadings in the proposed curriculum will no doubt, if properly structured and delivered, inculcate the necessary IL skills in students so as to position them as lifelong learners. In addition, the curriculum content will lead to the integration of moral and ethical consciousness in information utilization in the younger generation so as to possibly eradicate impunity and unethical practices associated with the use of the intellectual content of others.

Library and Information Personnel and the Repositioning of Information Literacy Instructions in Tertiary Institutions

Personnel in academic libraries in Nigeria have a necessary role to play in repositioning IL instructions in tertiary institutions. IL involves the inculcation of essential necessary skills to find, understand, evaluate and use information in all available formats, both print and electronic for teaching, research, and learning as a normal lifelong competence. Academic library personnel therefore face the challenge of a paradigm shift from the traditional use of library teaching to imparting information literacy skills in users (Akintunde, 2007). This is premised on the fact that the information seeking behaviour of 21st century users have shifted to the online environment, thus requiring the integration of IL skills for them to be in tandem with the realities of the digital era.

LIP in tertiary institutions should review the traditional use of library curriculum and come up with a holistic one, as proposed above, that will address and impart IL skills in students who are majorly computer and online-savvy individuals.

These students see the Internet as the first port of call when their information need arises, and they are always online with their hand-held devices. This curriculum review should be done in line with the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (2000) and other relevant inputs to reflect the information environment in Nigeria. In addition, the task of teaching IL by LIP should include getting students to become aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and then addressing those weaknesses in a pedagogically sound manner (Tamil and Hadley, 2010).

Heads of academic libraries, university librarians, polytechnic librarians, and college librarians should devise workable strategies for pushing the frontiers of IL instructions mainly in academic board meetings of their various institutions. This involves enlightening members of the academic board, which comprises of management teams of tertiary institutions, deans, heads of departments, professors and top senior lecturers, on the importance and essence of IL instructions to students. This should be carried out with a well-structured working document stipulating the overview of what IL entails the standards, the performance indicators, the outcomes and the strategies for IL delivery as well as methodology for evaluation. This would address the barriers to IL programmes such as lack of interest by management of institutions (Baro and Zuokemefa, 2011), lack of understanding of IL by staff (Madu, 2010), and inadequate attention to IL programmes in tertiary institutions (Ntui, Ottong and Usoro, 2012).

LIP should conduct empirical researches and develop frameworks for the evaluation of IL instruction to ascertain whether the desired skills are imparted in students and also indicate areas for further improvement. Such evaluation, which should reflect and be in tandem with the performance indicators and outcomes of IL competency standards for higher education, should be practically-oriented, so as to discover if the recipients possess the following: knowledge of determination of information needs and the development of information seeking/searching strategies; knowledge of accessing and retrieving information resources both online and onsite with information access tools such as full-text databases, web directories, subject gateways, online catalogues, uniform resource locators, and others; knowledge of evaluating information resources from all formats and sources, both print and electronic; knowledge of applying reading strategies such as the SQ4R (survey, question, read, record, recite, and review) system and the development of reading habits; knowledge of ethical, legal and social issues associated with information utilization such as copyright, plagiarism, citations, referencing, and acknowledgement of sources; knowledge of the strategies for creating new knowledge with the integration of accessed and used information

resources; as well as knowledge of applying time management skills.

Conclusion

A well planned, coordinated and implemented IL programme both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels of tertiary education will impart the consciousness of information utilization in students. Such will address the challenge of plagiarism that is getting out of hand in our tertiary education system. Stakeholders in the educational enterprise should collaborate for the achievement of this noble objective of IL. Administrators of tertiary institutions should support the development of their libraries to reflect the 21st century outlook and encourage their academic librarians in their business of inculcating IL skills in students. In that direction, library personnel that are still using traditional names such as use of library or user education should change it to information literacy with reviewed curriculum. Above all, institutions that are yet to make information literacy instruction a compulsory course for all departments should as a matter of urgency do so with at least two-credit unit allotted to it. By so doing, the future of tertiary education in the country will definitely be bright and compete favourably with others in developed countries.

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The Nightmare of Retirement in Nigeria: The Librarians' Perspective

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Abstract

This paper discusses the nightmare of retirement among civil and public servants with particular reference to librarians in Nigeria. It examines why retirement causes mixed feelings rather than seen as a rewarding experience to the retiree. It highlights the conditions for retirement, types of retirement as well as its benefits. Some of the benefits for the retiree include an opportunity for self-appraisal and actualization, opportunity to serve one's local community better as well as get close to his creator God. The paper considers delay in receipt of retirement benefits from employers, unclear vision of what next to do after retirement and fear of death among others as the challenges that confront the retiree. The paper concludes that overcoming retirement challenges necessitates husbanding one's income, entering into savings bond or thrift and living within one's means.

Keyword: Retirement in Nigeria, Librarians, Retirement from Public Service, Nigeria.

Introduction

One of the worrisome issues that generate mixed reactions from civil and public servants in Nigeria, particularly librarians is the question of retirement. Ordinarily, retirement from public employment is supposed to be a rewarding moment, a period one looks up to with fulfillment that he or she has contributed his or her own quota to the development of the organisation that employed the person or contributed to the development of the society. It is supposed to be a period of self-appraisal of what the person has achieved while as a civil or public servant. Retirement provides a person with an opportunity to be himself or herself once again, free from the dictates, control, directives and discipline of paid employment. It is a period one appreciates his or her worth, rejoins his kits and

kins in social and political fora, remain part of the locale he once distanced himself from due to the exigencies of paid employment.

In most countries the idea of retirement is a recent phenomenon as it could be traced to the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Prior to that, most due to low life expectancy and the absence of pension regime. This was the case until Germany became the first country in 1880 to introduce retirement (Wikipedia, 2012). According to Webster's Universal Dictionary and Thesaurus (2007), retirement refers to the act of retiring or the state of being retired; seclusion; privacy. Reitz (2004) puts retirement in a more poignant way to mean resignation from a position of employment with the intention of ending a career, a step usually taken at an age when the retiree is in a position to live on other income such as pension, retirement savings, social security amongst others. Early retirement is resignation before the age at which most employees cease working, sometimes in response to a special offer of eligibility or compensation made by management otherwise referred to as golden handshake. Under a policy of mandatory retirement, employees are not allowed to continue working beyond a certain age. Whether retirement is done within the stipulated mandatory age, retirement conjures up emotions of freedom and some-times sadness. It is the ability of the retiree to create room for survival after disengagement from paid employment that makes a difference between one retiree and the other. The strength of this paper lies in its ability to show how retirement can be rewarding when viewed against the backdrop of the tension it generates when one is notified of his period of retirement from service.

Conditions for Retirement

One of the questions that continue to attract wide comment in labour matters is why do people retire even when they are still energetic, young and able to continue to perform whatever responsibilities that are given to them. But just like Holy Bible states in Ecclesiastes chapter 3: that there is time for everything - a time to be employed and a time to retire from work. When people are employed, the first thing they begin to calculate is the time they will retire. This shows that retirement is real and brings joy and satisfaction to the retiree. Still, many civil and public servants are often saddened when they are reminded of their, possible retirement. The question then is: why do people retire even when they are not willing to. There are many conditions that necessitate one's retirement from his paid employment. We shall look at these from the following standpoints: legal prescription, social, economic, health, religious and even voluntary conditions.

Legal prescription: Organisations like libraries in their statute books stipulate conditions of engagement, as well as retirement. The Nigerian labour law stipulates the age level when certain categories of workers must retire from public paid employment. For librarians in government service, they retire at the age of 60 if civil servants or 65 if academic librarians in university and research libraries. Just recently, ASUU fought vigorously and obtained a legal backing which allows lecturers including librarians of professional rank to retire at the 65 years for those below the rank of Professor. So the law in most countries like Nigeria stipulate the mandatory age of retirement.

Social condition: A librarian can be forced to retire before the mandatory age of retirement due to physical and mental incapacitation arising from accident, traveling outside of the country, fraud or criminal activity. Again one can be forced to retire from an establishment out of frustration especially if the person feels humiliated because of his state of origin. For e.g. using a junior to boss a senior because of where he comes from, or unjustifiable demotion can cause a person to retire from service. Again, prolonged stagnation on one grade level, wrong salary placement, lack of training opportunity, refusing to convert a librarian after professional qualification etc can force one to retire from his or her work. Also lack of productivity and incompetence can make a person to retire before time. Many librarians have been forced to retire on account of not being citizens of the state where they work.

Economic condition: Poor remuneration can make one to retire. In most cases, many librarians are poorly paid. Poor reward system often leads to frustration and eventual disengagement from service. Other factors may include unpaid arrears of salaries, lack of working tools, distance of residence to work place, fear of death due to bad network, excessive tax and economic difficulties like high school fees for children, insecurity, punitive transfer, economic crime like embezzlement, fraud and so on.

Health condition: People also retire from service due to ill health that may have incapacitated such a person. Prolonged illness such as paralysis, blindness, diabetes, mental instability, or any other illness that a library or organisation may consider intolerable for the continued service of such an employee.

Religious factor: Faith-based retirement is also common place among employees. People retire from service to go into full apostolic ministry. They found churches, ministries and prayer houses. Others may even retire to be trained as clergymen whereby they enter for training of clergymen. Some also go into faithbased retirement with dubious religious plans especially if the person finds out that he is not making any reasonable progress on the job such as overall decline

in productivity.

Types of Retirement

There are different ways through which a librarian can embark on retirement. The major types are statutory, forced and voluntary retirement.

Statutory retirement. This refers to retirement of librarians based on the attainment of the required age or years of service. In Nigeria, statutory retirement is applied to librarians in two different ways namely attainment of statutory age limit and completion of certain years of service. For librarians employed by governments especially those in public, school and national libraries, they may retire on the attainment of the compulsory retirement age of 60 years or 35 years on the job (whichever one that comes first). For librarians in tertiary institutions especially universities, retirement is simply on the attainment of 65 years or 70 years for those on professorial rank.

Forced retirement. This is a type of retirement that is imposed on a librarian before the statutory age or year of service. This type of retirement is not with the consent of the librarian but imposed on him by library management or government. A number of reasons may cause a library staff to be forced on retirement. A possible reason for forced retirement is a means of meting out punishment to a librarian who has been found guilty of a grave offence such as embezzlement. In this situation, it is usually the last possible way of saving the officer from outright termination of his appointment. Another possible reason for forced retirement is on health ground. This becomes inevitable when physical conditions occasioned by illness or accident no longer allow the librarian to perform his duties. Rather than sack the officer, library management may give him the option of forced retirement to enable him go with all his benefits.

Voluntary retirement. This is a situation where a librarian decides to quite his job after putting in the number of years that entitle him to pension. What makes it voluntary is the fact that this retirement is without outside prompting but rather based on personal decision. However the librarian may have some factors that prompted him to arrive at the decision of voluntary retirement. Some librarians retire voluntarily on account of being bored by the job or frustrated with the cataloguing/classification of outdated materials or being forced to take instructions from people they consider their juniors in the office. Some others voluntarily retire in order to engage in private practice or business which they consider more lucrative or that offers them more freedom and respect.

Benefits of Retirement

Is there any benefit in retirement? Certainly yes. Retirement has a lot of benefits to a person.

- (1) It enables a person to manage himself or herself better.
- (2) It is an opportunity for self-appraisal and actualization one to be himself again.
- (3) It is an opportunity for wealth creation as against wealth sharing.
- (4) It makes a person to be closer to his God
- (5) It is an opportunity to serve one's local community better
- (6) It affords one the opportunity to have full control of family and children.
- (7) It is also a period to make new friends

Fear of Retirement (Challenges of Retirement)

In spite of all the obvious benefits of retirement, many librarians are so afraid to retire. When retirement is mentioned before an employee such as a librarian, the person gets so scared. Why? There are many reasons

- (1) Inadequate preparation before date of retirement
- (2) Children yet to be fully trained
- (3) Delay in receipt of retirement benefits from employers
- (4) Location after retirement (Quo Vadis)
- (5) Relocation after retirement
- (6) Conflict at home without relations
- (7) No house or place to reside in the village
- (8) Unclear vision of what next to do after retirement
- (9) How to maintain family without a job
- (10) No skill or desire for further wealth creation
- (11) Split personality
- (12) Fear of death

Overcoming Retirement Challenges

- (1) Husbanding ones income - try to save money while in service. Open accounts for each of your children no matter how small that is deducted from your salary month.
- (2) Enter into savings bond or thrift arrangement where you can share it yearly or bi-annually. Try not to use your thrift money for other things other than for the future.
- (3) Find little investment while in service
- (4) Buy shares in companies

- (5) Acquire landed property if you can
- (6) Enter into cooperative venture
- (7) Learn alternative skill before retirement
- (8) Find non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- (9) Minimize waste through social engagements such as drinking in beer parlours etc.
- (10) Live within your means. Avoid unnecessary emulation or competition.

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Information Search and Retrieval in the Internet Age: Is there any Need for the Librarian?

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Abstract

It is common knowledge that the Internet has become one of the most important channels of communication of our time. As a result, researchers and information seekers are already thinking that the Internet has provided answers to all their research queries and as such have displaced the need for librarians. This problem moved the researchers to study information search and retrieval in the internet age, with the aim of finding out the difference between librarians and non-librarians in Internet information search and retrieval, particularly in the context of research and scholarship. The survey research method was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of librarians and non-librarians in Abia State. A convenient sample technique was employed to select sixty (60) respondents comprising of thirty (30) librarians and thirty (30) non-librarians. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire of four (4) questions. The findings show that librarians who possess Computer/Internet skills perform better than non-librarian counterparts in Internet information search and retrieval. This is because, librarians were found to understand information reliability, search techniques and other information search and retrieval characteristics better than non-librarians. The researchers concluded that the librarian is not only indispensable in the knowledge society, but is still very relevant to varying category of information users and researchers in this Internet age.

Keywords: Librarians, Non-Librarians, Information Research, Internet age.

Introduction

The Internet has become one of the most important channels of communication of our time. It is a powerful search tool for retrieval and dissemination of information of all kinds for varying types of information users. The genesis of this success is traced back to the use of computers for typesetting. Thereafter, there has been a steady and unlimited conversion of volumes of data available in abstracting and indexing services, from varying fields of knowledge, into machine readable forms called databases (Singh, 2008). Significantly, the reference database built daily through abstracting and indexing services - is the hub of today's inexhaustible search and retrieval of information on the Internet. This is because the reference service provides access to bibliographic details of intellectual contents of scholarly works like journal articles, research reports, conference proceedings, books, etc. This development however has allowed the Internet to be stuffed up with information contents of all kind. Meanwhile, the librarian is fully aware of this development and is not in doubt of the potentials of the Internet in information provision, search and retrieval (Sharma and Sharma, 2007). This paradigm shift has not only led to the evolution of digital or virtual libraries, but has also made librarians to acquire basic and for some others, an in-depth knowledge and use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in rendering their services. One of these ICT tools in question in this study is the Internet.

The proliferation of information on the Internet has not only made librarians and researchers to often observe a mass of documents from which specific information of need is to be retrieved, but has also created a problem of distinguishing between the reliable and the unreliable Internet information, of which majority are not certified or peer-reviewed. This, no doubt, has made finding reliable information on the Internet increasingly difficult. Yet, many researchers and information seekers think that the Internet has and would continuously provide answers to all their research queries. More to it, librarians in some institutions are becoming worried on the submissions of researchers and prospective library users that the librarian is seemingly irrelevant to them since they can have whatever they want only with a click on the Internet. To this point, arguments seeking the reason why librarians' services should still be retained since information and knowledge are now available on the Internet are common. These observations therefore has led to the objectives of this study which sought to know if there is a difference between librarians and non-librarians in Internet information search and retrieval in the context of research and scholarship. Specifically, the researchers are set to find out by way of comparison:

1. The computer/Internet experience margin between librarians and non-librarians
2. Librarians and non-librarians knowledge and perception of qualities of a certified and reliable Internet publication.
3. Librarians and non-librarians knowledge of search sites and query signs used for Internet search and retrieval of information

Literature Review

The librarian as a profession. Researchers have asserted that libraries and librarians may no longer be relevant in this Internet age (Chad and Miller, 2005; Hirschey, 2006). When Ramos (2007) asked if there is any need for librarians in the electronic age, his audience, partly made up of rice researchers across the globe, had their faces radiated with the answer No. But sooner than they had finished nodding their heads in pity for the library profession in this age, they suddenly became dazed when they had to accept that only the librarian understands the taxonomy of information. By the end of the forum, the rice researchers had already accepted that the nitty-gritty of bibliography, indexing, abstracting and referencing services the profession of librarians is the backbone of information movement on the Internet. Needless therefore, to say that the researchers had no need for the librarian.

In today's library, librarians are changing from manual concentration to embrace electronic applications, carrying their activities along with the two practices. Nowadays, librarians are made to possess the skills and knowledge of computer operation, services and its internet application (Ogunsola, 2011). A librarian is that professional that would define, determine and source for reliable information materials for meaningful scholarship exercise. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labour (2012) posits that librarians are professionals that verify all information and knowledge. They examine information to use for research by asking or providing answers to the questions of: what organization is responsible for the information site? How accurate is the information likely to be? Why the site is made available? How comprehensive is the information? et cetera.

Internet and research. The internet is like a large highway that connects one to millions of other people and organization. Unlike typical highways that have people and things from one location to another, the internet moves ones ideas and information. Rather than moving through geographic space, one moves through cyberspace the space of electronic movement of ideas and information (Unagha,

2008). The internet is now widely used as a communication channel. It is a twentieth century information resource designed for everyone. Data on the internet can also be called online information. Consequently, many research groups have set up websites and gopher sites summarizing their areas of study. The internet has become one of the most important channels of communication of our time, a powerful search tool for retrieval and dissemination of information. In Unagha (2008) foreword, Afolabi maintains that knowledge of and ability to operate the computer is a highly essential skill that must be acquired. The acquisition of this knowledge enables an individual to have access to vast electronic information and information resources that could be useful to the individual and the community of information users, resulting to saying that such an individual possess internet/computer skills.

Information retrieval is imperative for research. It is essentially the act of finding documents that are relevant to a user's information need. It involves searching a collection of documents to identify those that relate to an information problem at hand. This is the process that require that there be a user who has an information need and is attempting to satisfy the need by getting only those documents that are relevant to that particular need (Ononogbo, 2010). Moreover, noting that a searcher of information is not necessarily the person who stored the document in the first instance, appropriate search techniques with corresponding search engines are vital for internet searching. Unagha (2008, p.150) says that searching information on the internet requires the use of certain terms and keywords relevant to the subject searched. He further writes that a search engine and a query string are crucial for searching information on the Internet. Search engines are piece of software which trawls the web looking for sites to include in its database searching through a lot of documents, lists, etc. in other to find out information. It can be concluded that while search engines are Internet site tools designed specifically for surfing the internet, query strings are Internet operator's words and signs keyed in to the search portal in order to download specific web pages and publications on the Internet. So, a query string is the actual text that a researcher enters in a search query box, which includes keywords, letters, digits, punctuation and other characters that Hock (2001) has called Boolean operators. Some examples of the Boolean operators are: (), AND, OR, NOT, +, -, "", etc.

Meanwhile, Ononogbo (2010) has stated that most internet documents are not reliable or certified. He maintains that many online researchers end up in retrieving, printing out and taking home to their research desk, documents that are unreliable for research. A refereed document, he narrates, is one that is

peer-reviewed, meaning that a group of people, in most cases called the editorial board, came together to evaluate and approve such document for publication. His further argues that a certified and reliable internet publication is one that is peer-reviewed, published in reputable journal, book or any other scholarly site. The common characteristics of reliable publications include references to justify the citations, availability of numerical data and other sources of factual information, correct grammar and spellings, comprehensive, depth of coverage and timely to the subject concerned.

Methodology

The survey research method was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of librarians and non-librarians. The convenient sample technique was employed to select sixty (60) respondents comprising of thirty (30) librarians and thirty (30) non-librarians. By purpose, the researchers ensured that the sample population (60) comprised of computer/Internet literates. This is because not everyone may be computer/Internet literate. The librarian respondents were drawn from (10) libraries chosen randomly from a long list of academic and research institutions libraries in the south region of Nigeria (see Table 1). The non-librarian respondents are researchers identified and chosen at random from the Digital Library of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUUAU) and the computer unit of National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), Umudike. These two centres are extensions of the institutions' libraries where lecturers and researchers browse the Internet for information to support their teaching and research activities. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire of four (4) questions. Questions number two (2) and four (4) jointly contain three sub-questions that are open ended, while the rest of the questions in the questionnaire are open closed. The instrument was distributed and collected by hand and by e-mail. Analysis was done descriptively.

Table 1: Distribution of Librarian Respondents Per Institution

Institutions	Number of Librarians
Abia State University Library, Uturu	3
Anambra State University Library, Uli	3
Ebonyi State University Library, Ebonyi	3
Federal University of Technology Library, Owerri	3
Federal Polytechnic Offa Library, Kwara State	3
Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Library Umudike	3
National Root Crop Research Institute Library, Umudike	3
Rivers State University of Science and Technology Library	3
Shell Petroleum Library, Warri	3
Anamdi Azikiwe Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka	3
Total	30

Data Analysis

Objective One: The computer/Internet experience margin between librarians and non-librarians.

Table 2: Distribution of Computer/Internet Experience Margin between Librarians and Non-Librarians

S/N	Item	Respondents	
		Librarians	Non-Librarian
	Experience of computer/Internet operation and services		
1	Less than 5 years	5 (17%)	10 (33%)
2	More than 5 years	25 (83%)	20 (67%)
	Total	30 (100%)	30 (100%)

The first objective of the study is to ascertain the difference, in terms of years of knowledge and use of computer/Internet, between librarians and non-librarians. Table 2 above shows that 83% of the librarian respondents have more years of experience against the non-librarians who has only 67%.

Objective Two: Librarians and non-librarians knowledge and perception of qualities of a certified and reliable Internet site or publication.

Table 3: Respondents' Knowledge of Internet Information Publications Certified and Reliable for Research.

I can differentiate certified internet documents from the uncertified?	Librarians	Non- Librarians
Yes	24 (80%)	9 (30%)
No	6 (20%)	21 (70%)

Table 4: Respondents' Perception of Features of Certified and Reliable Internet Publication

List of Responses and The Frequency Counts			
Librarians	frequency	Non-Librarians	Frequency
Publication must contain:		Publication must contain:	
Abstract	7	References	4
A title	9	Evidence of originality	1
name of the author(s)	9	Date of publication	2
References	6	Time of publication	2
Valid web address	3	Web address	1
Updated information	3	PDF format	1
Detailed bibliography	1	Names of author(s)	5
Citation in the body of the work	7	Qualification of author(s)	2
Peer-reviewed	2	Years of experience in the subject field	1
Name publisher	8	Address of recognized institution of learning	1
Authority of the writer on the subject	1	Official website	1
Date of publication	6	Certification of the internet provider	1
Currency	3	Be visible	1
Place of publication	5	Be accessible	1
Publication number	1	An introduction	1
Subject area of document	1	A premise	1
		A conclusion	1

NB: The responses above are given by the respondents who noted that they can identify internet certified publications and differentiate them from the uncertified

The second objective of the study sought to know, first, the knowledge of respondents to publications that are certified and reliable for research. Thus, 80% of the librarians against 30% of non-librarians accepted knowledge of certified and reliable Internet sites or publications. They agreed that they can differentiate them from the uncertified ones (see Table 3). Secondly, the view of respondents as to what features justify a certified and reliable Internet site or publication was also sought (Table 4). Librarians pointed out features like title, name and authority of author(s), name of publisher, abstract, citations in the work, reference, date and place of publication, as things a certified Internet site or publication possesses. On the other hand, the non-librarians pointed out features like names of authors, references, and qualification of author and others as typical characteristics of certified and reliable Internet publication.

Objective Three: Librarians and non-librarians knowledge of search sites and query signs used for Internet information research.

Table 5: *Distribution of Search Sites Respondents Use for Internet Research*

Librarians		Non-librarians	
Internet search sites	Freq.	Internet search sites	Freq.
www.aginternetnetwork.org (Agora)	5	www.devilfinder.com	16
www.sciencedirect.com	5	www.askme.com	4
www.oaresciences.org	6	www.google.com	28
www.nigerianvirtuallibrary.com	7	www.amazon.com	4
www.yahoo.com	6	www.answer.com	2
www.google.com	10	www.yahoo.com	10
www.mama.com	4	www.astatalk.com	14
www.cnet.com	1	www.brothersinfo.com	1
www.askme.com	5	www.getjar.com	1
www.allexperts.com	1	www.wikipedia.com	15
www.yahoosearch.com	6	www.foa.org	2
www.emerald.com	2	www.askjeeves.com	1
www.ask.com	4	www.ebook.com	2
www.en.wikipedia.org	5	www.mama.com	6
www.nexis.com	2	www.ask.com	5
www.business.com	5	www.lycos.com	2
www.askmenow.com	5	www.netscape.com	1
www.nigerianmasterweb.com	1	www.ebay.com	1
www.agriza.com	2	www.aolsearch.com	3
www.who.int/hinari (Hinari)	5	www.altavista.com	2
www.googlebooks.com	7	www.excite.com	6
www.agrisurf.com	4	www.gigablast.com	1
		www.freebook.com	4
		www.webcrawler.com	1
		www.usda.gov	1
		www.jstor.org	1
		www.msn.com	2
		www.bing.com	2
		Agora	1
		www.tecal	1
		www.academicjournals.com	1

NB: Search sites listed above are the ones given by respondents. Most respondents only listed a few of the sites and rounded off with "et cetera".

The third objective of the study is to verify librarians and non-librarians knowledge of search sites and query signs used for Internet information research. Table 5 above shows the names and web address of the Internet search sites respondents know and use during Internet research. The frequency counts show that the Google site tops the table of respondents' Internet site use. It is also seen on the table that non-librarians know more search sites than librarians, even though the latter (librarians) listed more subject based sites than the former (non-librarians).

Table 6: Distribution of Query Signs used for Internet Research

S/N	Search query strings	Frequency of Responses	
		Librarians	Non-Librarians
1	“ ”	5	3
2	+	5	5
3	-	5	4
4	AND	10	6
5	OR	10	5
6	NOT	10	4
7	()	5	4
8	Keywords	15	10
9	Sentences	1	4
10	None in this list	-	1

Furthermore, objective three also sought to know the query signs used by librarians and non-librarians. Some established query keys were outlined for respondents to indicate the ones they use in composing search words for tagged information retrieval. Table 6 shows that keywords are mostly used by both groups of respondents. Essentially, it is observed that librarians use keywords, Boolean operators (and, or, not), double quotation mark, with plus and minus signs, more than the non-librarians.

Research Findings and Discussions

From data gathered in this study, it is imperative to state that:

- i. Computer/Internet use experience of librarian respondents exceeded that of the non-librarians.
- ii. Librarian respondents who know and listed the features of a certified and reliable Internet publication exceeded the non-librarians.

- iii. Librarians who know and listed the features of a certified internet document were more definite, accurate and consistent in the features listed unlike the non-librarians.
- iv. The number of Internet search sites known and used by non-librarians exceeded the number known and used by librarians.
- v. Non-librarians listed more names/addresses of Internet search sites than librarians.
- vi. Majority of the Internet search sites listed by non-librarians are general and usually operated with metadata search, while the few listed by librarians are subject gateways that specialize on specific fields of knowledge.
- vii. Eleven Internet search sites that are subject based are listed by librarians while only six of such are given by non-librarians.
- viii. 'Google' is the search site listed more by both respondents.
- ix. Librarians accepted the usage of keywords, Boolean operators and other query signs in retrieving internet information simply and fast more than non-librarians.

Based on these findings, it is not gainsaying that librarians who possess Computer/Internet skills perform better than non-librarians in Internet information search and would retrieve a more detailed, definite and reliable research information than the non-librarians. Already Hock (2001) has submitted the importance of query signs for executing definite search and retrieval of information. It is imperative to note the assertion of Ononogbo (2010) that many online researchers end up in retrieving, printing out and taking home to their research desk, documents that are unreliable. For instance, the high dependence of non-librarians on Google, Yahoo and other general search sites for Internet research can result in retrieving more of unreliable information than the reliable. But this certainly is rare with librarians, and this is because they have not only been trained in the business of information classification and description, which is the backbone of Internet success (Singh, 2008) but also possess the ICT related skills to practice in today's society (Ogunsola, 2011; Ramos, 2007).

Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study, the difference between librarians and non-librarians who both possess internet skills is clear. Librarians, unlike the non-librarians, among other things, are able to identify Internet search sites that are subject based. Librarians know and perform better in narrowing down Internet search hits

because they employ Boolean operators (query strings) in composing search queries. Besides, librarians are very conversant with keywords appropriate for themes and subject areas, and as such download research document most specific to information needs of clients. This could be as a result of the traditional training and skills of librarians as indexers. It is common knowledge that terms and keywords used for indexing text documents, which has given way for online database creation today, are determined by librarians. Thus, these attributes has not only made the librarian indispensable in the knowledge society, but also assert that a librarian is still very relevant to information users and researchers in this Internet age.

As a result, the study recommends that one, the services of librarians, even in this electronic information age, should not be despised. Two, research institutions and universities should endeavor to allow and support their librarians to acquire computer/Internet skills to improve their traditional roles of information identification, classification, organization and dissemination. This therefore calls for equipping libraries of universities and research institutions. This is essential since librarians do better than the non-librarians in Internet information search. Hence, the situation in some universities and research institutions in Nigeria where available computer/Internet facilities is run by the ICT unit independently from the library may not help the growth of research and knowledge in our society in general. Nevertheless, further studies are encouraged.

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Knowledge Management in Corporate Organisations: A Contemporary Opportunity for Information Professionals in the 21st Century Nigeria

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Abstract

Knowledge Management (KM) is a multidisciplinary field that has attracted the attention and interests of scholars in different field such as library and information science (LIS), business administration, management sciences, computer science, information technology and other social sciences. Meanwhile, as assessment of the principles, practices and strategies of KM shows that it has a strong relationship with and acts as a contemporary nomenclature of LIS. However, in Nigeria, the practice of KM in virtually all sectors of the country's economy is still in infancy, as revealed in the literature reviewed. This paper examined the relationship between KM and LIS, assessed two KM jobs in the areas of job descriptions and requirements, explained KM skills for information professionals, and discussed strategies which LIS schools should adopt in training prospective information professionals for the emerging opportunities in KM in Nigeria.

Keywords: Knowledge Management, Information Professional, Corporate Organisations, Nigeria.

Introduction

Knowledge Management (KM), the process of identifying, documenting, organizing, storing and sharing knowledge in organisations for sustainability and competitive advantage, is a concept that has attracted a lot of controversies among scholars in the academic world across the globe. Different branches of knowledge such as business administration, library and information science (LIS), computer science, public health and public policy claim ownership of KM. In other words, KM has attracted enormous attention from a number of disciplines, and

these disciplines have influenced and informed KM thinking. This can be seen in the context of philosophy in defining knowledge; cognitive science in understanding knowledge workers; social science in understanding motivation, people, interactions, culture and the environment; management science in optimising operations and integrating them within the enterprise; information science in building knowledge-related capabilities; knowledge engineering in eliciting and codifying knowledge; artificial intelligence in automating routine and knowledge-intensive work; and economics in determining priorities (Kakabdse, Kakabadse and Kouzmin 2003; Ndwandwe and Onyancha, 2011). This multidisciplinary nature of KM has drawn inputs from people in different fields, including economists, human resource professionals, information technology professionals, and LIS professionals; and are largely attributed to the evolution of information and knowledge society (Kumar, 2010; Hazeni and Martin, 2006), dominated by innovations in information and communication technologies (ICT).

In Nigeria, the practice of KM, as the nomenclature appears, is still in infancy. This may be attributed to the fact that the country is still a developing one. Many sectors of Nigeria's economy are the exclusive reserve of the government, and yet to be liberalized for investors, both local and international, to fully come in for competition. Also, the security situation in the nation is not left out, as it limits the participation of foreign investors and entrance of multinational corporations to establish branches in the country, which will in turn require the services of practitioners in KM. Studies have shown that KM practices, capabilities and knowledge sharing are missing, neglected and not known in various sectors of the nation's economy, such as in tertiary academic institutions (Osunade, Phillips and Ojo, 2007; Krubu and Krubu, 2011), insurance industry (Epetimehin, 2011), banking institutions (Sodiya, Onashoga, Dansu and Adeleye, 2006), enterprises (Apulu and Latham, 2009) and the oil and gas industry (Rabiu, 2009). In addition, some international organisations operating in the country seems to be paying more attention to KM than national organisations.

Be that as it may, it is a fact that things are changing, governments are in transition, new policies are emerging, privatization of government-owned companies and corporations is the language of the present Nigeria, technological innovations are on the increase, and as well, the practice of KM in industrial, economic, scientific, engineering, technological and corporate organisations are equally expected to follow the trend. Therefore, librarians and information practitioners (LIP) are also expected to get prepared for the enormous opportunities that are emerging in KM. This paper examines the relationship of KM with LIS, cases of KM opportunities in Nigeria with job descriptions, skills for KM as well as

recommendations on how LIP should advance and take possession of the opportunities in KM. Thus, this article is not only an advocacy for information professionals, but also aims at bringing to the attention of information practitioners, the skills and knowledge required for knowledge management opportunities, which are fast emerging in Nigeria.

Knowledge Management and Library and Information Science

According to Ndwandwe and Onyanha (2011), the growth of KM, both as a research theme and an organisational strategy, has gained significant attraction throughout the past decade. Despite this growth, there is no consensus among KM scholars and practitioners on what constitutes the concept. As such, there is no universally agreed definition of KM. Noticeably, defining the scope of KM remains one of the unresolved issues in the KM discourse. This is evident from the variety of definitions that have been put forward to describe the term (Ndwandwe & Onyanha, 2011):

- KM in its broadest sense is a conceptual framework that encompasses all activities and perspectives required to gain an overview of, deal with, and benefit from the corporation's knowledge assets and their conditions.
- KM addresses the generation, representation, storage, transfer, transformation, application, embedding, and protecting of organisational knowledge.
- KM is mainly concerned with the development and exploitation of the knowledge assets of an organisation, with a view to furthering the organisation's objectives.
- KM is the identification, optimisation and active management of intellectual assets, either in the form of explicit knowledge held in artifacts or tacit knowledge possessed by individuals and communities.
- KM is the identification, acquisition, utilisation, support, maintenance and disposal of knowledge assets for the purpose of adding value and benefitting all stakeholders.
- KM involves the identification, organisation, dissemination and use of this knowledge to generate value in the achievement of the organisation's objectives..
- KM is a strategy that transforms organisational intellectual goods into higher productivity, new values and competitiveness increase.

However, the definitions share three common features. First, KM is an organisational strategy to enhance competitiveness; second, it is a systemic

process of leveraging the organisation's intellectual assets; and third, KM involves the process of identifying, capturing, sharing and creating organisational knowledge.

KM is a multi-disciplinary, broad, multi-functional area, covering many aspects used to improve the performance of organisations as well as secure and sustain competitive advantage. KM entails capturing the knowledge that employees and customers need at a central repository. It demands for identification of the categories of knowledge needed to support an overall business strategy. It is also the process of collecting, classifying, and disseminating information throughout the organization. KM advocates for the assessment of the current knowledge-base of an organisation, identifying and filling its knowledge gaps, employing ICT to help organize, store information, and provide access to organisation's knowledge (Mutula and Mooko, 2008).

Knowledge Management (KM) is closely related to Library and Information Science (LIS). It is like a new wine (KM) in old bottle (LIS). A number of scholars in LIS field have commented on the relationship of KM with LIS. Some of them, such as Ganguly (2007), have gone so far as to argue that the management of information and knowledge has long been regarded as the domain of LIS professionals, since the librarians and information professionals are formally trained in identifying, selecting, organising and disseminating information and knowledge to users. Onyancha and Ocholla (2009) observe that KM is an extension of what LIS workers have always done the management of information, including records management. Chen, Snyman and Sewdass (2005) observe that information management and knowledge management are similar in that the three contribute to business efficiency and effectiveness, consider the processing of information in some ways, use ICT as enablers, and require skilled and knowledgeable workers. In the words of Tom Wilson, a LIS Professor at the University of Sheffield, UK:

It seems odd that "being a librarian" should need to be redefined as "doing knowledge management"! Particularly as KM is such a contested notion. Many years ago, working in industry as an information officer, I was advised by my boss, the research director, to spend 30% of my time walking around the labs, talking to people, finding out what they needed, finding out what they were doing, learning about the research process, etc. I did so, much to my benefit and, in fact, to the benefit of the organization - saving them thousands of pounds on one occasion by putting two people in touch who were working in different labs on the same problem, without being aware of one another. That was in 1958 - we didn't need KM then to understand the role of the librarian. (www.researchgate.net/profile/Tom_Wilson)

The above statement is a clear indication that KM practices has been in existence for years and executed by librarians and information practitioners. Thus, according to Mutula and Mooko (2008), KM activities include knowledge creation, knowledge taxonomy or classification, knowledge packaging, knowledge audit, knowledge mapping, research, indexing, publications, communications, software development, and knowledge retrieval. These are operations and practices that are carried out by information professionals in their various domains. Therefore knowledge management and library and information science have things in common, may be the nomenclature could become a contemporary name for LIS.

Knowledge Management in Corporate Organisations in Nigeria

In a study by Aina (2007) on African library and information job opportunities, he identified job markets for information professionals in traditional library settings, emerging information markets and information for the development of rural communities. Knowledge management belongs to the emerging information markets and information for the development of rural communities. The emerging market provides job outlets for information professionals, who in addition to the basic library skills they possessed, are also adept at ICT, publishing, archives and records management, public relations/advocacy and basic statistics skills. Information for the development of rural communities is an attractive job market for information professionals, especially at local governments levels, non-governmental organisations, community based organisations, and political constituencies, in areas such as HIV/AIDS activities, agricultural extension programmes, as well as public health campaigns and activities.

A look at two major job advertisements for knowledge management in Nigeria, as it relates to job description, requirements, duties, responsibilities and skills.

I. knowledge management coordinator - KPMG Nigeria

Job description: KPMG (www.ng.kpmg.com) operates as an international network of member firms offering audit, tax and advisory services. They provide multidisciplinary professional services to both local and international organizations within the Nigerian business community. In view of that, the organisation requires the services of a Knowledge Management Coordinator, who is to deliver excellent and value-added services to their clients. The primary responsibility of the KM coordinator is to manage, develop, coordinate, maintain and disseminate the firm's KM processes and

resources. Major focus is to update content that will aid in business development and knowledge on all market indicators, work with all knowledge managers to update content on the local intranet, provision and general dissemination of information. Principal duties and responsibilities include:

- KM coordination
- develop content of the micro-web and extranet, including the locations of where to find KPMG credentials, lines of businesses, industry business models, practices' websites, proposals and other marketing and business development materials. Be able to use and apply this knowledge to assist in business development opportunities.
- assist division knowledge managers to develop knowledge management strategies and process suited to their needs, ensuring adherence to brand central and brand regulatory compliance in capturing and submitting high quality and value content to the micro-web.
- assist practitioners in navigating knowledge bases and creating content documents according to standards. Edit commentary/interpretations of content experts and internal submissions.
- assist with monitoring documents submitted to the micro-web for compliance with brand and image regulatory policies, procedures and practices, and ensure that high quality standards and taxonomy are enforced.
- assist in training staff in knowledge management competency for sharing information
- monitor and maintain subscription to online resources and periodicals that are relevant to the organisation such as fortune magazine, economist, time newsweek, Harvard business review; business directories, the banker magazines and others.
- making relevant and useful desktop tools and reports available to users.

Competency and skills requirement are:

- organizational and coordination ability
- web management and development skills (html, css and JavaScript)
- technology appreciation, including a working understanding of Microsoft Office Share Point Server
- good computer skills and searching the Internet
- good interpersonal skills and ability to work in diverse teams
- strong relationship building and networking skills
- timeliness of deliverables related to research
- minimum of a first degree, second class lower, in any Social Science

course.

([Http://www.informationnigeria.org/2010/11/kpmg-nigeria-jobs-knowledge-management-coord.html](http://www.informationnigeria.org/2010/11/kpmg-nigeria-jobs-knowledge-management-coord.html))

II. knowledge management officer/monitoring and evaluation university research company, an NGO in Abuja

Job description: University Research Co., LLC (URC) is a global company dedicated to improving the quality of health care, social services, and health education worldwide. With its non-profit affiliate, the Center for Human Services (CHS), URC manages projects in over 40 countries, including the United States. Established in 1965, it offers a range of technical assistance to strengthen health and social systems and service quality by empowering communities and health workers to identify and scale up locally appropriate solutions to critical problems. Thus, the NGO needs the services of a Knowledge Management Officer. Responsibilities of the officer shall be to:

- coordinate data collection, entries and analysis of quantitative and process data.
- effectively monitor and generate data from tools for measuring standards and quality improvements.
- develop a work plan for monitoring and evaluation and KM.
- develop a strategy that guides knowledge management.
- develop a quality improvement performance monitoring plan.
- manage database and conduct data cleaning of the National Orphans and Vulnerable Children Information System (NOMIS).
- manage knowledge effectively at an organisational and team level.
- look for knowledge and successes from community quality improvement teams.
- document knowledge, success stories and case studies.
- write and compile reports from quality improvement activities.
- establish procedures to look for KM and share best practices.
- compare and analyze performance of different quality improvement teams.
- develop and facilitate group discussions and interviews with best and struggling performing teams.
- identify and validate knowledge management.
- actively promote the knowledge agenda within and beyond the

organization.

- determine factors for success and failures from piloting standards.
- use quantitative measures to prove and relate with outcomes.
- create a knowledge sharing plan, create awareness and promote change agents through use of outcomes indicators.
- adapt and apply KM for future organizational plans to be used by planners, implementers and at different policy levels.
- facilitate connections, coordination and communications.
- responsible for harvesting knowledge and ideas generated and presenting them in creative and innovative ways.

Qualifications and requirements include:

- minimum of a university degree in any discipline.
- relevant experience in capacity building for diverse targets, particularly in indigenous organizations
- ability to communicate clearly the knowledge agenda, have good listening skills and be sensitive to organizational opportunities and obstacles
- computer skills with good working knowledge of Microsoft office and Internet applications are essential.
- able to identify and critically assess the value of knowledge in the organisation.
- fluency in both written and oral English required.
- ability to use new communications, collaboration and information technologies effectively support the KM processes, within and between organizations.
- willingness to travel within Nigeria

([Http://mobile.jobberman.com/job/170201/monitoring-and-evaluationknowledge-management-officer-ovc-at-university-research-co/](http://mobile.jobberman.com/job/170201/monitoring-and-evaluationknowledge-management-officer-ovc-at-university-research-co/))

The KM jobs description in the two cases above are in tandem with what is obtainable in Southern Africa as noted by Ndwandwe and Onyancha (2011). According to them, the general themes visible in most advertisements included designing and implementing a knowledge management strategy; identifying knowledge and information needs; conducting research and knowledge audits; developing, implementing and maintaining knowledge repositories/databases; promoting knowledge sharing, building strong networks, designing and implementing a knowledge management policy. Other common descriptions are: capturing,

organising, managing, sharing and leveraging the collective intellectual capital; analysing competitors' activities; auditing and analysing current KM system; general professional support to co-workers, including but not limited to training and use of the data bases; managing, building and maintaining the knowledge management solution; providing support for the establishment and nurturing of communities of practice, including workshops, one-on-one guidance and troubleshooting; helping project identify best practices from own project experience and add them to the best practices compendium; establishing consultation process for identifying and documenting best practices and lessons learned; supporting the development of a knowledge and information system; managing the quality assurance of projects; catalogue management, including codification and meta-tagging, taxonomy, assembling collections, asset management and archiving; as well as implementation of KM initiatives. These descriptions for KM jobs are essential for determining future training and education needs.

Knowledge Management Skills for Information Professionals in Nigeria

According to Gartner Group (Koina, 2002), KM promotes an integrated approach to identifying, managing and sharing all of an enterprise's (organisation's) information assets. These information assets may include database, documents, policies and procedures as well as previously un-articulated expertise and experience resident in individual workers. KM as it is at present goes beyond identifying, selecting, organising and disseminating knowledge. It is mainly concerned with the development and exploitation of the knowledge assets of an organisation, with a view to furthering the organisation's objectives. This fact points to a number of potential deficits in the skills of information professionals that would inhibit the maximization of the contribution that they could make in KM initiatives. These are lack of organisational political understanding, unwillingness to address issues of return on investment, insufficient understanding of business practices, and limited access to high-level decision-making (Ndwandwe and Onyancha, 2011).

There are skills which facilitate the practice of KM. The skills are for developing, implementing and maintaining the appropriate technical and organisational infrastructure to enable knowledge sharing in organisations. While some of these skills are possessed by library and information practitioners, there are some that they do not possess. Konica's (2002) assertion can be seen in the table below.

Table 1: Konica's Knowledge Management Skills for Information Professionals

<i>KM skills information practitioners may have:</i>	<i>Attributes information practitioners may not necessarily have:</i>
Flexibility	Lateral thinking
Team skills	The ability to think in terms of the enterprise rather than the professional function
People skills	The power to persuade, to 'sell' themselves and their skills in an organisational context
Communication skills	The capacity to manage, rather than merely endure change
The ability to assess and evaluate information	Advocacy
How to create, record and store information effectively	Strategic planning ability
How to use information tools effectively	Marketing capacity
How to train and educate the client	Able to analyse their roles and identify areas for improvement
Are client service oriented	Project management capacity

(Source: Koina, 2002)

KM is the future for information professionals. Well-executed KM has the ability to enhance collaboration, improve productivity, enable and encourage innovation, and to cope with information overload and deliver only the essentials. This might sound like a job description tailor made for information professionals, but their presence in the field so far has been overshadowed by business experts, computer programmers, and systems engineers, due to various skills they are lacking. These are mainly ICT skills for the design, manipulation and maintenance of new technologies that facilitate the creation, transfer and sharing of knowledge. Knowledge managers need to be excellent interviewers and listeners. They need to understand how people think, not just what they know. Information professionals often have a background which covers the management of day to day activities in a library office or department, but this is radically different from the business processes of a large-scale company or organization. Harnessing organizational knowledge requires understanding of the processes that developed it. Information practitioners need a strong understanding of business models and the management process.

Taxonomy or organization of knowledge is the defining characteristic of information centres and libraries over the decades. This aspect of KM will be a strong ground on which information professionals will have a distinct advantage over other entrants into KM with other backgrounds. Even in LIS schools, information professionals were taught how to create classification systems especially for subject-based resources in information centres of corporate

organisations with specific mandates. Information professionals need to develop the idea of creating company and organizational specific classification systems instead of relying on a universal scheme like Dewey Decimal or Library of Congress systems, which may not present the true picture of organisational knowledge system. Knowledge taxonomies must be highly specialized and presented in a language that the end-users (employees of the organization or company) understand. KM taxonomies should reflect the way users think in their day-to-day work. The difference between fitting content into a system, and creating a system from scratch to reflect a body of content, may be a roadblock for many information professionals seeking to make the transition to knowledge taxonomist. Modern library systems rely on the ability to create cross-references and other relationships between subjects. In KM, these multiple navigational points of entry are even more important. Moving towards a concept-based indexing will replace the idea of main headings and added entries with preferred terms and synonyms. In addition, designing and manipulating a large number of terms for indexing, sorting, and searching requires specific knowledge about the way language works, both symbolically on a morphological level and in the minds of knowledge providers and seekers. Even in the design of a mono-lingual taxonomy by a native speaker and subject expert, linguistic analysis needs to be an explicit step in the taxonomy design process. Also, much taxonomy even goes further to become full ontologies or semantic networks of business related information. Bryar (2001) defines ontology as "a logical array of subject concepts, and relationships, and it includes a methodology for developing sub-topics, overviews, and new subject relationships." Information professionals will have to think well to embrace the idea of navigational semantic networks and flexible evolving ontologies.

KM brings with it not just a new way of looking at information, but a new set of tools to manipulate and disseminate data that was once considered far outside the domain of the library. Large scale collaboration, document management, and search tools all require technology skills. More likely, a knowledge worker will have some level of involvement in either the planning and developing or purchase of some of these tools. In many cases, already existing technologies such as instant messengers (IM), email, intranet, and web 2.0 tools such as blogs, wikis and other social media will be the first introduction to an organization's knowledge base. A knowledge manager should be able to learn and apply new technologies with high-level of ICT skills.

The study by Ndwandwe and Onyanha (2011) identified other essential skills required for knowledge management opportunities. These include strong communication (both oral and written), presentation and computer skills, problem

solving skills, teamwork and interpersonal skills, entrepreneurial skills and project management skills. Most jobs require a positive attitude with emphasis on emotional resilience, analytical thinking with attention to detail, ability to work under dynamic situations, result driven, honesty and integrity, ability to work in a team as well as willingness to learn and adapt. In addition, Abell and Oxbrow (1999) state that communication is at the heart of the knowledge management environment, as verbal, written and presentation skills are required in order to influence, persuade, negotiate and share knowledge.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It should be noted that LIS has started on a better footing in KM in Nigeria. The senior manager in charge of knowledge management at the Central Bank of Nigeria, Dr Paul I. Oluikpe, who holds masters and doctorate degrees in knowledge management from Loughborough University UK, had his undergraduate degree education in the LIS School at Abia State University Uturu (ABSU) (ng.linkedin.com/..b21;www.lboro.ac.uk/universityhome>internationalstudentprofiles). This is a welcome development, as it is believed that the training he received during his BLS in ABSU motivated and prepared him to embark on postgraduate research in KM.

As noted by Aina (2007), a profession will be respected in a society if there is assurance that trainees in the profession would easily find jobs after graduation. However, a profession will go into oblivion, if after graduation, its graduates are unable to secure employment in the private and public sectors or they are unable to create self-employment. Such a profession would not attract new trainees. The education and training of LIS graduates for 'only' traditional library jobs, due to nature and content of curriculum, is not supported by the researcher. Even the so-called traditional jobs in functional and reputable establishments require contemporary applied knowledge and skills. Education and training in LIS schools should be geared towards producing graduates that would take advantage of the numerous emerging opportunities in KM. Thus, with the direction KM is heading to, due to changes, advancements and developments in the knowledge society, information professionals in LIS schools (the educators) should ensure that their trainees are exposed to an appropriate curriculum that would provide the society with the required skills needed. It is sad to note that the curriculum of some university LIS schools in Nigeria is so dry and stuffed with traditional library courses. They only have introductory course on information science and library automation (Edegbo, 2011; www.Imsuonline.edu.Ng/fac/detail/lisprogramme.html),

with little or no attention to details and realities of the digital era. That of Higher National Diploma (HND) of polytechnic LIS schools as approved by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) is not left out. These emerging opportunities in KM have made LIS schools in South Africa to review and repackage their curriculum content in line with the trends of the knowledge society. Some have even gone to the extent of changing their nomenclature and faculty locations. For example, the Department of Information Science of the University of Johannesburg has changed its name to Department of Information and Knowledge Management, and has moved from the faculty of humanities to the faculty of management, and offers two bachelors degrees - B.A. Information Science and B.Com. Information and Knowledge Management, in addition to post graduate (PG) degrees of masters and doctorates in information and knowledge management (Ocholla & Bothma, 2007).

LIS is a multidisciplinary field that is most affected by the dynamic nature of ICT. This ICT is not just having elementary knowledge of its components and uses in automating library routines, but possessing the skills in deploying it for various information and knowledge management solutions in organisations. Multidisciplinary nature of LIS as seen in the subject-based courses on information sources and systems should be reflected in the content for the training of prospective information professionals. Taking advantage of the emerging KM opportunities by information professionals should start from curriculum review by LIS schools to integrate knowledge management principles, practices and other associated components in their content. Such review should be in line with the requirements in KM opportunities, as described in this paper, which cuts across disciplines like business administration, computer science, management sciences, organisational behaviour, information technology, statistics, psychology and other social sciences, as well as the specific missions of organisations and corporations that are involved in KM.

In addition, the review should be carried out with the combination of product and market needs analysis. Product analysis will involve tracing graduates to their current places of employment and interview them with their employers to determine whether the knowledge, skills and attitudes gained during their training were adequate for their current job requirements. On the other hand, market needs analysis involves searching for job advertisements appearing in major national dailies over a period of years. Then the job details, specifications and requirements in terms of nomenclature of qualifications, skills and attitudes should guide the curriculum review. The plan by the Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) to partner with National Universities Commission (NUC) to review

LIS curriculum in Nigerian universities and bring it in tandem with global best practices, so as to equip graduates with the requisite information age skills, to function in the 21st century is a welcome development (Idoko, 2012). However, it should be carried out with experts in all associated areas of LIS, bearing in mind the emerging trends and opportunities in KM.

LIS schools should encourage their students to take electives from the business and management sciences, and de-emphasise electives from the arts and humanities. LIS schools should mount PG programmes (masters and doctorates) in knowledge management. Such PG programmes may be interdisciplinary in partnership with disciplines like business management, engineering, agricultural and environmental sciences.

KM opportunities in Nigeria are emerging in virtually all areas of human endeavour such as financial institutions, business enterprises, multi-national corporations, ICT and telecommunication firms, non-governmental organisations, oil and gas sector, water engineering, and so many others. In addition, the federal government led privatisation programmes demands that the privatized establishments and corporations will be deeply involved in competitions for service delivery. Therefore KM opportunities will be springing up, as these establishments and corporations will require KM initiatives and practices to remain sustainable and competitive. So, LIS schools should train their products in line with the demands of not only traditional LIS jobs but also emerging KM opportunities in various sectors of the economy.

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Retirement and the Challenges of Survival of Librarians: The Way Forward

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Abstract

Retirement is a critical and inevitable transition that every worker lives to face its reality. Retirement marks the end of a paid employment. Retirees face a lot of challenges for survival. The purpose of the paper therefore is to look into the challenges of survival of librarians after retirement, especially in developing countries like Nigeria. The paper recognizes that librarians, like other professionals face enormous challenges after retirement and therefore need to plan for retirement. In the discussion, the paper looks at the concept of retirement, reasons for retirement, who are librarians and what they do, problems and challenges of survival of librarians. The paper identified entrepreneurship, information brokerage and contract job as possible ways of overcoming challenges of survival of librarians after retirement.

Keywords: Retirement, Challenges, Survival, Librarians

Introduction

In life, whatever has a beginning must definitely have an end. It is only a matter of time. The journey of active work life ends with retirement. After attaining the stipulated period of years in service or age, an employee is expected to bow out of active service baring other factors. Retirement is a process of bowing out of active service in view of certain circumstances arising from old age, illness, attainment of stipulated period of service, disability and or voluntary

disengagement, termination of appointment or compulsory disengagement as required by the law of the land (Nwali, 2009).

Retirement is one of the most important life events any employee will experience from both a personal and financial perspective. It marks a significant change in an individual's life style and any form of change comes with elements of emotion. Retirement does not only apply to the person who has been asked to withdraw from work on account of old age or ill health, but also to all persons who for one reason or the other are no longer on someone's payroll and so must be in a kind of employment in the interest of their health, fighting boredom and depression etc, if not for money. For this set of people, retirement should not simply be a change in their habitual and economic activities alone, rather it is a major emotional event involving a different way of life, never experienced by the individual. In Nigeria today, retirement age ranges between 30 and 35 years in service and possibly till old age, incapacitation or death for the self-employed, but the fact still remains that one day, a letter of retirement shall be handed over to an employee, marking the end of paid employment.

In the advanced and developed countries, it is the responsibility of the employer to ensure the well-being of the employee and the security of their families, not only while in active service, but also at retirement. This is not limited to regular wage payment but ensuring that provision made for old age is faithfully kept. It is against this background that government introduced security schemes and mandates both employees and employers to make different contributions to the scheme, preparatory for retirement. But in Nigeria, no one is sure of these schemes and other contributions for retirement. It is a well-known fact that many retirees have passed and are still passing various levels of harrowing experiences after retirement. Such ugly experiences of some retirees in both private and public sector establishments have made employees dread retirement with passion. The word retirement is dreaded by many basically because of the challenges of survival after retirement. While everybody would want to retire comfortably, the complexity and time required in building a successful retirement plan can make the whole process seem nothing short of daunting. It is known that many powerful societal forces such as longer life expectancies, fewer or decreasing and in some cases unreliable retirement benefits, changing and rising healthcare costs, increasing job insecurity etc create serious challenges for managing life after retirement (Asonibere and Oniye, 2008).

It is against this background that this paper sets out to discuss some of the challenges that librarians face after retirement and at the same time suggest windows of opportunities open to librarians for a purposeful, exciting and

successful life after retirement.

The Concept of Retirement

Retirement as a concept has both old and new definitions. The old definition of retirement signifies when a worker could not do something anymore and he or she is laid off. However, the new concept of retirement is associated with leisure, travel, family activities, hobbies and educational pursuit. The new concept of retirement today is a socially constructed concept that was created as a result of the passage of the Social Security Act, 1935 in America (Asonibere and Oniye, 2008). This act submits that retirement refers to the time when an employee reaches the end of his working career. The age at which an organisation decides to retire its employees may vary considerably from the state scheme. Some organisations adopt a policy of flexible retirement in which employees may leave early (e.g. after 50 or 55) or may stay on after normal retirement age, depending on their fitness and their continuing ability to fulfill their employment contract (Cole, 2002). Torrington and Hall (1998) describe retirement as the formal mood of contract termination. They observe that it is now rare for people to retire abruptly after working at high pressure to the very end. Some sort of phased withdrawal is much preferred so that the prospective retiree adjusts gradually to the new state of being out of regular employment and with a lower level of income. To trim their work force, or other reasons, many employers have been encouraging employees to retire early by providing early retirement windows. These windows mean that for a limited time, the company opens up the opportunity for employees to retire earlier than usual, so as to employ more vibrant workforce (Dessler, 2008). Retirement generally implies the terminal cessation, relaxation or changeover of financially remunerative employment. It is a very important stage of life because it is a period of economic inactivity or a change over in one's economic activity, socially and legally prescribed for workers in later life. Retirement is a phenomenon characterized by separation of the worker from paid employment, which has the characteristic of an occupational or a carryover period of time. It is essentially a period of adjustment (Oniye, 2001 cited in Asonibare and Oniye, 2008).

Reasons for Retirement

According to Alaezi (2010), there are many reasons why people retire from their job. Such reasons can be grouped into two namely; (i) personal and (ii) official.

Personal reasons: Under this category are those for which the decision to retire is taken mainly by the employee himself. Such reasons may include:

- i. To go into business
- ii. To look for power and fame (politics)
- iii. To explore new areas of endeavour for personal or societal benefit.
- iv. On ground of failing health, clear cut physical challenge.
- v. Subjective feelings of diminishing abilities etc.

Official reasons: The second category refers to those cases where the employer takes initiative to prematurely retire the employee or start the process of retirement as a normal end of active work life of the individual with the organization. Some of the reasons may include:

- i. Attainment of compulsory retirement age.
 - ii. Declining productivity
 - iii. Public interest or the interest of the organization.
 - iv. Divided interest on the part of the employee.
 - v. Frequent absence from duty due to failing health or other unfortunate reasons etc.
 - vi. Government policies leading to retirement in an effort to absorb an increasing population of younger people into the work force.
 - vii. Involvement in fraud or other malpractices.
 - viii. Intrigue, false rumour or allegation and the likes against the employee.
- No matter the reason for retirement, whether personal or official, the bottom line is that the retiree needs to be prepared to face the challenges of life after retirement

Who are Librarians and What Do They Do?

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary simply defines a librarian as a person who is in charge of or works in a library. However, more encompassing definitions of a librarian has been given by specialists in the area of library and information science. Reitz (2004) defines a librarian as "a professionally trained person responsible for the care of a library and its contents, including the selection, processing and organisation of materials and the delivery of information, instruction and loan services to meet the needs of users". Crosby (2010) defines a librarian as an information professional trained in library and information science, which involves the organisation and management of information services or materials for those with information needs.

Typically, librarians work in libraries such as public, private, school, special or academic. They also work in information centres and media centres. Some librarians are independent entrepreneurs working as information specialists,

cataloguers, indexers and in other specialized capacities. Traditionally, librarians have been associated with collections of books. However, modern librarians, especially in the information age have gone beyond the collection of books in libraries to deal with information in many formats, including books, magazines, journals, newspapers, audio recordings, video recordings, maps, manuscripts, photographs and other graphic materials. The change in the formats of information carriage and dissemination has added more responsibilities to the work of librarians to include compilation and searching of bibliographic databases, web searching and handling of digital resources. Librarians often provide other information services, including computer provision and training, coordination of public programmes, basic literary education and help with finding and using community resources (<http://en.wikipedia.org//librarian-role>). The new status of librarians in relation to handling of electronic resources and web searches has given rise to the designation of Digital Librarians or simply cybrarians. In the views of Uhegbu (2007) the roles and functions of librarians are viewed within the context of the activities that are obtained in the information industry: acquisition; processing; organization; storage; retrieval; provision and dissemination. In the course of providing these information services, librarians involve in linkage services. This they do by linking users, whether individual persons or corporate entities to other databases or libraries when users information requirements cannot be answered by one database or a library. Librarians in their duties also involve in interface relationship by performing retrieval functions on behalf of users. These roles become necessary because in online databases or libraries, some users do not know how to consult the computer or library catalogue for information retrieval. In such situation, the librarian acts as a liaison or interface between the information system and the user.

The librarian as an archivist deals with archival materials such as manuscripts, documents and records. The systems librarian develops troubleshoot and maintain library systems including the library catalogue and related systems. Electronic resources librarians manage the databases that libraries license from third party vendors. In view of the above, Crosby (2010) attests that in an online environment, the role of the librarian is to manage and mediate access to information that may exist only in electronic form. Today, librarians are held in high esteem in view of their roles in the digital era. As professionals, librarians are employed at various sensitive positions in any establishment to mediate information. They work and retire like other professionals and therefore the need to prepare for the challenges of life after retirement remains paramount.

Problems and Challenges Associated with Retirement

It has been discovered that our society is getting more complex by the day, both by its structure and operational challenges. For this reason, the retired librarian is faced with the problems of longer life expectancy, fewer or decreasing retirement benefit, changing and rising health care cost, inflation etc. When a person is out of job through any means, except illness, old age or permanent disability, the normal thing is to look for another job. The situation becomes more critical if on the contrary the loss of job was due to old age, illness or permanent disability because the victim will have a lot of challenges to grapple with (Dada and Idowu, 2005). The challenges come in the following forms:

Inadequate fund: The first weight-losing problem a retiree encounters is the sharp difference between the monthly salary and the monthly pension. Since the pension is lower, the pains of how to maintain his former living standard become a serious challenge. A major determinant of what one does in retirement is money. Money is needed for the payment of bills that hitherto were taken care of by the office of the librarian. Bills such as electricity, water, telephone pose great challenges, which may result in stress, frustration and consequently high blood pressure for some retired librarians. According to Uzoigwe (1997) cited in Dada and Idowu (2005), worry over finances is usually compounded in Nigeria because of the employer's failure to pay retirement benefits, including gratuity on time.

Challenges in health management: Health, according to the World Health Organisation WHO (1989), is being in a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. It is not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Thus retired librarians tend to face serious challenges in managing their health especially due to inadequate exercise, inadequate funds and psychological imbalance. Such category of retirees might experience some physiological and emotional problems such as moodiness, stomach ulcers, heart diseases, hypertension etc.

Challenge in managing a new and lower social status: For many retirees in the public and private sector, maintaining their former social status, a sense of identity and self-worth without a full-time job is in fact the single most difficult challenge that they have to face. This is as a result of the fact that there are no more junior officers to run errands for them. The sudden realization that they have to do certain things themselves becomes a source of worry.

Difficulty in time management: According to Kolawole and Mallum (2004) cited in Dada and Idowu (2005), one fact of human consciousness is the awareness of time. Humans feel the passage of time in their personal experience and observe it in their environment. Some characteristics of time which must be borne in mind are that time is consumable, it is irreplaceable. Since these characteristics of time

are basic, retirees need to think of how to utilize their time judiciously to avoid boredom, since they may have longer time to themselves compared to when they were in active work.

Overcoming the Challenges of Retirement

In retirement, life can be interesting, exciting, stress-free, joyous and challenging if during your active service adequate preparations were made through savings, acquisition of assets and wise investment to complement pension. Conversely, life in retirement can also be frustrating, stressful and frightening if poor preparations were made before retirement (Zook, 2012). However, no retirement can be interesting without adequate money. Therefore, proper planning and implementation is an essential ingredient in managing challenges of life after retirement. Smallwood (2012) conducted a study on the retirements of senior librarians in the age of economic uncertainty. In the study, librarians of all cadres were asked their thoughts about retirement and whether being a librarian prepared them for any of the challenges often found when in retirement. The consensus was that librarians on retirement should do well to follow their passion and dreams by remaining in the information business through information brokerage.

In the views of Alaezi (2010) the best practical survival approach for the retired librarian who is still healthy enough to work is to secure another employment, probably on contract basis. He opines that the retired librarian as an alternative need a good understanding of the various small business opportunities that exists in the country, especially those revolving round information services. Some of the possible information service businesses he can retire to include; authorship and editorial works, indexing and abstracting, book binding business, book publishing. Other entrepreneurial businesses open to the retired librarian include; bookshop business, cyber café, card/magazine/newspaper shop, literary scout, continuing education centre and stationery store. Any of these businesses will not only keep the retired librarian busy but at the same time provide money to compliment his pension. Above all, the retired librarian should be financially disciplined and focused, live within his means and then strive to increase his means within available resources. The retired librarian must not fold his arms and depend on pension but must find something doing.

Conclusion

Employment is only a short term solution to a long term problem. Retirement is inevitable no matter how juicy a job may be. Stress free retirement requires steady and early sacrifices during employment period. Managing challenges of post retirement life starts with proper planning during active employment. Failure to make retirement preparations in a situation compounded with rising responsibilities and cost of living may degenerate into crisis factor, which if not checked could lead to ugly end of the retired librarian.

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Faculty Status of Librarians: The Distinctions in an Academic and Research Institution in Nigeria

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Abstract

In the college and research system, faculty members contribute to the attainment of the broad objectives of the institution, often described as teaching, research and community service. This study investigates the distinctions in faculty status of librarians in Michael Okpara University of Agriculture (MOUA) Library and National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI) Library both in Umudike. The paper adopted the descriptive survey method to examine the difference in the recognition of the faculty status of librarians in the two institutions. Observation and questionnaire instruments were used to study six (6) of the thirteen (13) librarians found in the institutions. The Association of College and Research Libraries' [ACRL] eight-point standard for faculty conferment constituted the objective of the study. The study shows that the faculty status of librarians in both institutions is different, even though they share the same profession of teaching, research and community services. It is suggested that the Librarian Registration Council in collaboration with the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) should come up with uniform standards for librarians irrespective of the institution of their employ.

Keywords: Librarians, Faculty Status, Academic and Research Institutions, Nigeria.

Introduction

The issue of faculty status for librarians has been a hotly debated topic ever since its inception. While some people believe that librarians have no business operating under the rubric of faculty, others assert that librarians have rightly won the status and must do anything in their power to keep it (Farkas, 2005). Be that as it may, the Association of College and Research Libraries [ACRL] (2007) states that librarians in academic and research institutions make unique contributions to their service community and to education at large and as such must be conferred the faculty status. In their positional document - the most widely accepted tool for measuring standard for faculty status - ACRL (2007) submits that: librarians perform professional responsibilities, have an academic form of governance for the library faculty, enjoy equal representation in all college or university governance, receive compensation comparable to that of other faculty, covered by tenure policies, promoted in rank based on a peer review system, eligible for sabbatical and other leaves in addition to research funds, and do have the same academic freedom protections as other faculty. These are the features of faculty in general and as such are the justification for conferring the faculty status on librarians. Already, Farkas (2005) opines that librarians in an academic environment are teachers, creators of knowledge and professionals in the field (librarianship). This does not include the degrees librarians hold and the knowledge they possess towards the furtherance of teaching, learning and research. Librarians' contributions include developing collections, providing bibliographic access to all library materials, and interpreting these materials to members of the research and university community. They also contribute to the sum of knowledge through their research into the information process and other areas of study, service improvement and the advances in the field result from their participation in library and other scholarly organisations. These are few of the reasons why this paper is not arguing on whether librarians should be accorded the faculty status or ask if they are accorded the status or not, rather this study is aimed at finding out the difference in the recognition of the faculty status of librarians in an academic and research institution.

Meanwhile, as insight to terms that shall be common in this study, the word faculty, according to Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, is a department or group of related departments in a college or university. Faculty includes all members of a particular university or college. In the university system, faculty members contribute to the attainment of the broad objectives of the university, often described as teaching, research, and community service (Salaam and Fatokun, 2011). While a librarian in this study is one who holds degrees in the field of

librarianship and is employed on the teaching or research capacity, usually referred to as an academic staff, the term status is defined as the social or professional position of somebody, in this case the librarians, in relation to others. Essentially, it points at the level of importance that is given to them. Having noted these, now refer back to the ACRL (2007) submissions earlier. It is on the premise of the ACRL eight-point submission that this study shall investigate the distinctions in practice of faculty status in academic and research institutions, using librarians in Michael Okpara University of Agriculture (MOUA) Library and National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI) Library, both in Umudike, as case study.

A Birds Eye View of MOUA and NRCRI Libraries

The library of MOUA Umudike is an academic library supporting the university's tripartite role of teaching, learning and research. The MOUA Library is run under seven departments overseen by Mrs. Ahiaoma Ibegwam (PhD) with the support of Seven (7) librarians and tens of other cadres of library staff. On the other hand, the library of NRCRI Umudike is a research library that is given the title "Information and Documentation Centre" in the institute. The library has four units and exists solely for the purpose of supporting research into root and tuber crop production. Thus, the library provides researchers with publications for reading and studying and also documents and preserves the research findings of the institute, whether published or unpublished. The library is headed by Chief K.F. Okocha with the support of six (6) librarians and other cadres of library staff.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. to ascertain the involvement of librarians in MOUA and NRCRI in professional duties of their departments.
2. to find out if librarians in MOUA and NRCRI have an academic form of governance for the library faculty.
3. to find out if librarians in MOUA and NRCRI have equal representation in all university and research governance.
4. to find out if librarians in MOUA and NRCRI receive compensation comparable to that of other faculty.
5. to find out if librarians in MOUA and NRCRI are covered by tenure policies.
6. to find out if librarians in MOUA and NRCRI are promoted in rank based on a peer review system.

7. to find out if librarians in MOUA and NRCRI are eligible for sabbatical and other leaves in addition to research funds.
8. to find out if librarians in MOUA and NRCRI have the same academic freedom protections as other faculty.

Literature Review

Already, it is common knowledge that librarians in the employ of academic and research institutions are considered members of the teaching or research staff. But this is not the situation when it comes to faculty status. In this case, librarians in the employ of academic and research institutions are not essentially entitled to ranks, titles and faculty governance operated in other faculties (Cary, 2001). According to Reitz (2005) faculty status is the official recognition by a college or university that the librarians in its employ are considered members of the faculty, with ranks, titles, rights and benefits equivalent to those of teaching faculty, including tenure, promotion and the right to participate in governance. Hoggan (2003) explains that librarians are recognized as instructional and research staff, but are often not given the same rank, benefit, and responsibilities as faculty. If librarians do research and serve on faculty senates, then they have better relationship with other faculty on campus, he argues. The research librarians do allow them to better adopt to change and solve problems in a more systematic and effective way. There are lots of benefits attached to the faculty. Faculty librarians' status can bring about increased salaries, though this has not been found consistently across institutions. However, Shapiro (1993) cited in Hosburgh (2011) emphasizes the disadvantages of faculty status to include resentment among other faculty members which seems to be most pronounced at universities, while noting that the terminal degrees of some masters' level librarians is not considered appropriate by the Ph.D holding faculty. This has been a challenge for most librarians and as such has limited their context for the faculty status. Nevertheless, Shapiro's study defends the librarians on the angle of effective services they offer which is assumed important than a mere nomenclature. It should also be noted that the pressure to publish that often accompanies tenure track position can be an enormous source of stress and can actually limit the ways in which librarians are able to contribute directly to the university community.

Hosburgh (2011) in his own view on librarians' role in the academic and research environment maintains that one of the fundamental qualities of librarians' academic status is based on the teaching faculty model. Yet there are those who

believe that librarians should not be held to the same guidelines that are seen in this model: teaching, research and service, rather the clinical model of McGowan and Dow (1995) advocated for academic librarians. According to him, the clinical model was drawn from the medical profession and centers around the idea that teaching, research and service activities focus on the patient. Ekoja and Oji (1999) in their study on the extent of academic status of librarians, found out that librarians engage in many academic related and allied services such as publication and research activities; training and development; teaching and related activities; membership of learned societies and academic board; and community service. Yet, that does not confer them the faculty status, even though librarians also enjoy equality with their teaching colleagues as well as membership of convocation and could vote or be voted for. Chukwu (1998) identifies the challenges facing librarians in academic and research environments to include lack of recognition, unfavorable government legislation, disparity in academic benefits and unusually heavy work load among others. Supporting this, the Report of the Committee on Promotion of Academic Librarians in MOUA, cited in Ugah (2012), observes that there is no discrimination in the assessment criteria of librarians and other academics.

On the angle of typology, there are various schemes for evaluating what type of status a given librarian might have, but one that is particularly useful has been laid out by Bolin (2008). He examined typologies of librarian status across American Land Grant Universities, these being state universities that share the three pronged mission: teaching, research and service. Bolin's examination shows that librarians, proactively, were classed as faculty or staff (under the employment group); dean or directors (under library administration); professors and other teaching parallel rank (under the ranking system); senate members (under faculty senate); teaching or academic appointment tenure (under tenure eligibility). Bolin's (2008, p.223) study further show that the status typology frequencies of librarians across institutions, particularly the academic institution were: professorial 42 percent, other ranks with tenure 28 percent, other ranks without tenure 10 percent and non-faculty 20 percent. The rationale for this typology is that professorial rank is an obvious category, because it is the universal faculty teaching model.

One of the fundamental qualities of librarian faculty status is that it is usually based on the teaching faculty model. Yet, there are those who believe that librarians should not be held to the tenure and promotion guidelines that are seen in this model, namely: teaching, research and service. ACRL conducted a survey in 1999 of academic libraries which included a series of questions designed to

determine the extent to which institutions offer faculty status to librarians. The area in which librarians most often responded that they are not on equal footing with their teaching counterparts was salary scale, benefits, and appointment period. As Cary (2001) points out, "tenure and peer review were also areas where a significant number of librarians indicated they are not on equal footing with academic faculty, with 35.5 percent indicating they were not covered by the same tenure policies as other faculty and 35.2 percent indicating they were not promoted through the ranks on the basis of professional proficiency and effectiveness via a peer review with standards consistent with other faculty.

Furthermore, through comparison of the conditions of faculty status given to librarians at the different types of institutions, certain patterns were brought to light. Librarians at institutions granting Bachelor of Arts degrees reported the most inequality in the area of salary. Additionally, librarians at institutions granting Bachelor of Arts degrees were less likely than librarians at other types of institutions. Wikipedia published a guide to the professional status of librarians in the United States and other places, which presents the extract as follows:

Love it or you hate it, faculty status, the tenure track, and variations of these designations are facts of life for a majority of academic librarians. As such, peer review in one form or another are among the most relied-upon validations of librarians work when up for review. One form of this is the external peer review that is sometimes soliciting external reviewers, it's usually important that the request be directed toward librarians with similar status.

Meanwhile, in September 2007, ACRL constituted a committee that carried out a survey of the law librarians' tenure and employment status. 175 law schools are listed with the primary designations of tenure-track, continuing appointment, and employees at will. The findings were geared towards the categories of: librarians with faculty status and tenure, librarians with faculty status but no tenure, librarians without faculty status, librarians without faculty status but with status similar to tenure. First, it was shown that the institutions that ranked librarians as faculty members with tenure (first category) are one hundred and eighteen (118) and include American University, Washington, DC; Appalachian State University, Boone, NC; Urburn University, Arburn, AL; Augusta State University Augusta, GA; Austin Peay State University, Clarkville, TN; Binghamton University, State University of New York; Boise State University; and, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH; and tens of others. Second, the institutions that adopted librarians with faculty status but no tenure (second category) are thirty-five (35) in number and include Ashland University Library, Ashland University, OH; Baptist Bible College Library; Baton Rouge Community, Baton Rouge, LA; The

Catholic University of America Washington, DC; and, Elon University, Elon, NC. etc. Third, the institutions that rated librarians without faculty status (third category) are thirteen (13) in number and comprise of Arora University, Cornell University, Gallandell University Library; George Washington University-the Gelman Library; Harvard University; Texas Christian University, and others. Four, the institutions that rated librarians as having no faculty status but conferred with status similar to tenure are nine (9) and include ASU Libraries - Arizona State University; Bridgewater State College, Princeton University; Temple University; University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill; University of Manitoba; University of Washington; Wayne State University; and, Yale University. Thus, by this survey provided by the ACRL, it is evident that librarians in different institutions are not enjoying same status the faculty status, even though majority of the institutions confer them the status. Hence, this study examines the situation in Nigeria, seeking to find the distinction, if any, in academic and research institutions.

Methodology

This is a descriptive survey method which employed observation and a simple structured questionnaire as instruments for data collection. Population of this study consists of all librarians in MOUA and NRCRI, both in Umudike. There are a total of seven (7) librarians in MOUA and six (6) in NRCRI and this translates to a total of thirteen (13) librarians. Thus, thirteen (13) copies of questionnaire were administered to all the librarians under study, but only six (6) was completed and returned. Thus, data analysis was based on the 6 instruments and the results were presented using percentage table.

Table 1: Distribution of Faculty Status Adoption in MOUA and NRCRI

S/N	Faculty Criteria	MOUA		NRCRI	
		YES %	NO %	YES %	NO %
1	Involvement of librarians in professional duties in departments	100	-	100	-
2	Librarians have an academic form of governance for the library faculty	33.3	66.7	100	-
3	Librarians have equal representation in all university and research governance	100	-	66.7	33.3
4	Librarians receive compensation comparable to that of other faculty	100	-	33.3	66.7
5	Librarians are covered by tenure policies	100	-	-	100
6	Librarians are promoted in rank based on a peer review system	100	-	66.7	33.3
7	Librarians are eligible for sabbatical and other leaves in addition to research funds	100	-	66.7	33.3
8	Librarians have the same academic freedom protections as other faculty	100	-	100	-

From the table above, librarians in MOUA are almost operating on the faculty standards, except on the contending issue of academic governance pattern (See criteria 2 on Table 1). The professional services of classification, cataloguing, indexing and others are being executed by the librarians at MOUA. The university library of MOUA is headed by a librarian ranked and addressed as University Librarian and not Library Dean or Professor. Librarians have equal representation in all university and research governance. The librarians receive compensations comparable to other faculty. The University Librarian is covered by the tenure policy, just like faculty Deans. The additional benefit enjoyed by the University Librarian is that she is in the university management alongside the Vice Chancellor. Both of them are academic staff appointed on a five-year single tenure. The promotion and assessment of librarians takes the same form with other faculty. To appoint a librarian, the candidate must show evidence of research, publications, community services and other scholarly activities. They are eligible for sabbatical and other leaves in addition to research grant upon a successful proposal.

So, back to governance status (criteria 2 on the Table), it is true that the library has departments running under it, but they are not comparable to other faculty departments, essentially in faculty senate representation. Although in recent times, the heads of department in MOUA library are paid headship allowances comparable to that of their colleagues in other faculty departments, but office impress usually provided for the later are not provided for the former.

Besides, it is observed that faculty community of MOUA has never accorded librarians faculty status neither are there agitations for such from the librarians. This reality in MOUA is in line with the assertion of Hosburgh (2011) who maintains that even though ACRL recommends the conferment of faculty status to librarians, but hardly do institutions implement fully at any given time the eight-point standards. Moreover, in a case where the librarian is not bordered with the situation, nothing would be done. Hence, the experience in MOUA where the present University Librarian made a case for librarians' representation in all university, faculty and research governance board (See criteria number 3 on Table 1) and won it is an encouraging move for the profession. Maybe, if other librarians become proactive to faculty conferment demands, one day it may be granted to the profession. What then is the case? The case is that the librarians in the employ of academic and research institutions are considered members of the teaching or research staff, engage in research and community service, but are not conferred the faculty status (Cary, 2001; Reitz, 2005).

Meanwhile, in NRCRI the case is a little different. Librarians at NRCRI engage in professional services of the profession such as cataloguing, classification, indexing and abstracting of information resources. They enjoy an academic form of governance for the library faculty. This is seen in the uniformity of administration in the institute where the head of the library is referred to as the Director of the department just as it is in other departments of the institute. While the librarians at NRCRI have equal representation in all research governance, they do not receive compensations comparable to other faculty (departments involved in research). The librarians are not given all the research grants granted to other faculty members. The librarian (Director) at NRCRI is not covered by the tenure policy, just like other faculty Directors. At the position of a director, the staff remains on the position till retirement. The promotion and assessment of librarians takes the same form with other faculty. Librarians are required to "publish or perish". They also show evidence of research, publications, community services and other scholarly activities. They are eligible for sabbatical and other leaves, but are not in the practice of seeking and getting research grants.

Now, it can be seen that the situation is a little different in NRCRI. It is not because the institution is only into research and not into teaching and awarding of degrees like the university. After all, they are into learning, research and community service, which are faculty characteristics. So, it is wrong to think that the research institutions should be judged differently from the academic institutions. It should be noted that the faculty issue was born by a joint

association of the two colleges and research libraries and as such refer to them as same in faculty standards (ACRL, 2007). So far therefore, Table 1 has shown clearly the distinctions in faculty status of librarians in MOUA and NRCRI Umudike.

Conclusion

This is a comparative study of the faculty status of librarians in MOUA and NRCRI both in Umudike. It has been shown that the faculty status of librarians in both institutions is different, even though they share the same profession of teaching, research and community services. The reason for the disparity may be because of their varying institutional pursuit MOUA is pursuing furtherance of knowledge through teaching, learning and research, NRCRI is doing same through centrally through research.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, it is hereby recommended that the Library Registration Council (LRCN) in collaboration with the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) should come up with a uniform standard which would define the status of librarians no matter where they work, and also make sure that this standard is approved by the government and incorporated into the condition of service of the federal republic of Nigeria. Librarians should also be ready to fulfill all that are required of them as faculty members or otherwise. No stone should be left unturned.

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A Review of Current Trends in Records and Information Management: A Case for Records and Information Managers

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Abstract

This paper examines the latest trend on records management in a business environment. It equally looked into the strategies in managing documents during its life cycle. The most significant fact in understanding the trend in records management is that paper records are now decreasing in some organisations and attention is being shifted to electronic document management solutions (EDMS). This paper submits that new technology provides great potential to improve records management services and efficiency. It concludes that the evidence base information upon which the organisation depends must continue to be protected and preserved. This implies that records and information managers should develop their career and acquire skills that will keep them relevant in this EDMS era.

Keywords: Records Management, Information Management, Records Managers, Information Managers

Introduction

The way our society communicates, creates and stores records has undergone a momentous change over the last few years. Records and information are the most vital strategic and operational assets of organisations. Organisations depend on records to make critical strategic decisions, protect contractual rights, support innovation, develop products, deliver services, drive marketing, process transactions, serve customers, and generate revenue. Records and information has always been an organisation's central resource. Without it, the modern organization simply could not function. Business records are operational and sometimes strategic assets. They have economic, legal, fiscal, risk-management, and competitive values. Many organisations, however, lack effective policies and procedures for systematic control of their recorded information. As a result, they

keep some records too long, spend too much to store them, waste time looking for misplaced information, risk penalties for non-compliance with recordkeeping regulations (Robek, Gerald and Stephen, 1995).

This essential information is contained in business documents, or records. Business records need to be effectively managed. Managing directors and senior executives in organisations ultimately are responsible for the prudent stewardship of corporate assets. Yet many companies today lack effective policies and procedures to control, manage, preserve and retrieve critical corporate records and other business documents. Consequently, they waste valuable time searching for information when it is needed, risk severe penalties and loss of corporate reputation for non-compliance with records-related regulations and legal statutes, keep some records too long, spend too much for storage, and too often fail to protect mission-critical information from loss or destruction.

Today's complex business environments generate numerous challenges for both management and employees. Fast-paced changes in office technologies, changing governmental mandates and global competition create both obstacles and opportunities. However, a common aspect of all business environments is the constant demand for on time access to data, information and documentation. Informational business records are needed for operational guidance, reporting to auditors, documentation of intellectual capital, evidence in litigation and a variety of other tactical and strategic drivers. Business records with critical informational content must be locatable and retrievable quickly and accurately. Otherwise lost productivity, public embarrassment and damaged financial status may result. Of equal importance is the transition of most enterprises today from sifting through piles of paper to managing gigabytes of data. This shift creates a mandate for an enterprise to control and manage its organization (Priscilla, 2005).

The business risks associated with poorly managed information resources are substantial and increasing (McLean, 2003). Unfortunately, when records and information management issues are covered by the news media, it often is in a highly negative context. For example, when Arthur Anderson was implicated in the accounting irregularities related to Enron, the headlines did not cover that Arthur Anderson had the foresight to have a records retention schedule and records management program. The headlines did, however, cover extensively the use of shredders and allegations of intentional spoliation of evidence. When public records used by state governments that must be made available to the public cannot be located, allegations of misconduct may arise quickly.

In another example from Nigeria, Oderemi (2012) report the recent case of oil subsidy report by the House Committee on Petroleum revealed whole lots of

discrepancies on subsidy figures. While the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporations (NNPC) states that Nigeria's daily consumptions of fuel are 35 million liters, the Minister of Petroleum stated 52 million liters, Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) gave 43 million litres and the Minister of Finance stated 40 million liters. Again, when also asked about the amount budgeted for subsidy in 2011, the Minister of Petroleum gave the figure of 1.4 trillion naira, Minister of finance reports another figure of 1.3 trillion naira, whereas Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) submitted 1.7 trillion naira. Furthermore, when asked about the production capacity of local refineries, NNPC stated 30 percent, PPRA gave 20 percent, DPR stated 13 percent and the Minister of Petroleum gave 15 percent (Aziken, Ujah and Agande, 2012). The list of inconsistencies is endless. Cases abound of discrepancies of facts and figures relating to government transaction mainly due to improper records keeping. The financial losses due to misplaced evidence that are critical corporate records as well as the lost research data related to product development can surge to millions of dollars.

Information and records management typically are the largest overhead burdens of an organisation. The creation of correspondence, reports, brochures, forms and graphic materials can be highly expensive due to both the cost of materials and labour. Now that much of this information flow must occur within computer systems and networks, the incremental cost of performing daily tasks continues to grow. At the same time it becomes critical to have well-run information systems that support an organisation's business goals. Should an organisation's loss of information become publicly disclosed, the financial impact in lost customers and public confidence can be immense. These dangers are what Priscilla (2005) has seen and opine that records management is an indispensable venture in organizations.

Records Management: A Conceptual View

Records management is a corporate area of endeavor involving the administration of all business records throughout their life cycle. In this context, a record is documentation of a business event. Among other possibilities, documentation may exist in contracts, memos, paper and electronic files, marketing materials, reports, emails and instant message logs, website content, database records and removable storage devices. Records management also called "records and information management" or "recorded information management" (RIM) is the systematic application of management principles chiefly control to the recorded information needed and used in the normal course of an organisation's business

(McLean, 2003). Records document transactions, in some cases, may be legally required as evidence of each transaction. Transactional records include orderings, schedules, receipts, notification, loans, and contracts, and many other types.

According to the International Organization for Standardization (2001) standard records management activities include "the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including the processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records." Records management is both a discipline and management function concerned with the systematic application of management techniques to and control of the information created or received in the normal information of an organisation's business. Unlike many information sources, records also have a more distinct life cycle that includes creation or receipt, processing, distribution, maintenance, evaluation, and ultimate disposition (i.e., either destruction or transmittal for permanent housing in an archive, vault, or other dedicated facility operated by the company or an outsourcing partner). In records management, the term 'record' means more than imagined (International Organization for Standardization, 2001). Pemberton (1998) submits that:

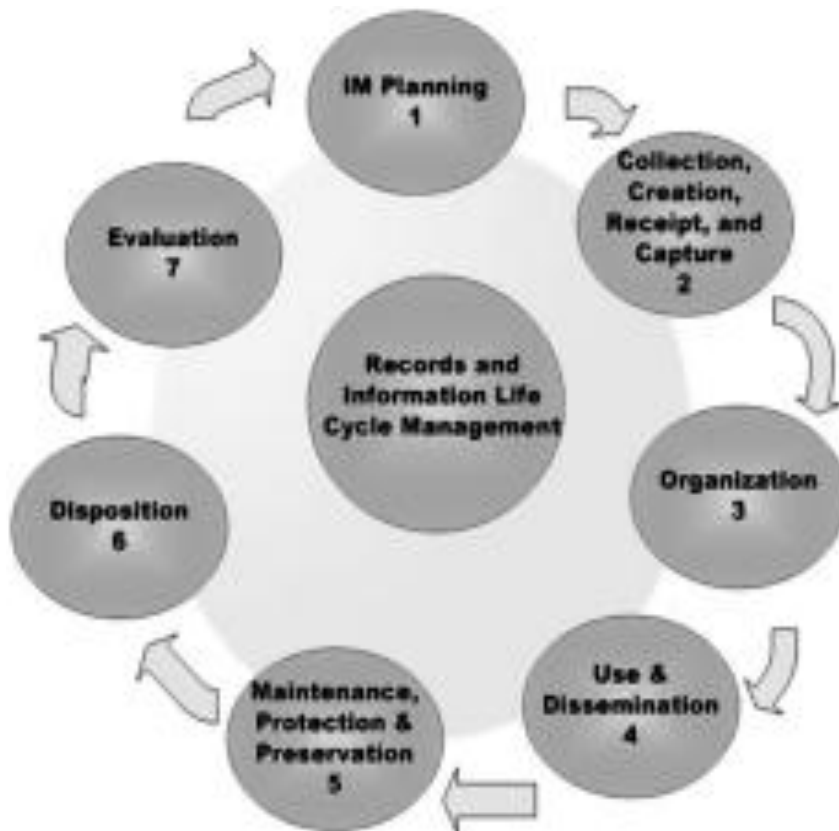
A record is something you can take into a court of law. And if called upon, you must be able to show in court that the record has authenticity, reliability, integrity and usability that is, you must prove that the record is what it purports to be, that it is complete and unaltered, that it fully and accurately represents the facts to which it attests, and that it can be retrieved and presented.

These features are only sustained through recordkeeping systems. It is in the act of consistent capture and organisation that reliability is sustained. Meanwhile, integrity comes to play when a record is devoid of unauthorised alteration, destruction and removal. While permanency of a record relates to how much impossible it is for a record to be tampered, altered or deleted, compliance refer to the consistent manner with which a given record applies to all organisational policies and procedures.

Life Cycle of Records Management

The life cycle of records is an important concept in records management. It is a way of looking at how records are created and used. The life cycle is based on the idea that records become less important as time passes. 90 percent of the use of a record takes place during the first 90 days after it is created (<http://www.pws.gov.nt.ca/pdf/recordsManagement/...>). This short period of high use is followed by a longer period of low use. The records only need to be looked up

occasionally during this second phase. Eventually, even this limited use will end and the records will have no further value to their creator. The diagram below shows the seven (7) steps in the records and information life cycle. Each step will provide a description of key inputs, outputs, benefits and resources to help you understand, plan, implement and improve an ideal records and information management initiatives.



Source: Library and archives, Canada website (www.collectionscanada.gc.ca).

The diagram shows that the journey of a record begins at planning information management (IM) planning. Good planning is the key to success of every initiative, large or small. Thus, at this stage, measures to support the records and information life cycle are conceived. Next, the records are created, collected or received. This could be through the daily transactions of the business unit, school, etc. and can include printed reports, emails or even phone messages, documents that detail the functions, policies, decisions or procedures of an organisation. The next, after the creation of records is its organization. This has to do with the arrangement of the records collected and created. This proceeds to use and dissemination of the record. A good record, at this stage, provides value in the

sense that it helps in problem solving and aids users in finding answers to issues that arise in the cause of operation. Yet, the record must be maintained if it must be used and reused this is where the maintenance, protection and preservation needs arise. The next stage is the disposition circle, the stage where records have no more value to an organization, after which the success of the record is then evaluated. This means that an inventory of the records disposed should be maintained, including certifications that have been destroyed. In addition, records and information managers should note that records are never to be discarded as refuse. This is why most organizations, in recent time, use processes like pulverization, paper shredding or burning as records disposal methods (Shields, Garofola and Garza, 2008).

The Value Chain Records Life Cycles

All information has a life cycle that begins with creation and ends with a final disposition of information to an archive or destruction. Creation of information can be in either paper or electronic format. Increasingly, most information is created on computer systems as electronic files or data. After creation, digital computer files can be printed and transmitted to other users by e-mail, made accessible by posting on Internet web sites or other means. Eventually, digital information must be stored for future retrieval or may simply be deleted.

During the various phases of the information life cycle, some of this information becomes sufficiently valuable to be considered record material and other information simply remains in general document or data format for eventual discard. This distinction of becoming a record for preservation is critical to the concept of records management, in that all defined records series should have a mandated retention period, whereas non-record materials should be discarded soon after their initial use, often within one year of creation. For this reason, when an organisation establishes a value chain for products and services, the important records that add value to the creation or management of those products and services should be identified early and should be managed throughout their entire life cycle. Documents or data that does not need to be retained will clutter up disk drives or desktops and can be eliminated as soon as is practical in the life cycle of the information by quickly moving it toward destruction or deletion.

It is common for organizations with collaborative projects such as architectural, engineering, or manufacturing firms to produce both paper and electronic records materials during project workflow. In some cases, records may initially be produced on computers, stored during the project in records centers,

and eventually scanned or simply stored as paper off-site. It is obvious that not all organizations are properly staffed and equipped to perform records tracking in an integrated manner for both paper and electronic files across multiple departments over time. Many organisations are similarly not staffed or trained to capture and manage the records generated from such complex business processes if the documents must be scanned into images for multi-user access from many different jobsites. In these cases, it may be most cost effective to contract for outside assistance with some of these records management issues so that internal personnel can focus their attention on the organisation's line of business and delegate some information management services to more highly skilled, trained specialists.

McLean (2003) asserts that contemporary concerns about technology obsolescence and digital preservation are the source of another information life cycle issue. All computer systems run on hardware and software that begin to become obsolete from the moment they are installed and configured. As hardware systems such as tape, magnetic disk, and CD/ DVD drives wear, the information recorded with those devices is in danger of becoming inaccessible over time. As office desktop computer software versions change yearly, the various data formats being created may not be re-usable in the future depending on the backward compatibility of each vendor's software offering. For this reason, many organisations are creating digital document preservation strategies that include a migration of electronic records over time from the original native file formats to more permanent file formats, such as PDF or TIF, to archival media such as CD-ROMs, and eventually to printing and preservation on acid-free archival-quality paper media. Without a sound data migration strategy, organisations may in the future try to retrieve electronic files that are not readable on contemporary computer equipment. This will greatly impact organisational success in addressing records retrieval needs and could negatively impact the overall success of the organisation in the marketplace.

Defining an organisation's information life cycle within the operating framework of line-of-business processes and value chain is critical to the identification of critical records needing long term retention. Each organisational business process that generates revenue must have the critical records for that process defined in a Records Retention Schedule, retention periods assigned, and applicable policies and procedures developed to address them. In addition, appropriately trained personnel must be assigned to ensure that those records are captured and preserved, or the loss to the organisation may be substantial, financially or in public perception. In contrast, well-managed organisations with

highly skilled personnel assuring that record-keeping systems are properly managed will enhance the marketplace reputation and viability of an organization and its management (Pemberton, 1993).

Regulatory and Compliance Mandates for Records Management in Organisations

As earlier explained, the introduction regarding a sensational story of classical case of Arthur Anderson employees shredding documents in an attempt to reduce the record available, subsequent to discovering court proceedings were in progress. The losses suffered by many organizations due to improper attention to accounting irregularities and other executive misdeeds have focused both public and governmental attention on the needs for excellence in recordkeeping. Although many firms have been in the news with respect to inappropriate records related actions, none is more visible than the case of Arthur Anderson.

In November 2001, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) delivered a subpoena to Arthur Anderson requesting records about the public accounting work performed for Enron. Subsequently in January, 2002, Arthur Anderson revealed that it had destroyed a number of documents related to the Enron audits. In March 2002, Arthur Anderson was charged with obstruction of justice for inappropriate records destruction, and the company was subsequently convicted in June 2002. Within a year, many of Arthur Anderson's clients withdrew their business, and a \$9 billion company with a long history of professional credibility was virtually destroyed simply because of court decisions that it had not followed its own records management policy.

A major outcome of this action has been increased public scrutiny of accounting practices, records management practices, and executive responsibility in general. For first that have demonstrably supported and enforced existing records management programs, this level of visibility and management practices review does not pose a problem. However, companies that have failed to invest any significant resources to ensure official records are created and managed with the requisite attention and priority, risk serious during audits, regulatory review or legal actions.

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 brought new focus on the issue of records accountability and proper records control during auditable business processes. The law requires that the MDs, CEOs and CFOs personally attest to and certify many records used in reporting financial status. Among other things, the Act creates guidelines for the establishment of audit committees, requires that documents relevant to possible government investigations be appropriately retained, and

specifies that "audit work papers" be retained for seven years. Stiff criminal penalties are provided for executives in non-compliance, including that CEOs and CFOs making a false approval of company financial status potentially be fined up to \$1 million and/or be sentenced to prison for up to 10 years.

If the false representations are deemed to be willful and intentional, the fine may reach \$ 5 million and the prison sentence could reach 20 years. These admonitions apply to anyone who knowingly alters, destroys, mutilates, conceals, covers up, falsifies, or makes false entries in records or documents. Another area of growing concern for corporations is the stringent attention paid by courts to the preservation of records when the prospect of litigation arises. Just as Sarbanes Oxley legislation addresses the destruction of records, spoliation of evidence is similarly of importance to courts expecting to see high quality fully disclosed documentation. Spoliation is the destruction or alteration of evidence by actively destroying information or simply failing to preserve it. When records are destroyed at a defendant's site or while under management control, the courts generally will find in favour of the plaintiffs even when ill intent on the part of the defendant may not be present. Courts have awarded fines and sanctions against organisations that failed to preserve records on magnetic tapes, optical disks, or older computer systems when the data could not be read or used. In addition, the costs of electronic records discovery often are paid by the defendant, creating significant incentive to settle cases quickly. Influence by regulatory agencies in the recordkeeping processes of business is growing. There is increasing need to assure records creation and retrieval occurs accurately and quickly, with proper supervision. For instance:

- The Securities and Exchange Act of 1934, Rule 24o.17a-4 prescribes non rewriteable non-erasable media for recording some electronic records.
- The National Association of Securities Dealers Rule 3010 directs that organisations oversee the communications of authorized representatives with the public, including assurance that employees comply with policies. To assure compliance there can be expectations of monitoring emails received internally or sent externally, as well as the ability to select for separate treatment emails that may have legal implications.
- SEC regulations require that organisations provide comprehensive electronic records retention and search capabilities that ensure the latest two years of records are readily accessible.

Litigation e-discovery costs resulting from the need to produce emails and other electronic records can be significant and push defendants into out-of- court

settlements. For instance, most organisations today know that their email systems are out of control with respect to the volume of emails transmitted and the capacity of their servers to store the records in a well organised manner for retrieval. This is simply an IT systems performance issue and organisational inconvenience until a court decides that: this performance failure has been known for some time; and, management's failure to address it means that e-mail critical to resolving legal disputes has been lost. Courts may decide to award damages to plaintiffs simply because the defendant has made it impossible to accurately assess the validity of their own defense or courts may decide that recordkeeping activities affect the quality of the records produced for legal purposes.

Changing Office Technologies

Computers and the networks that connect them have created quantum-level change in today's business environments. In fact, the vast majority of paper that is used within organisations was initially created, stored, and transmitted on computers. The personal computer has brought immense information creation and delivery power to office workers and the Internet has within only a decade transformed our expectations regarding information communication and accessibility. Computer technology and its benefits, however, come at a price that often includes organizational change for both business processes and employees. The use of computers in the workplace and their effect on information management must be planned carefully to avoid losing control of our information assets. Computer files exist in many systems, including electronic mail, personal computers, web sites and database applications, and are distributed across many locations. Organizations increasingly conduct business electronically. This causes valuable business intelligence, evidence for legal proceedings, process documentation, and intellectual capital to be placed at risk if electronic business records are not properly protected and preserved. However, the variety of information in electronic format is almost overwhelming. They include:

- desktop computer files, including word processing, spreadsheets, small databases, graphics files and some email stored locally on hard disks
- local Area Network-based server files, including server-based emails, shared project directories, and printer management servers
- document management, content management, workflow, imaging systems and other workflow or collaboration oriented server-based applications for global use.
- dedicated applications that support forms processing, document scanning,

- engineering or design business processes
- enterprise accessible database systems for business functions such as accounting, human resources management, or handling facilities maintenance requests.
- intranet web sites for publishing internal policies, research data, or other private information
- extranets and public web sites that offer web-based documents and data to business partners or the general public.

In fact, there is a continual synthesis and integration of data that results in changing information content format and presentation. For instance, in creating a monthly report, a person might download data to a spreadsheet, paste the spreadsheet as a table into a word processor, attach the word-processing file to an email, send the email to an Intranet web publisher, and then post the monthly report on an Intranet. It can become difficult to follow the chain of records that constitute the final document. Hence, without documented records, management procedures, the evidentiary sources of the final published report, can be lost and become difficult to produce should evidence of the reports' production processes be needed.

Organizations increasingly conduct business electronically as computer files exist in many systems, including electronic mail, personal computers, web sites and database applications which are being distributed across many locations, this technological development causes valuable business intelligence, evidence for legal proceedings, process documentation and intellectual capital to be placed at risk if electronic business records are not properly protected and preserved. Much of the records material produced within these systems are either archived to backup tapes that must be restored to be useful, or the information is protected by offloading the data to CD-ROM, DVD, or a form of magnetic disk or tape. This practice exacerbates a complex growing information duplication problem unless the disks or tapes are organized and labeled to indicate the content of the media. Unfortunately, much of the information stored off-line on computer media external to originating computer systems often is poorly labeled, difficult to retrieve, and filed locally in paper filing cabinets. This can seriously disrupt electronic records discovery. A major improvement in controlling paper documents can come from implementing barcodes and request for information (RFI) sensitive labels to track physical files. Implementing computer network resident records management software to track both physical and electronic files also can reduce the time required to find records.

In response to the global need to control electronic records, several software standards have been created that specify how electronic records should be managed. These standards include the U.S. Department of Defense DoD 5015.2 Standard, and electronic records management standards developed in Europe (MoReQ), Great Britain (PRO), and Australia (VERS). Most major software companies recognize the need both to meet emerging international standards and to offer software solutions to manage electronic records. IBM, Open Text, EMC/Documentum, Summation, Interwoven, Stellant, and FileNet are among the companies that now offer software solutions designed to manage both paper and electronic records. The need to distinguish between these standards and ERM requirements often encourages organizations to seek outside expertise from records management consultants and outsourcing services companies with accredited records management professionals to assure that the software procured meets business needs. One of the most important aspects of using these standards to implement ERM solutions is that they all address both paper document and electronic records tracking to some degree, creating a seamless system where a single query may recall information on both paper and electronic documents. Corporations that wish to command the respect and trust of their customers, business partners, employees and investors are rapidly moving toward electronic systems to achieve full spectrum management of electronic records. An important option to effectively implement best practices based records management programs is to partner with external records management service providers.

Organisational Best Practices

Best practices organisations recognise and act on the growing business imperative for formally defined and consistently administered records management programmes. This is occurring due to government requirements for records compliance as well as for the substantial cost savings and productivity gains associated with the ability to quickly find and access business information. Although the size and scope of programmes varies widely, they share common elements. These elements are global policies, specific procedures, IT support systems, on-going records management training, and personnel dedicated to assuring that this enterprise wide responsibility is wholly addressed. The primary components of a high quality Records Management Program are:

1. Policies and procedure for creating and storing records in both paper and electronic format that are demonstrably supported by an organisation's executives, including the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer,

- Chief Information Officer, Chief Legal Counsel, and Chief Compliance Officer.
- 2 A thoroughly documented Records Retention Schedule that lists Records Series. This includes categories and the expected retention period in months and years based on legal, regulatory, and best practices research.
 - 3 An organisational File Plan that lists primary records types by functional unit so that information can be located without dependence on anyone employee.
 - 4 A Vital Records Program that identifies and protects those records that are critical for immediate restart of an organisation's business processes following a disaster.
 - 5 A Records Management Implementation and Training Programmes that works with identified Records Coordinators in primary functional units to train them in the policies, procedures, workflow, and systems required to assure quality recordkeeping occurs.
 - 6 Increasingly, the presence of a dedicated hardware/software electronic records system repository so that employees have a place to store personal computer files, electronic mail messages, and any other electronic documents for long term retention based on a formally defined Records Retention Schedule and business rules.
 - 7 Periodic audits to assess the clarity of procedures, effectiveness of training, and that provide an enforcement vehicle.

Outsourced business services relationships often support a well-planned records management programme. A contractual relationship with an offsite commercial records storage center enables inexpensive and secure long-term retention of paper documents, electronic media, or computer system backup tapes in a disaster resistant environment. Commercial records centers can protect vital records from on-site disasters at their customers' locations, and assure that expensive office space is not consumed by local storage of older low-value records. Records management consultants or expert business process outsourcing firms often provide focused knowledge of records in highly regulated industries, skills in ongoing management of paper and electronic records programmes, or expertise in electronic records management software selection and implementation. Increasingly, records management program activities are outsourced to full-service document process management firms with specialized expertise in records management. These outsourcing firms can provide some or all of these managed services. Since records management is not the core competency of most

organisations, outsourcing can free internal resources and investment to focus on core business competencies

Conclusion

Most Organisations that anticipate impending litigation now are considered responsible for preserving records, even before receiving pending litigation hold orders from courts. Destruction of evidence in advance of court appearances can be considered a federal crime as many discovered during the Arthur Andersen case. New Sarbanes-Oxley and other legislation often specify working papers and other forms of records such as financial reports that must be protected and preserved in view of future reference. This is evident in auditable internal workflow processes so that executives can demonstrate they have appropriate level oversight of the activities they manage.

The goal of a records management programme is to ensure that high quality recordkeeping activities and systems have integrity and reliability, as well as that the records being managed are authentic and accurate when preserved over time. Historically, records management has promoted economies and efficiencies in operations. As modern organizations increasingly rely on informational data and documents, records management programmes have become strategically and tactically critical to their ongoing operation and prosperity. A well-planned, comprehensively implemented records management program is visible proof that management expects and supports accurate, accountable internal work processes. In addition, a well-run and consistently enforced records management programme clearly demonstrates that executives intend for their organization to create reliable business records, and to manage those records to high professional standards, wholly in compliance with laws and regulations.

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The Librarian as Personnel in Charge of Information Services Delivery

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Abstract

This paper discusses the librarian as personnel laddened with the responsibility of delivering information services. The paper investigates the importance of the librarian in the delivery of information services in the face of the challenge posed by the Internet and the arguments that the librarian is no longer relevant in the 21st century. It conceptually examines information within the context of service delivery. The paper highlights some of the skills and experiences which place the librarian as an information professional in good stead to deliver information services. While the authors recommend that government at various levels should always ensure that librarians are appointed to manage libraries since they possess the requisite skills and expertise to perform their functions, the paper concludes that librarianship is a profession and librarians acquire the necessary skills to carry out their job of information service delivery.

Keywords: Librarian, Information Services Delivery, 21st Century Librarian.

Introduction

In recent times, following the massive impact of the Internet in information provision, there has been varying opinions on whether information services delivery should strictly be the exclusive preserve of librarians or non-librarians who possess Internet skills. Two schools of thought have put up arguments for and against these opinions. Infanct, some situations have precipitated the appointment of non-librarians to head public or state libraries, on the retirement of director of library or chief librarian. There have also been instances where efforts have been made to place the library under the administrative department of parent organisation.

There is in addition, another school of thought that has recently evolved, and is fast gaining ground among researchers, and that is, that with the advent of the Internet, the librarian and his services are no longer relevant. Some even believe that the Internet has taken over the responsibilities and roles of the librarians in information services delivery. This situation has necessitated this investigation to find out the appropriate personnel to carry out the functions of information services delivery. Is the librarian the professional personnel whose job profile centres around information services delivery or is it the non-librarian with Internet skills? This paper sets out to provide answers to these nagging problems.

Information: A Conceptual Analysis

Information is a broad concept. Encyclopaedia Britannica (1994) defines information as a term that refers to facts and opinions provided and received during the course of daily life; facts and opinions obtained directly from other living beings, from mass media, from electronic data banks, and from all sorts of observable phenomena in the surrounding environment. It sheds more light on information when it states that a person using such facts and opinions generates more information, some of which is communicated to others during discourse, by instructions, in letters and documents, and through other media; and that information organized according to some logical relationship is referred to as a body of knowledge, to be acquired by systematic exposure of study.

To drive home the point that information is a broad concept, Aguolu (1989) states that in defining the term information, one is immediately confronted with semantics and conceptual difficulties. He adds that information constitutes messages of human experience - that is, what is transmitted, a signal or stimulus. It assumes a response in the receiver and therefore, possesses a response potential. This information should be understood from two perspectives - first,

from the viewpoint of its content its intellectual essence, and second, from the point of view of its processing and transfer, that is, the means we use to produce, publish organize, store, retrieve and communicate information. It is essentially a neutral entity that denotes removal of uncertainty.

Aguolu (1989) concludes by stating that information can be transferred physically or electronically, evaluated or raw; accurate or inaccurate, but always sought in an evaluated accurate or inaccurate, but always sought in an evaluated accurate sense; that it could be in any medium, in any language or any subject. How the receivers of any information react to its content is conditioned by their intellectual and social needs, level of literacy and education, motivations, cultural attitudes and value systems. All the foregoing show how wide range in scope the term information is.

Burch and Starter, cited in Chinaka (2008), wrote about information as the increase in knowledge obtained by the recipient by matching proper data elements to the variables of problems that it is an aggregation or processing of data to provide knowledge or intelligence to reduce uncertainty on the user. Further, information is the term used to describe mankind's accumulated knowledge derived from all subjects in all forms and from all sources that could help its users reduce their levels of uncertainty. Chinaka (2008) also cited Carter (n.d) who defines information as facts and ideas presented in a meaningful form; a representation of model from some aspects of the real world; a data that have been subjected to some processing functions, capable of answering a user's reply, be it recorded, summarized or simply collated, that would help in decision making. The researchers observe that in spite of the importance of information in all human activities, it is a term that is difficult to define because it has several dimensions. Information means many things to different people; that to some people, information is news, while others refer to information as facts, and yet to others, it is essentially data. Furthermore, that while the telecommunications engineers associate information with bits and data, librarians associate information with recorded knowledge.

Stressing that information is used interchangeably as news, facts, data and knowledge, Aina (2004) itemizes some of the various definitions of information thus:

- .. Increasing the knowledge of the recipient.
- .. Resolving uncertainty.
- .. Value in decision-making.
- .. A physical surrogate of knowledge.
- .. All published and unpublished knowledge about any given subject.
- .. Body of knowledge.

An earlier research work by Buckland (1991) cited in Aina (2004) posits that information is ambiguous and he thus characterized it as:

- .. Information as process
- .. Information- as knowledge
- .. Information as thing

Buckland explained that information is a process when it is performing the function of informing, which involves transmitting information from a source to a recipient; and that information is knowledge when it is performing the role of imparting knowledge to an individual, where it reduces uncertainty. The foregoing circumstances were described by Buckland as "intangible". He concludes by stating that information becomes "tangible" when it is physical object such as data or document.

Within the context of this paper, we are limiting our discussion to information- as thing. By this we mean, information in a physical object form, which is represented as data and documents. Our focus therefore centres on information that is recorded, and could be in the form of written documents, printed materials, or digitized materials. They appear in different formats such as books, periodicals, newspapers, diaries, letters, manuscripts, tapes, diskettes, compact disks, databases, artifacts, microforms, and so on. For information in the foregoing formats to get to the end users, a number of intermediaries have to be involved, before it gets to them. The intermediaries consist mainly of two categories, namely, information infrastructure institutions, and information professionals. The latter category is trained to make information available to end-users.

What are the information infrastructure institutions? They are the libraries, the archives, the record offices, the record management institutions, the publishing organisations, and the museums. All the formats of this earlier identified information are housed at no other place, as a group, than in the library. It is these instruments of information that this paper attempts to establish whether a non-librarian can successfully or efficiently deliver these services to the end-users; or whether the electronic gadgets can be a substitute for the librarian. Answers to these questions will prove instructive

Librarians' Skills in Information Services Delivery

Who is a Librarian? Aina (2004) succinctly defines a librarian as "the professional who is concerned with the collection, storage, processing and

dissemination of recorded knowledge in a library." Of particular interest in the definition is the word "professional." Librarianship is a profession and the skills of information service delivery are acquired after years of training. The librarian, and no other, has the training to successfully, and with relative ease, handle the work of information services delivery.

A non-librarian, deployed to be in charge of information delivery services, in the context of this paper, will be woefully handicapped to discharge the duties, because only the librarian possess the skill required to carry out the functions. The librarian is the personnel who can add value to the information created, for it to be accessible to the end-users. The librarian's expertise in information delivery starts even before the arrival of the materials at the library, and continues. Here are the facts:

- The librarian has to first of all tackle selection of materials needed. Selection of information involves choosing appropriate materials from the mass of materials that have already been searched. Selection exercise is more or less a filtering process selected from a large pool of materials already scanned. A thorough understanding of the library clientele is very important. The librarian is trained to know the right materials for his library users.
- After selection of the appropriate materials, comes acquisition. This is done through appropriate channels. The librarian, using his skill, knows the right channels to use, based on well thought-out criteria.
- The library materials require organisation, before they can be made available to users. Organisation of information is aimed at making the information already acquired available to users so that it will be easy to be retrieved. The librarian has at his disposal for this exercise, such tools as subject headings, cataloguing tools, classification, schemes and others of which only he, as a trained person for the job, knows how to use the tools. Without this organisation of the library materials, it will be an uphill task for anyone to identify from the avalanche of materials, the very ones he needs.
- Each item of the library has to be analysed. This information analysis involves the provision of labels for every library materials. The librarian does that through cataloguing, indexing and abstracting.
- The librarian, as the right information personnel, provides current awareness services (CAS) for his library users. The CAS is a system for reviewing publications immediately on receipt and putting up notice on same on the library information board, or at any strategically-located side of

the library, for information to the library users.

- The librarian carries out what can be regarded as personalized service, in the form of selective dissemination of information (SDI). This is a process in which information that may be relevant to a user is anticipated, and when it arrives the library, is made available to the particular library user.
- Nobody can give what he does not have. For the library user to make use of the library resources unassisted, to a great extent, he needs to be educated. The librarian provides this on constant basis to the library users, through the means of user education. This is a professional package that can only be provided the library clientele by a professional - the librarian.
- Reference service is another type of service that marks the librarian as a professional in his field and makes him to be the only personnel qualified to handle information services delivery.
- Part of the librarians' professional skills is to provide researchers a guide or launching pad for his work. This the librarian does through the provision of bibliography. A researcher usually commences his study by examining what has already been done, or is being done in his research area in general and on his research topic in particular. Employing his skill, the librarian, provides adequate bibliographic apparatus, such as guides to literature, subject bibliographies, abstracting and indexing journals, directories of research already completed, or are in progress. Only a librarian can render this service to his library clientele, because it is his field.

Conclusion

Librarianship is a profession and a vocation where skills and competencies are acquired through training, retraining and experience. Librarians are therefore information professional whose stock-in-trade is to deliver information to the desired destination with the primary goal of satisfying its needs. Much has been said about people putting a square peg in a round hole. This expression always comes to the fore whenever there is a case inappropriate placement of persons in positions that they are not trained and cut out for. This work has enumerated the noble information services in librarianship which, if assigned to non-librarians to handle will lead to complete failure in the work of information delivery. It has therefore been proved in this paper that the librarian is the right personnel to be in charge of information services delivery.

Talking about the Internet, it is a statement of fact that while information

available is both massive and exclusive, the reliability of all the information available on the Internet gives room for questioning. The librarian on the other hand from his training competencies and skills delivers reliable and trustworthy information to satisfy without equivocation the information needs of his clients. It is therefore right to conclude that the Internet cannot make the library and the librarian irrelevant in the 21st century.

Discussions and Recommendations

From the aforementioned, it is quite clear that the librarian is the right personnel trained with the competencies and skills in information services delivery. This assertion is further reinforced by the following scholars:

1. Omolayole (2004) in appraising the issue of Nigeria's national policy on information, recommends that librarians, as experts in their field, should be rightly assigned with the responsibility of collection development so that they identify the nature of information needs, the types of data that will respond adequately to those needs for designing, implementing and maintaining appropriate information systems, which can deliver the required services in each area of need.
2. Nnadozie (2006) recommends that for entrenchment of qualitative and quantitative adequacies in the collections of academic libraries in Nigeria, professionals especially librarians, who are knowledgeable about the book trade, should be allowed to acquire materials for academic libraries.
3. Ahmed (2012) in his recommendation on assessment of library component stresses the need for professional librarians to be deployed for the teaching of courses on librarianship in colleges of education.
4. Ahmed (2012) observes that inadequate number of librarians contributed to non-delivery of information services in Kwara State Library Board.
5. Aguolu (1989) cited the unfortunate situation where public library services were placed directly under the ministerial bureaucracy in some states of the federation.

Similarly, while lamenting on the lack of recognition of the importance of library and information services in Nigeria, based on the foregoing, the authors hereby recommend that both Federal and State ministries of information, education, and all library- owning institutions should always ensure that professional librarians take charge of libraries irrespective of the type. The governments should also ensure that any librarian deployed to man/manage the libraries must be a registered member of Nigerian Library Association, while

chartered librarians only should be entrusted with higher responsibilities in the management of libraries.

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Academic Status of Librarians in Nigeria's Agricultural Research Institutes: Retrospect and Prospects

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Abstract

The study examines trends in academic status of librarians in research institutes in Nigeria in order to determine the effects of academic status on the promotion, appointment and other employee privileges of librarians in agricultural research institutes in Nigeria. The documentary research method was used and data were collected from documents such as books, circulars, etc. Findings show that academic status is accorded to librarians in agricultural research institutes. Librarians participate in academic activities through information services but are riddled with discrepancies and ambiguities. The paper recommends that while librarians engage in publishing activities, they should also pursue degree programmes up to doctoral level. Furthermore, the paper makes a case that top ranking librarians in the civil service should participate in drawing the condition of service of Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Keywords: Librarians, Academic Status, Agricultural Research Institutes, Nigeria.

Introduction

The history of the evolution of information systems in agricultural research institutes in Nigeria is inseparable but concomitant with that of research institutes. Ekpe (1979) has traced the emergence of research institutions and their libraries to 1923 when experimental stations were established at Umudike and Samaru. In 1925, the agricultural research station at Vom (Plateau State) was constituted and in 1927 the agricultural school at Ibadan was opened. The desire to explore the vast economic potentials of Nigeria's agriculture propelled the British government to pass the first development Act in 1929 for a £1,000,000 out of which £170,000 was meant for Nigeria. More research centres were subsequently created to maintain these projects, leading to the establishment of a

research station at Samaru (Kaduna State) and a veterinary school in Kano in 1934. From these settings, what were termed as agricultural libraries, but fell within the classification of ordinary book stores or book archives housing a few experimental log books and records, annual reports, technical reports and a handful of policy documents and white paper, emerged.

To compound the psychological status and inferiority complex of these libraries and their handlers, Chief Executives of these research stations choose leadership of such research libraries from personnel who have no background education on librarianship and called them Librarians. These so called librarians from the beginning therefore operated from the positions of underdogs and were no match to their research officer counterparts who brandished fresh university degrees in agricultural disciplines and took themselves as a class of nouveau rich, warming up to take over reigns from the then colonial masters. Before long, the modern agricultural research institutes evolved by decrees of 1973 and 1975 (Federal Government of Nigeria [FGN], 1975) and thus, the colonial hand-over of complexes of educational background came to board. Since then, the professional status of the then librarians retrospectively haunted the modern day librarians in the manner of academic status discrimination.

Meanwhile, as a definition of term in this paper, the term academic refer to staff members in the research institute who are in the research cadre. They conduct research and contribute to knowledge through publication and scholarship. Hence, their academic conferment is rooted essentially on the basis that they conduct research and communicate their findings scholarly.

Objectives of the Study

Although librarians in research institutes now enjoy academic status, certain ambiguity needs to be sorted out. Therefore, the main objectives of this paper are to:

- i. analyse the appointment and promotion criteria for librarians in relation to their academic status
- ii. determine challenges hindering full concretization of their academic status
- iii. make recommendations to address the challenges

Literature Review

Agricultural research institutes are mainly staffed by agricultural research officers who are also called scientists. They employ scientific methods to

investigate agricultural problems and proffer solutions to increase agricultural productivity (Okigbo, 1993). They constitute the core staff for achieving the institutes' mandates. Librarians as supporting staff assist and enhance academic and research activities of researchers through the provision of, and processing of data to accelerate research activities. They are also looked upon to save the time wasted by researchers seeking information and thus enable the researchers concentrate on core mandates. Ike (1992) justifies this by asserting that the main objective for information based organisation is to help national development through easy access to relevant information to scientists. One of the greatest postulations for evolving agricultural information systems and involving librarians and information scientists in research and academic works is best presented in Woolston's (1983) argument. He argues that organised information in documents, records, and computer memories shorten communication barriers, eliminate probabilities, erroneous judgments, and thus increase productivity of scientists. Russel (1982) also insists that policy makers/administrators within research networks need services of librarians and information scientists to access information on levels of production, use of resources market intelligence in various formats as video texts, computer networks, electronic mails, telephone dial-up services; radio and television services to perform effectively (Tidbury, 1982). The other components of research staff include maintenance engineers, agricultural superintendents, accountants and other miscellaneous staff, all of which are tagged support service staff.

Meanwhile, the concept of academic and non-academic staff in Nigeria derived from the university system as far back as in 1948, during the days of John Harris of the University of Ibadan (Ugah, 2012). Subsequent universities of the 1960's like Universities of Lagos, Zaria, Nigeria, Ife and Ilorin began to accord academic status to their librarians in varying degree of rights and privileges (Akhidime,1983). It was not until 1993 and 2009 that this nomenclature received official recognition due to the Federal Government and Academic Staff Union of Universities agreements of the said years (Ugah, 2012). Furthermore, the struggle for academic status for librarians also received international and national impetus as the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in the 1970's listed standards for college and university libraries while the American library Association approved in 2007 its committee report to accord academic status to librarians (ACRL, 2007). Even though academic status have been accorded to librarians in Nigerian Universities, Chukwu (1998), Ekoja and Oji (1999) agree that serious challenges remained unresolved. These challenges are what this paper attempts to solve.

Methodology

The documentary research method of observations and oral communication were used for this study and the design for data collection includes data from documents reports and circulars on service conditions for librarians especially on appointments and promotions of librarians.

Findings and Discussions

Academic status of research librarians was recognised in their role of providing and processing necessary technical and scientific media for accelerating research as the then condition of service prior to 1987, and subsequent ones in 1992 and 2004. Thus, discussions on the findings are presented in subheadings below.

Librarians career prospects. Prior to 1987, the predicament for librarians in research institutes was not that of academic status but that of career prospect as the then condition and scheme of service stipulated librarians terminal grade at G.L 14 (FGN, 1982), with a service nomenclature listed below in Table I.

Table I: Service Nomenclature of Librarians in Agricultural Research Institutes Prior to 1987

Post	Salary GL	Qualification
Chief Librarian	14	BLS
Assistant Chief Librarian	13	BLS
Principal Librarian	12	BLS
Senior Librarian	10	BLS
Librarian I	09	BLS
Librarian II	08	BLS

While this was the case for librarians, their scientist counterparts could rise up to the post of Directors and Assistant Directors on grade level (GL) 16 and 15 respectively. Under this erstwhile condition, librarians suffered both career relegation and professional marginalization. Following persistent outcry and inundating memo's, a new service condition emerged in 1992 (FGN, 1992), which examined the grading and salary placements of librarians, accountants, administrative officers and maintenance engineers in agricultural research institute. This document extended the career of these officers to GL 15 on the post of Assistant Directors. This meant that they could then retire on GL 15. It

also recognised the academic status of librarians in the schedule of duty specified for scientific information collection and processing.

Academic status. Following the introduction of University Salary Structure (USS) and the Harmonised Tertiary Institutions Salary Structure (HATISS) and the subsequent consolidated structure (1997, 1998) which introduced research, journal, learned society, hazard, high risk allowances, etc, into staff salary, the problem of academic status for librarians in research institutes became more accentuated as many research librarians were not paid these allowances until five years later (i.e. in 1992). Having accepted that librarians contribute to academic activities in their institutes, they began to demand new but extraneous requirements of conditions for appointments and promotions of librarians, terms quite outside established conditions of service. Chief Executive Officers expected librarians to have the same number of publications and the same qualifications as their research counterparts for both promotions and appointments. Although a new condition of service for Federal Research Institutes, Colleges of Agriculture and allied institutions (2004) intervened and narrowed some discrepancies and misconceptions, it was not un-entirely unambivalent as the document was prepared in haste by research scientists for librarians and was therefore flawed in many respects. It provided criteria on pages 60-61 for appointment and promotion of research officers, and on page 62, it provided on 17.1 and 17.2 criteria for promotion of other research staff and listed 5 broad criteria for librarians as follows:

- i. professional competence
- ii. research publications
- iii. administrative abilities
- iv. community and special services
- v. experience and professionalism

The document fell short of specifying the exact marks to be allotted to publications and the number of publications requirement for different levels of librarians. Again on page 59, the Scheme of Service stated that promotion beyond the post of Senior Librarian requires relevant publications without stating the number. While it left qualification as bachelor of Library Science, it failed to recognise that master's degree is the minimum requirement necessary as ability to undertake an independent research or investigation to publish an authentic paper in any academic discipline. Again, page 51, item 13.4 showed retirement age stated inter-alia. However research academic staff may continue until they attain 65years of age as obtained in the Nigerian University. This ambiguity has been abused

severally in the past as some librarians have recently survived a forced and premature retirement. The document should have defined the cadre to retire at 65years.

Librarians' qualifications. The Scheme of service for research institutes specifies requirement for entry for librarians as any of the following:

- a) a degree plus a post graduate diploma in library studies
- b) a degree in library studies
- c) associate-ship or Fellowship of a recognized institute of librarians.

It did not however deem it necessary to specify master's degree for librarians who needed to have higher academic qualifications to undertake independent research in other to publish. More so, the document also showed enormous ignorance by not realizing that the requirement for associateship or fellowship of a recognised institution of librarians is a colonial pattern that has long been dropped as a qualification for librarians.

Table 2: Current Qualification, Professional and Publishing Status of Librarians in some Nigeria's Agricultural Research Institutes

Research Institutes	Headship Status	Qualification	Publication
Cocoa Res. Inst. of Nigeria	Asst. Director	MLS	Above 20
Nig. Inst. For Oil Palm Res. Benin	-----	MLS	Below 5
Forestry Res. Inst. of Nig., Ibadan	Director	MLS	Above 10
Rubber Res. Inst. of Nig. Benin	Librarian I	MLS	Below 5
Nat. Root Crops Res. Inst. Umudike	Director	MLS	Above 20
Nat. Hort Res. Inst. Ibadan	Director	MLS	Above 15
Nat. Vet. Res. Inst., Vom	Chief Librarian	MLS	Below 10
Nig. Inst. for Fresh Water		MLS	Below 10
Fish Res. Inst. New Bussa	Asst. Chief	MLS	Below 10
Nig. Stored Product Res. Inst., Ilorin.	Asst. Director	MLS	Above 15
Raw Mat. Res. & Dev. Council...	Asst. Director	MLS	Above 15
Nig. Inst. of Oceanography ...	Director	Ph.D	Above 15

Conclusion

Findings from the study show that librarians in agricultural research institutes contribute to academic activities of the institute through information processing and provision of scientific and technical media. The conditions of service for the institute were solely and entirely prepared for scientist and librarians without the necessary inputs from top class librarians in the institutes. This accounts for serious ambiguities like that seen in retirement age provision of

65 years for research academic staff without specific reference to librarians. These factors also led to the erroneous assumption that graduate diploma still constituted a requirement for employment and promotion of librarians. Librarians now have a reasonable level of educational qualification and equipped with intellectual capacity to undertake independent research to publish in journals and proceedings as they are currently doing. They thus have improved academic outlook. Present requirement of only a BLS for librarians above the post of Senior Librarian is considered too low for intellectual capacity for independent research. There are only a few doctoral degree holders among librarians in research institutes. Librarians remain contented and complacent and shy away from it not minding that it could be an advantage. Although librarians were required to publish on attaining the post of Senior Librarian, the specific number of papers was not listed. Librarians have successfully overcome the initial constraints hindering academic status. This long battle needs to be sustained for a brighter future through hard work.

Recommendations

This paper recommends that:

1. agencies for preparing condition of service for research institutes should involve top class librarians within and outside the establishment.
2. the ambiguities of 65 years retirement age should be rectified by listing librarians as beneficiaries and the erroneous assumption that associateship, fellowship and first degree as qualification for appointment/promotion of librarians should be erased.
3. the educational requirement for promotion above Senior Librarian should be raised to master's degree holders in library and information science as this is the basic requirement to conduct research in any discipline.
4. librarians should aspire to take doctoral degrees though not as requirement but as added advantage.

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