

QUALITY STAFF RECRUITMENT AND SUSTAINANCE OF LIS EDUCATION IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: Staffing is key to the progress and sustenance of any organization. Personnel in the library and information science field form the core of all activities in librarianship. Policies are fundamental to the implementation of staffing procedures. Thus, the quest for recruiting staff with the right qualification to fill available and specific position within the library and information science education field is essential. The high demand for information professionals in tertiary institutions libraries in Nigeria, calls for a closer attention. Insufficient manpower in the library could create a gap in the service quality as such it is relevant to consider users because they are at the receiving end. Therefore recruiting for right personnel to give the right training for Library and information science education could be a measure to reduce redundancy in library service. The paper discussed the qualification, recruitment process, staff remunerations, on the job training, school curriculum development for library and information science education and challenges facing in staffing policies formulation in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. In conclusion, curriculum should be developed in library schools that incorporate modern trend as well as prepare graduate for future task. Therefore, to give the right training to undergraduate can only be achieved when qualified teachers with the right skill and competence is employed to teach LIS students in tertiary institutions recommendations and suggestions will be proffered to advance library and information science program in tertiary institutions.

KEYWORDS: Staffing, qualification, recruitment process, remunerations, Library and Information Science Program, Curriculum Development and Tertiary Institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Library and Information Science (LIS) as a profession, is concerned with the knowledge and skill by which the records of human communication are collected, organized. A librarian is a mediator between man and the graphic records that his previous generations have produced; and the goal of the librarian is to maximize the social utility of these records for the benefit of humanity (Shara,1972). Librarians have very important role to play in the process of communication of information in today world for which they must be well educated, and highly skilled.

Anyanwu (2013), opined that Library and information science education plays a significant role in the educational achievement of any nation. The field of library and information science (LIS) is undergoing immense transformation and this has affected the landscape of library and information service parlance. In our contemporary society, where education has become the hub upon which economic development rotate, the place of library and information services cannot be ignored. Library and Information science programme is designed to assist students in the development of a wide range of technical skills in both library and media services that can lead to or enhance employment in the library field and other related industries.

Abioye (2013) also states that LIS professionals are gatekeepers and brokers of information which is essential for knowledge acquisition, decision-making and national development. Library and information science as a discipline is designed to produce information professional that will competently serve different stakeholders for development. The graduates of library and information science ought to be empowered through practical entrepreneurial skills. The graduates-to-be are expected to draw from the various entrepreneurial well of knowledge and be repositioned for job creation. Library and information science graduates needs to be given core entrepreneurial trainings in relation to library and information services so that, at graduation, they can become employable instead of looking for white-collar jobs.

In these era of rise entrepreneurship education has become a necessity. As noted by Combes et al (2011), new graduates are key stakeholders in Library and Information Science (LIS) and Library and Information Management (LIM), if this assertion is anything to go by, it implies that the graduates-to-be should be adequately repositioned in theory and practical knowledge of the profession and as well be trained to entrepreneurial in mind and reasoning as this is the only way through unemployment can be reduced drastically.

The success of library and information science in effectively meeting their obligation of information provision is hinged, in part, on the quality of staff recruitment processes in use in the bid to sustain the LIS education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Trained personnel, according to Korsah (1996) are a key requirement in library and information science education. In this respect, LIS education plays a vital role (Edegbo, 2011) since early LIS professionals, particularly practicing librarians did not undergo any formal training as it is in these contemporary time.

Staffing is key to the progress and sustenance of any organization. Personnel in the library and information science field form the core of all activities in librarianship. Policies are fundamental to the implementation of staffing procedures. Thus, the quest for recruiting staff with the right qualification to fill available and specific position within the library and information science education field is essential. The high demand for information professionals in tertiary institutions libraries in Nigeria, calls for a closer attention. Insufficient manpower in the library could create a gap in the service quality as such it is relevant to consider users because they are at the receiving end.

Getting the right personnel to fill a rightful position has led to the state of affairs in the field of library and information education. Since human resource is the key component for any institution attention and priority should be placed where it belongs especially in staff recruitment. The issue of staff recruitment is not only peculiar in library service but also in the various institutions that train the graduate. Sahai (2005) stated that the present conditions of professional service in the university library necessarily demand that staff should be precisely trained, equipped with technical skill for the job. Unfortunately, there is an acute shortage of trained staff in the university libraries and institutions especially in the developing countries such as Nigeria. Therefore, recruiting the right personnel to give the right training for Library and information science education could be a measure to reduce redundancy in library service

LIS STAFF QUALIFICATION AND RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

Sahai (2005) opined that today's librarianship is a highly complex profession warranting specialized and technical knowledge of various sorts like personnel administration, financial management and different bibliographical and bibliotheca techniques. The personnel responsible to render library service and education are expected to know both the objectives of this institution as well as the potentialities to achieve them. This can be possible through harnessing properly the library tools and means in an adept and skillful manner. These suggest that even a scholar of high repute cannot be successful in the function of a library except he/she has acquired the professional skills in librarianship. As such, under the modern personnel management in the library greater emphasis is laid on appointment of trained staff.

Cyr, et al. (1996), says that decisions concerning the appointment of staff are among the most important to be made by librarians. Staffs are a key resource and poor decisions are not easily undone. All kinds of factors come into play when staffing decisions have to be made and these often obscure the basic issues to be resolved. Library and information staffs are normally recruited from the ranks of graduate professional librarians and are expected to have at least a first degree with a post-graduate qualification in librarianship at the entry point. The preference is usually for the degree to be in a subject relevant to that with which the librarian will be dealing. Thus, quality staff recruitment and sustainability is required for the advancement of library and information science education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Buettner, (2014), assert that recruitment is the overall process of attracting, selecting and appointing suitable candidates for jobs (either permanent or temporary) within an organization. Recruitment can also refer to processes involved in choosing individuals for unpaid positions, such as voluntary roles or unpaid trainee roles. Managers, human resource generalists and recruitment specialists may be tasked with carrying out recruitment, but in some cases public-sector employment agencies, commercial recruitment agencies, or specialist search consultancies are used to undertake parts of

the process. Internet-based technologies to support all aspects of recruitment have become widespread. There are different recruitment processes that can be employed in the sourcing for staff but are not limited to the underlisted:

- Internal recruitment refers to the process of a candidate being selected from the existing workforce to take up a new job in the same organization, perhaps as a promotion, or to provide career development opportunity, or to meet a specific or urgent organizational need. (Schwbel, 2012).
- An staff referral program is a system where existing staffs recommend prospective candidates for the job offered, and in some organizations if the suggested candidate is hired, the staff receives a cash bonus.
- Niche firms tend to focus on building ongoing relationships with their candidates, as the same candidates may be placed many times throughout their careers. Online resources have developed to help find niche recruiters. Niche firms also develop knowledge on specific employment trends within their industry of focus (e.g., the energy industry) and are able to identify demographic shifts such as aging and its impact on the industry.
- Social recruiting is the use of social media for recruiting including sites like Facebook and Twitter or career-oriented social networking sites such as LinkedIn and XING. It is a rapidly growing sourcing technique, especially with middle-aged people.
- Mobile recruiting is a recruitment strategy that uses mobile technology to attract, engage and convert candidates. Mobile recruiting is often cited as a growing opportunity for recruiters to connect with candidates more efficiently with "over 89% of job seekers saying their mobile device will be an important tool and resource for their job search."

If there is going to be an active recruitment program, the personnel officer or library director must conduct regular reviews of the library's staffing needs. There are several important considerations in planning this review processes.

STAFF REMUNERATIONS

Staff remuneration is defined as, "the reward or compensation given to the staffs for their work performances," according to Management Study Guide. Remuneration is a method of promoting morale, increasing motivation and foster team cohesion. There two main types of staff remuneration which are: the piece rate method and the time rate method. The former is compensation based on unit of productivity, while the latter is the time a staff spends on a job before a deadline.

Remuneration can motivate employees to be more productive but does not have to necessarily be compensation based. Remuneration can also be praise or recognition. However, compensated Remuneration can be effective in long-term motivation and productivity, such as a raise or promotion.

American Library Association has been promoting the work of library staff and seeks to raise the salaries and status of library employees. Library staff are outspoken when it comes to intellectual freedom and other issues that affect library users, but we have not been nearly as vocal on our own behalf. The major challenge for library and information professional is clear:

- We must overcome the stereotype of the library worker as the selfless, dedicated and devoted worker, who is in the profession to do well and who will accept pay that does not reflect their status as professionals.
- We must promote a better understanding of what library staff does. We will not win higher wages if the public does not understand the education, experience, judgment, and special skills it takes for us to do our jobs.
- We must contribute substantively to the fight for pay equity—it is our fight too. Women have been discriminated against in a variety of ways, a primary one being compensation.

STAFF ON THE JOB TRAINING

Learning is a continuous process as such every tertiary institutions that offers library and information science course requires the right staff mix to provide quality library education in preparation for future employment. In order to produce qualified graduate to fill the gap in lack of library professionals prompt the need to recruit qualified instructors that will incorporate theory and practical in teaching library and information science to students so as to produce professionals and reduce the number of unemployable graduate in the society. In order to produce graduate with all the demand of the labour market requires extensive training as undergraduate that will expose students to what one will experience in future employment as such the government has put in place measure to ensure adequate standard in curriculum and recruitment process in order to employ professionals that will produce quality graduate that can perform under any work conditions.

Training according to Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary states that training is the process of preparing somebody or being prepared for job. In manpower development, training is therefore an indispensable element and at the same time, a vehicle for development and planning.

Dorman (1975) emphasized the role of training in management activity especially in the area of human resource management. According to him, the training function is a management activity in which the personnel department provides the necessary specialist knowledge and usually carries out in addition to the administrative requirements so that the function operates effectively within the organization. He went further to state the basic stages in establishing training function with the view of improving on the manpower development are:

- To find out the training needs of the particular organization at all levels.
- To formulate a training policy that will meet the needs of the organization.
- To evaluate the resources, both financial and material which could be required.
- To provide the necessary specialist training officers who will be responsible for implementing both the training policy and training plan.

Training can be seen as a process or a set of activities aimed at assisting an individual to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the effective performance of specific tasks or job. Within the context of work in modern business organizations, training is a continuous process which normally starts at the point of entry and progresses throughout the worker's career. Training could be carried out on-the-job learning experience or more formally structured programmes and practical exposure. It could also be undertaken in locations which are completely outside workers normal work environment (Armstrong et al, 1988).

Oyitso, et al (2012) citing Egungwu (1992) says training is a gradual and systematized continuous job-related education, training and job assignments during working life, which in itself, is a process of ensuring improvement in the performance ability on the job. On-the-job training takes place at the work place and possibly while at work. He went further assert that on-the-job training takes place at work location. Responsible for its implementation is primarily that of the immediate superiors. On-the-job training is given to new staffs by their organization irrespective of their previous training and experience. Orientation or induction training is given to these new workers to familiarize them with their new work environment and the operations of the establishment. He went further to opine that training is an organizational efforts aimed at helping staffs to acquire basic skills required for the execution of functions for which they were hired or employed.

At policy levels, LIS will aim to ensure that staff are well trained in order to carry out their task efficiently and are encouraged also in their personal development for the benefit of staff and the library profession (Jones and Jordan, 1982). The training and development of staff is a key responsibility for the LIS managers. Continuing education has become a major importance to librarians with the rapid developments within the profession and changes in the social, political, technological and economic environment in which it operates.

CONCEPT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION

Library and information science education in Nigeria has experienced consistency in evolution despite the economic challenges that might not be favourable to education in Nigeria. The establishment of library schools in Nigeria has brought about significant change in the library profession.

Despite the increase in tertiary institution in Nigeria with the influx of students into several program of the institution especially library and information science (LIS) education there seems to be insufficient professionals in the field of library and information science to teach. Could it be as a result of misplacement of employment priority by employing a degree holder not library profession to teach in library schools as such pose lots of challenges to the student. Could it be seen as a result of political underlining in order to satisfy a particular political group or could it be due to lack of sufficient graduate to fill the right position. This paper will present some of the underlining issues affecting quality staff recruitment and prospective measures to curb poor staff recruitment process.

According to Singh (n.d.) librarianship today has arrived at the information age where the role of information is increasingly emphasized as an economic resource, a marketable commodity and as a social wealth. In this content, the roles of librarians are of much importance. He / she will have to act as a facilitator, advisor, consultant, instructor, navigator, searcher, researcher, evaluator, organizer, preserver, promoter, communicator, technical expert, as well as a manager, leader, entrepreneur and visionary. And for the success library and information centers as effective communication system,

the development of manpower to do such work is vital. One of the important aspects of manpower development in this connection is improved education system for library and information science.

Library Information Science Education in Nigeria today cannot be relevant without effective preparation of new generation of librarians to effectively use the new information and communication technology in their professional practices. For many library and information science schools as enumerated by Nwalo (2000) this doubting task requires the acquisitions of new resources, expertise and careful planning.

Ene, (2007) went further to say that, tertiary institutions in Nigeria especially universities serve as training ground to prepare graduate for the labour market, government is yet to be awoken to the reality of human capital development, which is the whole essence of education and the single most critical factor in socio-economic and political transformation required for the banishment of poverty, hunger and disease Every institution is experiencing setback in the employment of labour which could be applauded to the current economic situation in the country. This has also been evident in meticulous ways employers of labour are placing lots of scrutiny on their recruitment processes.

Thus, this is a problem to be solved not only by the library professional associations but as a joint responsibility between the library professional associations and the government sectors. It is both the responsibilities of the university as well as that of the government. The government can set up standards and norms that will create opportunities to encourage the highly qualified graduates from field of library and information science to enter the profession.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION

Oparah (2006) observed that until 1999; there was no uniform or harmonized curriculum for Nigerian University Library and information science schools. Each operated its own curriculum. According to him, the newer LIS schools appear to operate modified curricula of the older schools. A review of the curricula of these schools shows that while some emphasize more library science courses, other strive to strike a balance between library science and information.

Onwuka (1981) went further to support Oparah that learning experience at any level of formal education is primarily determined by the contents of relevant curriculum. Perhaps, this explains why curriculum is seen as the means by which educational institutions seeks to translate the hope of the society into concrete reality. The length of LIS training varies from country to country, but the minimum training period for this professional course consist of at least full academic session in almost all the countries. For instance in the USA up on till 1940s the library schools offered the Bachelor's degree courses but now there are masters degree course as well as doctoral degrees even in the case of Nigeria.

It has been discovered that the curriculum for LIS education usually mirrors what is being offered to train librarians and information professionals, knowledge and skills to become qualified personnel in the field, but also, meet challenges the ever changing information society brings (Chu, 2006). As such could the changes be acclaimed in LIS education due to changes in the program curriculum? The curriculum reflects the courses to be thought in a program and outlines the aspect that will support training and development, an example of such training is found in the industrial training of students.

A curriculum is a fundamental part of any education or training programmes largely because it provides not only a list of courses or modules offered in a programme, but it also gives information on content, purpose, method, time / duration, trainers and location or situation of a programme or course all of which are essential in a successful dispensation of manpower training and education (Ocholla, 2003).

The provision of opportunities to meet the basic learning needs of information professionals is a first step towards preparing library and information science schools in Nigeria for the emerging global society. The relevance and viability of library and information science education in Nigeria requires looking at both the access to and quality in new ways to enhancing the quality of products turned out from the universities into the labour market. The survival of library and information science education in Nigeria depends largely on the quality of faculty and students.

CHALLENGES FACING QUALITY STAFF RECRUITMENT POLICIES FORMULATION IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

However, LIS education is confronted with several challenges that can militate against the library profession in Nigeria. One of the major challenges discovered is inadequate supply of man power or human capital to teach relevant courses in library schools. Some of the challenges of LIS education in Nigeria are inadequate infrastructure, outdated/changing curricula, poor human and financial resources, lack of access to necessary information resources for learning and poor communication among key players in the library schools are some of the major issues library schools in Nigeria are contenting with (Igwe, 2005 and Edegbo, 2011).

WAY FORWARD

To meet the challenges of a wide variety of jobs involved in library and information education, quality staffs are a sine qua non. This paper discussed the importance of quality staff recruitment and sustains LIS education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

From the literature reviewed LIS education in tertiary institutions in Nigeria must be developed according curriculum. The development of curriculum in order to equip LIS graduates for employability, increasing numbers of students enrolment, bring about changes in course titles, and make room for recruiting qualified staff to man the LIS program is very essential to sustain the LIS education in Nigeria. The consistent demand for LIS graduates means consistent demand for quality programmes and fine tuning of the curriculum to meet the market needs. This also calls for an urgent need for quality staff recruitment control checks since with rapid expansion of LIS education, the standards of teaching and learning must be maintained and sustained for LIS education to continue to thrive in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

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