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A DECADE OF JOB PROSPECTS IN THE LIBRARIANSHIP PROFESSION

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ABSTRACT

From 2010 to 2020, the study examined job advertisements for library practitioners in Ghana. The study results reveal no substantial changes over a ten-year period. Notwithstanding, job opportunities have gradually increased. In both 2010 and 2020, Assistant Librarians had more job openings than Librarians which is the topmost position in the library profession. Higher degrees of Ph.D. and MPhil are mostly the requisite for any positions, but most jobs require a Master of Arts in Information Studies or Information Science or Bachelor of Arts in Information Science. Despite the fact that technology is permeating job openings in libraries, employers do not require it, particularly in 2020, which is an affront to the digitised working environment for Librarians. The study recommends that Librarians should upgrade and improve their computer skills in this digital environment to be relevant in the job prospects for information professionals. Again, it is recommended that government institutions, Academic, Special, and School Libraries should indicate the professional skills required in the job advertisement for Librarians.

Keywords: *Librarians, Library Profession, Job Prospects, Advertisement, Ghana.*

INTRODUCTION

Change represents the most noticeable symptom of the digital world. Everything is changing so quickly in this day and age. This change occurs in both external or physical forms as well as internal forms like working practices or thing terminology. The library and information science career path are no exception. This career path has undergone significant changes over the past decade. The use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in libraries has contributed in trans and the transition of libraries into virtual and cyber settings. For instance, the information storing format is altered. Information production, Service structure, working patterns and user demands, are all affected. Even librarians' titles have changed to knowledge managers, cybrarians, metadata librarians, and so on.

IT literacy is essential for librarians in this digital age. Goggui et al. (2018) emphasized the importance of libraries having up-to-date computer literacy skills in order to increase productivity.

According to Tahir et al. (2010), contemporary ICTs are increasingly being used in libraries in Pakistan. According to the research results of their study, jobs in the LIS career path are gradually increasing, but there is an absence of uniformity in job titles. The majority of job titles do not discuss the decent job market demands. The advancement of libraries is dependent on qualified library practitioners and IT specialists. Library schools are in charge of training library practitioners. In Ghana, there is only one Library School that offers Master's and Ph.D. level education.

To meet global standards, this library school's curriculum must be revised and new subjects added on a regular basis. According to Ameen (2011), "designing the routine formal academic program to gain knowledge on a wide range of the required competencies is a significant challenge." Universities, colleges, institutes, and schools are expanding in Ghana. Job opportunities for library practitioners are also expanding. News outlets and institutional webpages are the primary sources of information about job vacancies in Ghana. Public and private academic institutions in Ghana advertise job openings in leading newspapers such as the Daily Graphic and the Ghanaian Times. The changes in job trends were measured in this study by evaluating adverts published in Ghana's leading newspapers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study's key objective is to analyse the professional mode of Librarianship in the job market in the Greater Accra and Ashanti Regions of Ghana. The following are specific objectives:

1. To discover out changes in job openings for the Librarianship profession in the past decade (2010-2020) in Ghana.
2. To study the changing trend of job titles for the Librarianship profession for the past ten (10) years in Ghana.
3. To compare the required qualifications for the Librarianship profession in the years 2010 and 2020 in Ghana.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Zhang (2008) examined job postings and discovered that the demand for language abilities has expanded for research and academic librarians. Technical services and government services work opportunities require the most language skills of any library position. There is a link between language abilities and work experiences.

According to Qutab and Shafique (2011), Kennan et al. (2006) equated job adverts in Australia to those in the United States of America. The findings revealed a deficiency of lucidity in the two countries' skills needed and proficiencies for library professionals.

Du et al. (2007) examined the content of job postings on the Library and Information Science job database. Their findings revealed three distinct motifs of preferred qualifications. In addition to a Master of Arts degree from an accredited library university, most positions require a professional/technology skills, academic background, and communication skills,

Mandal and Dasgupta (2019) investigated current trends and professional advancement requirements in the information service industry and South Australian library. According to the study, employers value professional and overall abilities such as communication skills and teamwork. Additionally, IT skills are in high demand. Gerolimos and Konsta (2008) discovered

38 vital skills and qualifications in library job advertisements from the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States, and Australia. "Communication skills" and "teamwork" are the most important skills, accounting for 38% of the total.

Homme (2014) examined online job postings in the Ghanaian industry. According to his findings, 283 jobs for information practitioners were posted in 2010. The most out of (81.17%) were for librarian roles, with archivists coming in second. Matthews and Pardue (2009) investigated the contents of job advertisements from the American Library Association's online JobLIST. Their findings suggest that librarians require a broader set of IT skills. Web development is the most important skill, accompanied by program management and system development. However, the programming language is the slightest needed.

Shongwe and Ocholla (2012) investigated the job market for Library and Information Sciences in South Africa by trying to analyse job adverts appearing in two newspapers over a three-year period. Their findings show that job opportunities in library and information science are expanding rapidly. Nevertheless, job opportunities in the government sector outnumber those in the private sector. Employers list the necessary competent skills, IT abilities, and other specific skills, indicating that South African libraries are really quite sophisticated in the use of ICT. IT skills are most in demand for all positions. LCSH, AACR2, WorldCat, MARC21, RDA, OPAC, Millennium system, library web 2.0, Collection development, and INNOPAC are all essential professional skills.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study used content analysis to detect changes in Library and Information Science employment trends. In Ghana, the greatest normal method is to advertise job openings in dailies. Job adverts are the best predictors of the abilities and skills that employers seek. As a result, job adverts appearing in two leading Ghanaian newspapers were chosen for analysis. For this study, the two most widely circulated newspapers in Ghana (the Daily Graphic and the Ghanaian Times) were chosen. These two newspapers cover the same geographic area. They are both available in English. Job advertisements from two distinct years (2010 and 2020) were investigated and connected for differences.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The two newspapers (Daily Graphic and Ghanaian Times) have equal coverage areas. They are both published in the English language and are also seen as the most authentic source of print job advertisements for Government sector employment and some private organizations. Job advertisements in two specific years (that is, 2010 and 2020) ten years separately were scrutinized and linked for the changes.

If an advert appears in more than one daily paper, it is common in the Daily Graphic and the Ghanaian Times. Similarly, if two job openings were advertised in the same publication, each job description was calculated. Table 1 displays that 39 jobs were publicised in the two dominant newspapers in Ghana's Greater Accra and Ashanti Regions in 2010 and 71 jobs in 2020.

Table 1. Distribution of Job advertisements in newspapers

	The year 2010		The year 2020	
	Freq n=39	%	Freq n=71	%
<i>Daily Graphic</i>	37	34.05	59	54.05
<i>Ghanaian Times</i>	2	1.81	12	10.09
Total	39		71	

Field Data: 2022

The Librarianship professional jobs publicised in the two years 2010 and 2020 were analysed to discover the changes that occurred in a decade (10 years).

JOB PROSPECTS

Table 2 below shows that the jobs in the librarianship profession in the Greater Accra and Ashanti Regions have expanded. In 2010, a total of 39 (35.86%) jobs were publicised. In 2020, job vacancies were 71 (64.14) which shows an increase for the decade. These statistics are promising and positive for the future, even if the findings are not consistent with that of advanced countries. A study conducted by Matthews and Pardue (2009) displayed a total of 906

jobs recorded on ALA's online JobLIST flanked by October 1, 2007, to March 22, 2008. From April 2004 to March 2005, within spite of a year, research undertaken by Younger (2005) identified 1,000 advertisements for Library and Information Science sites published in the CILIP newspaper of the United Kingdom.

Table 2. Jobs Advertised in Newspapers

Year	Frequency	Percentage
2010	39	35.86
2020	71	64.14
Total	100	100

Field Data: 2022

Title Description

Table 3. Job Title

	The year 2010		The year 2020	
	Freq n=39	Percentage	Freq n=71	Percentage
Librarian	9	23.07	9	12.68
Assistant Librarian	27	69.23	49	69.01
Library Assistant	3	7.68	13	18.29
Total	39	100	71	100

Field Data: 2022

An enticing job title with in library profession will leave an indelible impression on people's heads. For the most of job hunters in Ghana, the term "librarian" signifies a low-status position. Table 3 demonstrates that there has been no major change in job titles over the last ten years. In both years, the most prevalent title is Assistant Librarian. Assistant Librarian jobs were

advertised in 27 (69.23%) jobs in 2010 and 49 (69.01%) jobs in 2020. The use of the title Librarian has decreased from 9 (23.07%) in 2010 to 9 (12.68%) in 2020. The number of Library Assistants increased significantly in 2020 (13(18,29%) compared to 2010 (3(7.68%).

"We need to change our words to change our thinking," Nicholas, Dobrowolski, Huntington, and Raper (2000) write. In Ghana, there is an immediate need to replace old, out-of-date job titles. New IT-oriented, amazing job titles will actually enhance librarians' social standing. IT-related titles will boost librarians' faith and make them proud of their chosen profession. A study by Frimpong et al. (2018) displayed that the broad term information professional is employed to represent the kind of the job for professionals whose mandate is to manage information for decision-making. This generic term has gained a lead role in bringing all those involved in librarianship, information brokers, archivist, metadata officer, and records managers into one umbrella which society now accepts and respect their roles.

Salary

According to Table 4, public sector salaries are distributed based on a pay scale. Only 21 (53.84%) jobs with fixed salaries in Ghana cedis were advertised in 2010, compared to 36 (50.70%) in 2020. Between 2010 and 2020, the salary range was increased to 3,000-6,000 Ghana cedis from 1,500-2,500 cedis. The worth of a currency is roughly the same despite a ten-year difference. There were 3 (4.22%) jobs with negotiable salaries in the 2010 corporate pay scale and 5 (7.04%) in 2020. The number of jobs with no salary information was 15 (38.46%) in 2010 and 30 (42.25%) in 2020. In general, salaries are not mentioned in private institutions. Some companies offer negotiating salaries. These are low-paying private-sector jobs, particularly in school libraries, private colleges of education, and university libraries.

Table 4: Salary Scale

	The year 2010		The year 2020	
	Frequency N=39	Percentage	Frequency N=71	Percentage
Fix	21	53.84	36	50.70
Negotiable	3	4.22	5	7.04
Not Mention	15	38.46	30	42.25

Total	39	100	71	100
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Field Data: 2022

Requirement of Qualifications

Table 5: Qualifications

	The year 2010		The year 2020	
	Freq n=39	Percentage	Freq n=71	Percentage
PhD	-	-	-	-
MPhil	-	-	1	2.82
MA	21	53.84	27	38.02
BA	9	23.10	19	26.80
Diploma	1	2.56	4	5.60
Not Mention	8	20.51	20	27.16
Total	39	100	71	100

Field Data: 2022

Every profession is built on theoretical knowledge. It is incarnated in the Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees in the library profession. A Master of Arts degree is the most commonly requisite requirements for library practitioners (MA). It is true in both of the years. Table 5 demonstrates that a Master of Arts degree was required for 21 (53.84%) jobs in 2010 and 27 (38.02%) jobs in 2020. (MA). According to a study conducted by Du, Stein, and Martin (2007), the greatest desired requirement registered in adverts stashed in the Library and Information Science job database is a master's degree from an accredited university offering a library and information science program. There were 9 (23.10%) job adverts in 2010 that need a Bachelor of Arts Degree (BA) and 19 (26.80%) in 2020. MPhil is a two-year program at the University of Ghana's Department of Information Studies, while MA is a one-year program. M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees are higher-level research degrees. In 2020, only one job advertisement required an M.Phil. degree, whereas none did in 2010. In neither period was a Ph.D. required in any advertisement. Here's an intriguing qualification discovery. It's incredible that a bachelor's degree (B.A.) was required in 19 (26.80%) job advertisements in 2020, but only 9 (23.10%) in 2010. In 2010, a Diploma qualification was needed in one job ad (2.56%), and it will be needed in four (5.60%) by

2020. Employers in Ghana are generally unaware of the library profession. Private institutions typically require a B.A. or diploma qualification. According to Cunha (2009), a librarian documentalist role in Brazil required a bachelor's degree in library studies. Gerolimos and Konsta (2008) discovered that 82% of library positions in the United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, and Australia needed a degree in Library and information science.

Professional Skills Requirements

The olden times of library and information science demonstrates that the field is undergoing intermediate growth. Expert skills are frequently overlooked in job advertisements. Table 6 displays a list of professional library skills. In 2010, 33 (86.30%) job adverts did not specify the professional skills required; by 2020, the figure had risen to 67 (94.40%). In 2010, no job advertisements listed desired professional skills in administration, and only two (2.82%) do in 2020. Only two (5.10%) advertisements in 2010 needed cataloguing and classification skills, one (2.56%), and two (2.82%) in 2020 required cataloguing skills and none required classification. Both years, reference work never was listed as a requirement. Only 1 (2.56%) job advertisements in 2010 essential skills in bibliography and acquisition whilst none were required in 2020.

Table 6: Professional Skills Requirements

	The year 2010		The year 2020	
	Freq n=39	Percentage	Freq n=71	Percentage
Cataloguing	2	5.10	2	2.82
Classification	1	2.56	-	-
Reference	-	-	-	-
Bibliography	1	2.56	-	-
Acquisition	1	2.56	-	-
Library Administration	-	-	2	2.82
Not Mention	33	86.30	67	94.40
Total	39	100	71	100

Field Data: 2022

Experience requirement

Table 7: Experience requirement

	The year 2010		The year 2020	
	Freq n=39	Percentage	Freq n=71	Percentage
Required	13	33.33	11	15.52
Not mentioned	13	33.33	35	49.30
1-5 years	10	25.64	19	26.75
6- 10 years	-	-	4	5.63
11-15 years	3	4.22	2	2.80
16 years and above	-	-	-	-
Total	39	100	71	100

Field Data: 2022

A professional with theory experience and knowledge has been the best performer at work. Because theory knowledge offers essential information, there is no auxiliary for experiential learning. According to Table 7, the needed experience was 13 (33.33%) jobs in 2010 and 11 (15.52%) jobs in 2020. There were 13 (33.33%) job vacancies that did not mention experience in 2010 and 35 (49.30%) in 2020. In 2010, 10 (25.64%) job advertisements required 1-5 years of experience, while 19 (26.75%) in 2020. Three (4.22%) job ads in 2010 and two (2.80%) in 2020 needed 11-15 years of experience. In 2020, four job postings (5.63%) demanded 6-10 years of experience. This extensive experience was not needed in job postings in 2010. Gerolimos and Konsta (2008) discovered that 60% of job adverts in the United Kingdom, Canada, the United States of America, and Australia needed prior work experience.

Computer Skill Requirement

Table 8: List of computer skills required by Librarians

	The year 2010		The year 2020	
	Freq n=39	Percentage	Freq n=71	Percentage
Database	-	-	1	1.41

Automation	4	10.26	11	15.49
Digitization	10	25.64	14	19.72
Internet	-	-	-	-
MS Office	3	7.69	1	1.41
Computer typing	2	5.13	4	5.63
Not mentioned	20	51.28	40	56.34
Total	39	100	71	100

Field Data: 2022

Information and communication technology (ICT) has been used in library operations in Ghana. Except for academic libraries, this process is slow across all types of libraries. Table 8 contains a list of computer skills. In 2010 database skill was not known in the library until 2020 when 1(1.41%) posted an advertisement requiring such a skill. The process of automation is to some extent emphasized since 2010 with 4 (10.26%) and 11(15.49%) in 2020. Job advertisements in 2010 did require competencies in digitization with 10(25.64%) whilst in 2020 increased to 14(19.72%). However, in both 2010 and 2020, internet skills for the librarianship position were never a requirement. In 2010, job positions that needed computer typing skills were 2 (5.13%) whereas, in 2020, the number increased to only 4 (5.63%). Vacancies that demanded MS Office was 3 (7.69%) in the year 2010 and dropped to 1(1.41%) in 2020. According to Gerolimos and Kkonsta (2008), ICT skills are the most in demand in the United Kingdom. According to Raju (2014), ICT and technology software skills are in high demand by Australian libraries. According to Bychowski et al. (2010), as cited in Matthew and Pardue (2009), 72% of job adverts in ALA's online JobLIST listed at least one IT skill demand. In that study, the most needed skill was web development. Additionally, project management and system development abilities were required. In 2010, 20 (51.28%) job adverts did not specify any vital computer skills. Though, in 2020, 40 (56.34%) job advertisements listed computer skill requirements. This is in agreement with Zhu (2008) study which did indicate that computer skills were not mentioned as a requirement to work in the library.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In Ghana, there have been no major changes in the working world in a decade. After ten years, job titles and required skills are essentially the same. However, the number of jobs available has elevated, denoting that employment opportunities in Ghana are expanding. Librarians' employment opportunities are changing, with only a moderate amount of work expertise required. Most Librarian jobs advertised in 2010 and 2020 did not include a salary range. Qualifications for library professional jobs include a Master of Arts Degree (MA) rather than a Ph.D., Bachelor, or Diploma. The most job postings, however, did not lay down preferred professional abilities, such as IT, communication, and managerial skills.

The study, therefore, recommends that:

1. Librarians should upgrade and improve their computer skills in this digital environment to be relevant in the job market.
2. Government Institutions, Academic, Special, and School Libraries should indicate the professional skills required in the job advertisement for Librarians
3. Prospective job seekers should try as much as possible to attain the minimum experience of one (1) to five (5) years to be qualified for positions in the library profession.

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