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FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CAREER CHOICE OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE STUDENT'S IN FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC EDE, OSUN STATE

Abstract

This study investigates the factors influencing the career choice of library and information science students in Federal Polytechnic Ede, Osun State. The major objectives of this study was to find out the factors that influence the choice of librarianship as a career among students, the level of students perception towards library and information science as a career and to find a way out on how library and information science can become a reputable discipline in the society. A total number of 127 newly admitted students into LIS were purposely chosen. Enumerative sampling techniques were adopted. Structured questionnaire were used for data collection. Findings of the study revealed that students were influenced based on their personal interest in the course 78(70.9%), to seek for knowledge 77(70.0%) and Career expectation 60(54.5%). The study also find out that the students level of perception towards choosing librarianship as a career, and it was indicated that Library and information science is a lucrative field 95(86.4%), Library and information science is a professional course 93(84.6%),it offers job security 76(69.1%) and they will like to further their career in librarianship 60(54.5%). Furthermore the study found out that librarianship as a career should be introduced to secondary schools curriculum in Nigeria 99(90.0%).The study therefore recommendthat there should be a continuous awareness of LIS in other to clarify the belief of the public that LIS profession is a dumping ground for poor students, Nigeria library association should be involved in educating the publics about librarianship as a profession through symposiums, conferences, etc.

Keywords: Career Choice, Library and Information Science, Students

Introduction

Librarianship is a profession that is concerned with the application of knowledge, creation, acquiring, processing, and organization of information to users at the appropriate time. Librarianship is seen as a career that is dedicated to serving the public, providing timely and accurate information, thus contributing to the development of the society. No wonder Cheong (2008), argued that librarianship is the preservation and transfer of knowledge in all recorded forms across time andspace for the benefit of humankind. Librarianship is a service oriented course that plays a significant role within and

outside the educational system of any country. The choice of career is very important to students' academic endeavor.

Generally speaking most students get attracted to some 'so called' lucrative courses for different reasons, some choice of career are based on parental and peer influences, some are influenced based on the advice given by a councilor. Library and information science is a service oriented profession. Most librarians that find themselves in the field do not really plan to study the course, the case is still the same today as most students don't have interest in taking librarianship as a career because it is seen as unrecognized discipline in the society. Igbinsosa (2007) maintained that people, particularly students, do not like to pursue a career in librarianship. This is because they are ignorant of the fact that librarians are the brains behind the successful stories of students, lawyers, pilots, engineers, medical doctors, etc. He further argued that with the advancement of information technology, librarians are no longer limited to the library alone but have improved their roles in different areas such as a curator, programmer, consultant, webmaster, data base manager, analyst etc.

National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National University Commission (NUC) which is the regulatory body for technical education in Nigeria and universities respectively are contributing to the recognition of LIS in the society. This might have been as a result of accreditation policy that higher institutions must have a good library with well-equipped, updated materials and librarians that can support the teaching, learning and research activities of the various intuitions. This policy has really enhanced and increase the publicity of the profession.

A lot of factors could be responsible for student choosing a career of study over the other, some of these factors could be institutional based while some maybe as a result of mentorship. A student choice of a career could be based on the available O'Level result at his disposal, cut off mark for the course he want to study and institution test score obtained (post UTME score). Experience has shown that most students don't really have an idea of the choice of career, they often look up to some close individual or friends for the choice of course to study, without considering their personal strength and weakness. This ideology may have reflected in the field of librarianship. Most of the students don't have interest in Library and information science as a career but accidentally they found themselves in it, although they eventually enjoy the course. Most of library school

students would have prefers to choose more popular courses like Engineering, Accountancy, Science Laboratory technology etc.

Therefore, one begins to think if library and information science is a dumping ground for candidates who could not be admitted to study their preferred courses especially for low scores obtained at the Joint Admission Matriculated Examination and student with low educational profile. For students to be admitted to library and information science he/ she must meet up with the specific admission requirement and must have at least credit in five subjects including English and mathematics which will constitute the entry profile of the students.

The department of library and information science kicked off in 2011 with the introduction of courses according to what is stated in the curriculum. The objective of the department is to prepare students for professional's roles in libraries; to inculcate knowledge and skills to serve the information needs of their communities ;to prepare students in the for proactive engagement in the information professions and develop a commitment to continuing education by participating in local and national professional development opportunities.

Statement of the Problem

Most students nowadays could not sincerely answer a simple question of why the choice of career/study they picked in their institution. Many factors may be responsible for this. Observation has shown that most fresh student's academic performance in their first year is mostly woeful. This problem seems to be affecting library and information science field the more. In view of this, the research is set out to examine the Factors influencing the Career Choice of Library and Information Science students in Federal Polytechnic Ede, Osun State

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the factors that influence the choice of librarianship as a career
- To find out the level of students perception towards library and information science as a career

- To find a way out on how library and information science can become a reputable discipline in the society

Literature Review

A career in librarianship requires a cocktail of competencies, from information searching skills to communication and technical skills (Laloo, 2013). According to Brown (2002), he describes the process of choosing a career as a way of estimating one's ability and values, estimating the skills and abilities required for success in a given occupation, and estimating the work values that will be satisfied by the various occupational alternatives available. Muraguri (2011), states that an individual's choice of career is likely to be influenced by several factors including personal and cultural values, family background, career expectations and career guidance. According to Kerka (2000), career choice is influenced by multiple factors including personality, interests, self-concept, cultural identity, globalization, socialization, role model, social support and available resources such as information and financial.

In a related study on career choice of Nigeria youth, it was revealed that many youths made wrong career choices due to ignorance, inexperience, peer pressure, advice from friends, parents and teachers, or as a result of prestige attached to certain jobs without adequate vocational guidance and career counseling (Salami 1999).

Furthermore, the choice of accounting as a career revealed that the external factors that serve as the key players in accounting career interest choice were teachers' influence, parental influence, economic and political condition of the country, and peer groups' influence (Ohiwerei & Nwosu, 2009). In general, the choice of a career is influence mainly by advice from teachers, parents and peer groups

According to Edward & Quitter (2011) posit that an individual should have the necessary educational requirement for a course, the intrinsic interest also plays a major role in the pursuance of a career for the individual to succeed. In support to this, where an intrinsic interest is low, no level of creativity, behavior and training would positively increase the person professional

effectiveness. Nevertheless as students try to make career choice, they face problems of finding themselves in a career they never due to their low performance in their academic result.

Besides the family as a significant factor in determining children's career choice, and the ability of the learner to identify his/her preferred career choice; we have teachers as major influences in career choice of their learners (Shuman & Naong, 2012). Other studies have separately examined the influences of each parent on the career choices of their sons or daughters and have found that mothers tend to have more influence on the career decisions of their children than fathers.

However, it was revealed that the female students are much in LIS professions compare to their male counterpart and this could be as a result of their personal interest in librarianship (Salami & Owolabi, 2010). Studies have also reveal factors that influence career choice by high school students. Mudhovozi & Chireshe (2012) in their study of socio-demographic factors that anchor career choice among psychology students in South Africa, revealed that the participants who attended rural-situated public schools made delayed career decisions. The same study also found that participants were mainly influenced by parents, teachers and friends to choose psychology as a career.

In addition, Issa and Nwalo (2008) studied the factors affecting the career choice of undergraduates in Nigeria library and information schools. They also observed that in Nigerian universities, not many undergraduates apply to study library and information science unless as a last resort. Their close contact with new entrants into some Nigerian library schools showed that many of them would have preferred other courses of study to library and information science.

Methodology

The study consists of the newly admitted students of library and information science of Federal Polytechnic Ede, Osun State. A total of 127 questionnaires were distributed, and 119 were completed, returned and valid for analysis. Enumerative sampling method was employed, as all students of the population were given the opportunity of participating in the study. A questionnaire titled "Factors Influencing the Career Choice of Library and Information Science in Federal Polytechnic Ede, Osun State

Table 1: Demographic Distribution

Variables	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Marital Status	Single	125	98.4
	Married	2	1.6
Age Range	15-20	43	33.8
	21-30	79	62.2
	30-35	5	4
Gender	Male	50	60.7
	Female	77	39.3

The table above shows that majority of the students admitted into library and information science department are single and between the ages of 21-30. It was also revealed that the students are mostly female.

Table 2: Factors influencing the choice of LIS as a career by the students

FACTORS	YES	NO
I was given the course to study	41(37.3%)	69(62.7%)
Ignorance	11(10.0%)	99(90.0%)
Intellectual development	77(70.0%)	33(30.0%)
Job availability	18(16.4%)	92(83.6%)
Age factors	21(19.1%)	89(80.9%)
Gender Influence	12(10.9%)	98(89.1%)
Looking for easy course	17(15.5%)	93(84.5%)
Peer Influence	23(20.9%)	87(79.1%)
Parental influence	49(44.5%)	61(55.5%)
Image associated with the profession	58(52.7%)	51(46.4%)
Inability to meet up with my choice of career requirement	41(37.3%)	69(62.7%)
Mentors advice	56(50.9%)	54(49.1)
Career expectation	60(54.5%)	50(45.5%)
Personal interest in the course	78(70.9%)	32(29.1%)

Table 2 revealed factors influencing the choice of LIS as a career by the students. Majority of the respondents indicated that the choice of LIS was strongly influenced by personal interest in the course 78(70.9%), to seek for knowledge 77(70.0%) and Career expectation 60(54.5%). The study also shows that Ignorance 99(90.0%), gender influence 98(89.1%), looking for easy course

93(84.55%), job availability 92(83.6%), and Age factors 89(80.9%) plays no important role in the choice of LIS as a career by the students

Table 3: Level of perception towards librarianship as a career

Students Perception	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Library and information science is a last resort course	29(26.4%)	18(16.4%)	33(30.0%)	30(27.3%)
I don't see librarianship as a career course	7(6.4%)	9(8.2%)	50(45.5%)	44(40.0%)
Library and information science is a professional course	51(46.4%)	42(38.2%)	8(7.3%)	9(8.2%)
Contribute to the societal development	36(32.7%)	10(9.1%)	43(39.1%)	21(19.1%)
I would like to go for another course after library and information science	52(47.3%)	21(19.1%)	32(29.1%)	5(4.5%)
Library and information science is a lucrative field	56(50.9%)	39(35.5%)	11(10.0%)	4(3.6%)
Librarianship is quite challenging	28(25.5%)	11(10.0%)	59(53.6%)	12(10.9%)
Offers opportunity of meeting people	9(8.2%)	10(9.1%)	58(52.7%)	33(30.9%)
Public underestimate LIS	19(17.3%)	10(9.1%)	44(40.0%)	37(33.6%)
I will like to further my career in librarianship	36(32.7%)	24(21.8%)	32(29.1%)	18(16.4%)
Offers job security	46(41.8%)	30(27.3%)	19(17.3%)	15(13.6%)

From table 3 above, the respondents indicated their level of perception towards choosing librarianship as a career. It was revealed that out of the 11 component of level of perception towards choosing librarianship as a career, respondents affirmed that Library and information science is a lucrative field 95(86.4%), Library and information science is a professional course 93(84.6%) offers job security 76(69.1%) and I will like to further my career in librarianship 60(54.5%) has the highest rank. The implication of this study shows that students are aware of LIS and they are studying it because of their personal interest and not as a result of force therefore no negative perception about library and information science

Table 4: The ways out for library and information science to become a reputable discipline in the society?

WAYS	YES	NO
Nigeria library association should enlighten the public through campaigns, workshops, symposium etc.	69(62.7%)	41(37.3%)
Librarianship as a career should be introduced to secondary schools curriculum in Nigeria	99(90.0%)	11(10.0%)
Provision of a well- equipped library and media resource centre	77(70.0%)	33(30.0%)
More technology theories should be reflected in LIS curriculum that will make the students fit into the technology trend	92(83.6%)	18(16.4%)
LIS professionals should engage the use of technologies while doing practical ,to arise the interest of the students	89(80.9%)	21(19.1%)

Table 4 shows the various ways out for library and information science to become a reputable discipline in the society. It was revealed that majority of the respondents indicated that librarianship as a career should be introduced to secondary schools curriculum in Nigeria 99(90.0%). The table further shows that more technology theories should be reflected in LIS curriculum that will make the students fit into the technology trend 92(83.6%), LIS professionals should engage the use of technologies while doing practical, to arise the interest of the students 89(80.9%), Provision of a well- equipped library and media resource centre 77(70.0%), and Nigeria library association should enlighten the public through campaigns, workshops, symposium etc. 69(62.7%).

Discussion of the Findings

The study reveals that personal interest in the course, intellectual development and Career expectation are the highest factors influencing the choice of LIS as a career by the students. These findings corroborate Edward and Quinter (2011) that the choice of career is greatly influenced by interest in the profession

Also the study shows the level of student's perception towards choosing librarianship as a career which indicates that LIS is a lucrative field, library and information science is a professional course, job security and they will like to further their career in librarianship has the highest rank. The findings affirm Egunjobi, Salisu and Ogunkeye (2013) in their study that 99.1% affirmed that LIS is a

professional course and 63.3% are of the opinion that they are not studying LIS by chance etc. their study also revealed that students are well informed about LIS and they are studying it because of interest and not as a result of persuasion.

Furthermore, it was found out that librarianship as a career should be introduced to secondary schools curriculum in Nigeria ,more technology theories should be reflected in LIS curriculum that will make the students fit into the technology trend, LIS professionals should engage the use of technologies while doing practical, to arise the interest of the students, Provision of a well-equipped library and media resource centre and Nigeria library association should enlighten the public through campaigns, workshops, symposium etc.

Conclusion

Library and information science has been a subject of concern in the librarianship world. Present day librarians are no longer limit to some special areas in librarianship again but must be ready to rebuild the professional image in order to meet the diverse information needs of its users. This call for the facts that librarians have to seek every opportunity to portray the library profession in a widely acceptable and recognize way like other professional disciplines and make the profession attractive to the upcoming ones.

Recommendation

- There should be a continuous awareness of LIS in other to clarify the belief of the public that LIS profession is a dumping ground for poor students
- Librarianship as a course should be introduced to secondary schools curriculum in Nigeria so that these students will have the basic knowledge and foundation of what librarianship is all about
- Nigeria library association should be involved in educating the publics about librarianship as a profession through symposiums, conferences, workshops etc.
- The teaching of library course by the academic lecturers should be carried out in a manner that will arose the interest of the students and this can be achieved through the application of technologies so that the students will be fit into the electronic environment

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