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Aderonke Ayobami Ogungbade Miss
aderonkeayobami3@gmail.com

Oluwaseun Lekan Ipadeola Mr
Oyo State College of Nursing and Midwifery, Eleyele, Ibadan, ipd24forreal@yahoo.com

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ABSTRACT

Library science education in Nigeria has experienced several stages of developments and changes in curricula. There is some research on the history of library science education in Nigeria. However, little research has been conducted on curriculum development per se from a historical perspective. This study examines the historical and current status of curriculum development in Nigeria. It compares the changes in curricula from various stages and analyzes the factors influencing the curriculum development. The main problems in curriculum development are discussed. Suggestions and recommendations are helpful for library schools to successfully adapt themselves to the digital age and to develop future curriculum effectively.

Keywords: *Library Science, Curriculum, Information Science, Curriculum development, Library School*

Introduction

This paper is on comparative study of library and information science curricula in library schools in Nigeria. The central theme is curricula of the Professionalization of Library and Information Science in Nigerian library schools. Librarianship has attained all the attributes of a profession. It has its theoretical base, intellectual content, well-structured formal education programmes, ethics, and bill of right and association that champions its cause. A formal education programme cannot do without a well articulated curriculum. According to Coles (2003), curriculum is the embodiment of a programme of learning and includes philosophy, content, approach and assessment. Smith (2000) sees curriculum as “all the learning which is planned and guided by the school....” Curriculum is, therefore, a body of knowledge to be transmitted to achieve certain ends in students (product). Curriculum is heavily dependent on the setting of behavioral objectives. „Curriculum is not simply a set of plans to be implemented, but rather is constituted through an active process in which planning, acting and evaluating are all reciprocally related and integrated into the process“ (Grundy 1987:115).

Curriculum as practice cannot be changed substantially without adequate attention to professional changing trend. In 2007, the National Association of Library and Information Science Educators (NALISE), held a National conference. The concern of the conference

was on harmonizing and standardizing of the library and information science curricula for all Nigerian library and information science curricula for all the Nigerian library schools.

Lawal (2009) concern was on how library educators were tackling the problem of local relevance in their programmes. He endorsed the National Universities Commission (NUC) minimum academic standards for library and information science as a quality assurance tool capable of helping library schools prepare professionals who are adequately trained to be able to support the library's mission, goals, and objectives. The curriculum, the NUC adopted and approved as the minimum academic standard for library and information science was articulated in 1995 by the Nigerian Library Association Education Committee. Information and Communication Technology that has currently revolutionized the trend in librarianship was not in vogue as at then. The curriculum articulated in 1995 is not only antiquated but does not provide for the current professional skills and techniques needed for this 21st century librarianship. Nwosu (2009) recommended an upgrade of the curricula to reflect the ever dynamic information super-highway. Diso (2009) and Umar (2009) equally picked holes with the NUC minimum academic standards in Library and information science.

Nwosu (2008) made it clear to the NLA that the Academic programme provided by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) for Diploma programme in Library and Information Science in Nigerian Polytechnics is not adequate too.

Library and Information Science Education

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 and Information Science Education as a field and area of study is indispensable in this competitive era of knowledge and information management and the technological advancement in the area of ICT has made significant changes in the

profession towards achieving the desired objective and to meet up with the modern trends of effective information services delivery (Abdulrahman and Habila, 2017).

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 daunting task requires the acquisitions of new resources, expertise and careful planning. The education and training of LIS professionals has to be such that it empowers them to unleash their potential as they Endeavour to offer relevant and efficient services within the current levels of technological sophistication (Minishi Majanja, 2007). Curry, (2002) observed that library and information science (LIS) academic department have witness not only this increasing globalization of higher education but also that of the LIS work place including the consequent extension of competition beyond traditional, institutional, national and regional boundaries. According to Curry, this environment has made it important for LIS education and training to strive to improve their quality of programmes. On the one hand to be able to participate in educational networks and develop innovative strategies in planning and administration of LIS education while on the other hand, to produce graduate where work place spans the whole world. According to Mangla (1980) library and information science programmes should be so designed as to equip the student: with knowledge and techniques to handle the immediate job requirements in an efficient manner; and to develop programmes, procedures and services on modern lines in future where the use of various modern technique, computers etc, could provide better, quicker and efficient service. The practice of librarianship is changing Alabi (2000). But the question is how fast and how well is the change? Changes include the following:

moving from the traditional inward - looking orientation towards books to an outward looking emphasis on information handling; the emphasis on collecting, processing, compiling and disseminating information in support of students and researchers both inside and outside the institution; transformation of traditional library into a new information service unit; new outlook, structure, skills and attitudes which some library staff cannot only adapt to; removal of the line between the library and teaching, learning and research process; integration of technology into every aspect of library function / provisions. Further changes include: educational institution gaining access to networked resources as a journal and databases, thanks to MTN and other

agencies; new techniques of assessment are being introduced. Online tests are gradually becoming widespread and providing more information than traditional multiple choice tests; and information literacy is now an indispensable aspect of course programmes in many institutions (Hawkins, 1988). Sutton (2001) observed that changes are brought in the LIS profession by ICTs. These can be grouped into two. The *natural evolutionary change* and the *transformatory changes*. In the natural evolution, the library and information science profession has harnessed ICTs to perform old tasks better through the automation of housekeeping tasks such as reference work, bibliographic services, cataloguing, serials, circulation and acquisition, which are performed more efficiently in an ICT environment. Transformatory changes, on the other hand include the emergence of new functions arising out of an expanded, demand-driven information society wider and / or interdisciplinary jurisdiction and closer focus on user need. These transformative trends represent systematic changes that substantially alter the boundaries of the profession. For example, Fourie and Bothma (2006) observed the increased use of the World Wide Web in private, social business lives of many people and hence noted that it is a vital component of the enabling structure for school, university, career and other use for information and communication. This one platform exhibits the fact that those involved in information services need to be sufficiently prepared to handle both the users of information and the attendant technologies. Children are entering a world that is changing in all spheres - scientific, technological, political, economic, social and cultural. The emergence of the knowledge based society is changing the global economy and the status of education (UNESCO, 1998). The new possibilities exist largely as the result of converging forces. First, the quality of information: this is relevant to the survival and basic well being of the economy. This is exponentially greater than that available only a few years, and secondly, the rate of its growth which is accelerating.

Curriculum Development

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). Library and Information Science (LIS) as a profession, is concerned with the knowledge and skill by which the records of human communication are collected, organised and utilised. 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's world for which he / she must be well educated, highly qualified and professionally competent (Singh, n.d.). Information explosion has resulted in libraries and information centres becoming a necessity. A continuous flow of information in all sectors of human activities through research and innovation has brought drastic change in the present society. Knowledge and information today is a strategic input in all walks of life along with the traditional ones of man, money and materials. Knowledge and information will continue to play a significant role in the socio – economic development. Hence there is expansion of the employment market for library and information professionals. But despite increase in the number of jobs, the total market demand for LIS professionals at present is far from the total output. Moreover, the quality of output is not fully compatible with the requirements of the expanding job market

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION COURSES DESCRIPTION

LIS 101 – Libraries and Society

LIS 102 – History of Libraries

LIS 104 – Introduction to Library Resources and Services

LIS 211 – Collection Development

LIS 212 – Organization of Knowledge I

LIS 241 – Introduction to Library Administration

LIS 222 – Oral Traditions and Cultural Literature

LIS 232 – Introduction to Bibliography

LIS 234 – Information Users

LIS 242 – Library Work with Children and Youth

- LIS 243 – Library and Information Services to Disadvantaged Communities
- LIS 252 – Computers and Data Processing
- LIS 311 – Organization of Knowledge II
- LIS 331 – Introduction to Information Science
- LIS 352 – Library Practice and Internship (SIWES)
- LIS 361 – Research Methods in Library and Information Science
- LIS 402 – Contemporary Technology in Libraries
- LIS 404 – Publishing and Book Production
- LIS 412 – Indexing and Abstracting
- LIS 414 – Preservation and Conservation of Library Materials
- LIS 421 – Audiovisual Librarianship
- LIS 422 – Government and Serial Publications
- LIS 423 – Literature of African Studies
- LIS 424 – Children’s Literature
- LIS 425 – Literature of Humanities and Social Sciences
- LIS 427 – Literature of Science and Technology
- LIS 431 – Reference and Information Services
- LIS 441 – National and Public Libraries
- LIS 442 – Archives Administration and Records Management

LIS 443 – Academic and Special Libraries

LIS 444 – Inter-library cooperation and information networks

LIS 445 – School Libraries and Media Resource Centers

LIS 446 – Library and Information Service Policy

LIS 448 – Library Marketing and Public Relations

LIS 462 – Project

Review of Literature on Curriculum Adjustment in Library Education in Nigeria

The initial curriculum implemented at the first library school in Nigeria, the Institute of Librarianship, and Ibadan at inception in 1960 was the British Associate of Library Association's Syllabus (Mohammed, 2003). With increasing national consciousness, and in line with the indigenization processes in various facets of the nation, the Institute revised its curriculum in 1963 "to reflect African needs" (Aguolu and Aguolu, 2002). Notwithstanding this early effort to design a curriculum with African needs in view, Lawal (2003) still observes a high foreign influence on the curricula of library schools in Nigeria. Benge (1978) argues that Nigerian library schools have not sufficiently reflected local relevance in their programmes. This view appears popular among observers of the library education landscape in the 1980's. Thus, according to Ochai (1987), two national conferences were held in Kano and Zaria in 1984 and 1985 respectively on the theme, "Toward relevance in library education in Nigeria" to re-examine the curricula of library education with the aim of making them relevant to national needs. However, Mohammed and Otim, cited in Lawal (2003) show evidence of indigenization of curriculum at the Department of Library and Information Science, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, where 'Sociology of Library Science' and 'History of Books and Libraries' are taught in the context of Nigeria's social milieu. As the 20th century was drawing to a close, the information technology revolution hit the library world, engendering sustained calls for inclusion of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) courses in the training programmes of library schools in Nigeria. Ogunshye and Aboyade (1974 p.16) observe: It has become increasingly clear that the librarian of the next decade will need not

only knowledge and skills in traditional librarianship but new skills in the use of modern technology for handling information. They are invariably advocating a Library and Information Science education programme with adequate ICT component. The contributions of Adimorah (2002) and Ejiko (2002) to the conference on "Modernization of Library and Information Science programmes in Nigerian universities" organized by the National Association of Library and Information Science Educators (NALISE) place developments in information technology at the centre of the need for adjustments in the curriculum for LIS education in Nigeria. Nwokocha (2002) reports the curriculum restructuring and modernization at the Department of Library and Information Science, Abia State University, Uturu, necessitated by the 'over bearing influence of Information Technology (IT) in information delivery world and the frightening response to LIS graduate employers in the run-up to the millennium'. Balarabe (200 p.iv) studied the global information technology and its implication for university-based library education in Nigeria, finding out in part that "the curriculum of Library and Information Science education could not keep pace with the rapid developments characterizing the present information technology era and the changing needs of library and information services in the country". In view of this finding, he recommends "curricular reforms in response to the continuous challenges posed by information technology to the Library and Information Science world" (Balarabe, 2004 p.iv). In a subsequent study, Balarabe (2005 p.7) concludes from his findings that "Nigerian LIS curriculum is less responsive to the emerging trends in the information age". He thus recommends the expansion of LIS curriculum to include management information systems and services, network and networking, communication, computers and automation of library, web-page management, e-publishing, and management of virtual library system. Quite significant also, is the contribution of Aina (2007) to the need for curriculum adjustment in LIS education in Nigeria. Noting the revolutionary change in library practice brought about by the infusion of ICT into all human activities, he regrets that the curricula of library schools in Nigeria have not responded positively to these changes. He therefore designs and offers for adoption, what he believes is 'an appropriate curriculum for LIS schools in Nigeria'; this is a four-year bachelor's degree programme which blends traditional Library Science courses with new ones, reflecting modern trends in LIS education and professional practice. While the issues bordering on ICT integration into LIS curriculum continue to engage the attention of scholars, the concern for a curriculum that equips students with entrepreneurial skills saturates current literature. Nwosu (2013) adduces reasons

why the introduction of entrepreneurship training in LIS education in Nigeria is imperative. She believes that entrepreneurship in LIS education is the solution to the perennial complaint of joblessness by LIS graduates since it equips them with entrepreneurial skills to be self-reliant. For Abubakar and Farouk (2016), a robust and well-balanced LIS curriculum in Nigeria must include courses in entrepreneurial skills to prepare graduates to be self-reliant. They suggest such courses as business skills, information brokering, critical, reflective and creative thinking and strategic planning. Other courses they recommend to curriculum developers for inclusion in LIS curriculum include knowledge management, ICT skills (networking, Internet searching skills, database, Online reference chart) information literacy, information systems, publishing, multimedia application, electronic resources management, management sciences, management of digital libraries and digital preservations, and information management and sources in various information organizations. Furthermore, Igwe, Ugwuogu, Nworu, Akubue and Ume (2016) report the curricular adjustment done at the Department of Library and Information Science, Federal Polytechnic Unwana, Nigeria, by infusing entrepreneurship courses into the curriculum. Some of the courses added are: Perspectives and opportunities in Library and Information Science, Knowledge management, Information products and services, Advocacy, Marketing and Public Relations, and Inforpreneurship and Small Business Management. Similarly, Aina (2014) reports the curriculum enrichment at the LIS Department, University of Ilorin, Nigeria, to prepare students for local and global job markets upon graduation. In a comparative analysis of the curriculum prescribed by the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the curriculum designed by the Department of Library and Information Science, University of Ilorin, he notes that certain courses required to furnish salient skills for contemporary library and information services, are absent in the NUC curriculum, but are included in the University of Ilorin's curriculum. Some of those courses are on entrepreneurship, knowledge management, mass communication, and ICT. Underscoring the significance of entrepreneurship training in LIS education in Nigeria, Nwokocha and Ochogwu (2015), state in a communiqué developed at the end of the NALISE conference on "Training the Library and Information Science students for Entrepreneurship in the 21st century" as follows:

- LIS schools in Nigeria should provide adequate education and training aimed at producing graduates who are capable of being self-employed.

- All LIS schools in Nigeria should integrate entrepreneurship education courses into their curricula.
- Students in LIS schools in Nigeria should take entrepreneurship courses very seriously for self-sustenance on graduation.

Curricula for professional education are always influenced by the forces of dynamism that act on the society. Thus, courses are added to, expanded, or removed from a curriculum as events unfold in the society. The world in general is today preoccupied with the pursuit of sustainable development, and has mapped out seventeen goals to be achieved by 2030. Can the educational preparation of intending library and information professionals in Nigeria enhance their knowledge of the issues in sustainable development as it equips them with the skills to render general and specialized services on the subject?

The NUC Minimum Academic Standard (Curriculum)

The NUC in the minimum academic standards for Library and information science categorized the courses into: core/compulsory courses, cognate courses, restricted electives; unrestricted electives, concurrent courses and pre-requisite course. The core/compulsory courses, according to NUC (1995) are central to the degree programme in view and are normally offered by the Department offering the degree. The cognate courses are prescribed courses from related fields which are required for an understanding and appreciation of the student's major field. The restricted electives are optional courses taken from defined areas from which students are to choose specific courses and the courses are normally offered by other departments within the same Faculty. The unrestricted electives are courses which are opted for by a student in his own interest and are normally offered from outside the Faculty but has to be determined by the Faculty. The NUC gave each library school the opportunity to use its jurisdiction to define its own restricted, unrestricted and concurrent electives.

Review of the Standard Curriculum for LIS Education in Nigeria

In an attempt to unify the LIS education in Nigeria, the National Universities Commission (NUC) developed the Benchmark and Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS) for Library and Information Science Departments in Nigerian Universities. Many scholars have observed the obsolescence of the curriculum prescribed in the long extant 1999 edition of this document (Nwosu 2009, Diso 2009, Aina 2014). Aina (2014) showed that the NUC curriculum has no provision for entrepreneurship, and knowledge management, and barely provides for ICT with

just one course, "Automation in Libraries and Information Centres". Such a curriculum is thus inadequate for the education of library and information professionals for the 21st century. Although a revision was done in 2007, the resulting curriculum is not particularly appealing to the library schools because of its high education courses content. It becomes imperative therefore, that the NUC's official curriculum for Library and Information Science education in Nigeria be reviewed in line with the times.

**LIST OF APPROVED/ACCREDITED NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES OFFERING
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROGRAMMES**

S/N	UNIVERSITIES	APPROVED PROGRAMMES
1	Abia State University, Uturu	Library & Information Science
2	Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi	Library & Information Science
3	Adeleke University, Ede	Library Science
4	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Library & Information Science
5	Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma	Library & Information Science
7	Benson Idahosa University, Benin City	Library & Information Science
8	Benue State University, Makurdi	Library & Information Science
9	Delta State University, Abraka	Library & Information Science
10	Federal University of Technology, Minna	Library & Information Science
11	Federal University of Technology, Yola	Library & Information Science

12	Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai	Library & Information Science
13	Imo State University, Owerri	Library & Information Science
14	Kwara State University, Ilorin	Library & Information Science
15	Madonna University, Okija	Library & Information Science
16	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Akwa Madonna University, Okija	Library & Information Science
17	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Akwa	Library & Information Science
18	Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijebu-Ode	Library & Information Science
19	Umaru Musa Ya'adua University, Katsina	Library & Information Science
20	University of Calabar, Calabar	Library & Information Science
21	University of Ibadan, Ibadan	Library & Information Science
22	University of Ilorin, Ilorin	Library Science
23	University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri	Library Science
24	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	Library & Information Science
25	University of Uyo, Uyo	Library & Information Science