CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES: A FOCUS ON THE NORTH-WEST GEO-POLITICAL ZONE

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Abstract:

The field of Library and Information Science (LIS) education has witnessed profound transformations worldwide in recent decades, largely attributable to the swift evolution of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), with a particular focus on the Internet and network technologies. These advancements have far-reaching implications for the broader profession of LIS. Furthermore, in the context of LIS, a global perspective is essential, as it influences critical discussions and considerations. As a result, the acquisition of new competencies by LIS professionals becomes an imperative. This paper explores the evolving landscape of LIS education in response to the impact of ICTs, particularly the Internet and network technologies. It emphasizes the global perspective as an integral component of discussions surrounding LIS. The study underscores the pressing need for LIS professionals to acquire fresh competencies, which will serve as the foundational framework for curriculum development and the design of LIS programs. In this era of rapid technological advancement, LIS professionals are navigating a dynamic and complex environment. The internet, in particular, has revolutionized information access, retrieval, and dissemination. Therefore, LIS education must adapt to equip professionals with the skills necessary to excel in this digital age. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, global trends and considerations are vital in shaping the education of future LIS professionals. This research delves into the competencies that LIS professionals need to stay relevant and effective. It addresses the evolving role of information professionals in a digital and networked world, emphasizing the importance of staying current with technological developments. By examining global trends and the impact of ICTs, this study aims to inform curriculum development and program design for LIS education.

Keywords: Library and Information Science (LIS) Education, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), Internet and Network Technologies, Competency Framework, Global Trends in LIS Education

Introduction

Library and Information Science (LIS) education globally has developed and undergone fundamental changes in all its structures, especially during the last couple of decades due to rapid advancements in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) specifically, the Internet and other network technologies, which have implication for the profession in general. Additionally, global trend is also an issue of consideration in any meaningful discussion that relates to LIS. Thus, new competencies are

required to be acquired by LIS professionals. Such competencies are expected to provide framework for any curriculum development and design for LIS programmers.

Furthermore, the requisite new competencies for LIS professionals revolves around the ability to apply new ICTs to information handling and processing; information and knowledge management skills; communication skills; as well as the skills of effective handling of digital multi-media and web-based information resources to mention just a few.

According to Jain and Jorosi (2017) LIS schools globally are constantly reviewing and redesigning their programmes due to changes in technology and globalization. The authors further stated that in most LIS schools, LIS education has been re-conceptualized and re-positioned to provide graduates with the appropriate traits to develop and maintain high quality professional practice in the rapidly changing period. Furthermore, LIS education in African countries and Nigeria in particular is no doubt a part and parcel of the global LIS educational system. Therefore, any changes in structure, mode of delivery, trends, faculty, as well as students' mobility and challenges in the global scenario largely affects and influences LIS education in Nigeria. Similarly, it is worth reporting that in recent years, there has been increased concern among LIS scholars in the African continent and Nigeria to be specific, about LIS education and its practices. LIS education courses in Africa and Nigeria in particular are provided at different tertiary institutions i.e. Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges. These programmes according to Diso and Njoku (2007) usually lead to the award of various certificates, diplomas, BLS, BLIS, MLS, MLIS, and PhD which usually varies in nomenclature, content and grading system.

This paper reports on the current condition of LIS education/curriculum in four university-based level LIS schools in North-west geopolitical zone of Nigeria. They comprise the Department of Library and Information Science, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria, Department of Library and Information Sciences, Bayero University, Kano (BUK), Department of Library and Information Science, Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina (UMYUK), and the Department of Library and Information Science, Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano. The first two LIS schools are federal owned institutions, while the last two are state owned institutions. The discourse analyzes the types of LIS courses these schools provides, their curricula content and training facilities, and assesses the current situation against this milieu. Equally, all the four LIS programmes are domiciled in the Faculty of Education in their respective institutions with different uniqueness, but being modeled along the ABU pattern of undergraduate LIS education, and they have many features in common.

University Education in Nigeria

Nigeria is a nation that is geographically situated on the coast of western Africa. It covers an area of about 924,000 km2, it is bordered on the north by Niger Republic, on the east by Chad and Cameroon, on the south by the Gulf of Guinea, and on the west by the Republic of Benin. With approximately 184 million inhabitants, Nigeria has the leading population in Africa, and as well, the biggest black nation on earth. It accounts for 47 percent of West Africa's population (World Bank, 2017). With huge and ample natural resources that spread across the nation, Nigeria is the sleeping economic giant of Africa and largely a petroleum dependent nation. Similarly, majority of Nigeria's population still live in poverty, without adequate access to basic services (World Bank, 2017). The north-west Geopolitical zone of Nigeria was created from parts of the former Northern Region of the country. It comprises seven states namely: Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara. It is populated mainly by Hausas and Fulanis. Nigeria's educational system has been bedeviled by many crises that relate to irregularities in educational policies which normally lead to poor implementation/non-implementation as well as poor funding. Consequently,

the country's education system is seriously distorted by these factors. It is vital to note that Nigeria has a National Policy on Education (NPE), recognized as the 6-3-3-4 system of education, which stipulates 6 years of primary school education, 3 years of junior secondary, and another 3 years of senior secondary schooling, as well as 4 years of university education.

The history of university education in Nigeria is traced to the Elliot Commission of 1943, which culminated in the establishment of University College Ibadan (UCI) in 1948. UCI was an affiliate of the University of London (Otonko, 2012). Otonko (2012) further stated that the UCI was saddled with a number of problems at inception ranging from rigid constitutional provisions, poor staffing, and low enrolment as well as high dropout rate. According to Ajayi and Ekundayo (2008) in April 1959, the Federal Government commissioned an inquiry (the Ashby Commission) to advise it on the higher education needs of the country for its first two decades. Before the submission of the report, the defunct Eastern Region government established its own university at Nsukka (University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 1960).

The implementation of the Ashby Report led to the establishment of University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife) in 1962 by the defunct Western region, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 1962 by the former Northern Region and University of Lagos (1962) by the Federal Government (Ajayi and Ekundayo, 2008). In clear terms, the UCI Ibadan and University of Lagos became the first two federal universities in Nigeria – the other three remained regional. Similarly, in 1970, the newly created mid-western region from the defunct Western Region opted for a university known as University of Benin (Otonko, 20122; Ajayi and Ekundayo, 2008). In the third Nigeria's National Development Plan (1975-1980), seven universities were established in Nigeria; while the third generation universities were established between 1980 and early 1990. Currently, there are 43 federal universities; 47 state universities and 75 private universities in Nigeria (NUC, 2018).

Although Nigeria has witnessed tremendous and phenomenal growth in the number of its universities, the situation in Nigeria's educational system is still far from been easy. The National Universities Commission (NUC) is the supervisory body for university education in Nigeria and as well as the quality assurance agency. It conducts periodic accreditation of degrees and other programmes usually after every five years. The NUC has evolved a robust scheme of international accreditation of programmes in the system. For the accreditation exercise, NUC developed the basic minimum academic standards (BMAS) for every undergraduate and other programmes in the university system (Bamiro, 2012). It is imperative to note that during the process of accreditation, physical facilities, staffing, academic content, library, funding and employers rating of graduates are normally evaluated with each having a minimum and maximum requirements to be obtained by the universities (Ekpoh and Edet, 2017). Additionally, Ekpoh and Edet (2017) shed more lights on the major objectives of accreditation exercise. Firstly, to ensure that minimum academic standards are maintained in programmes. Secondly, to ensure employers of labour (both local and international) that Nigerian graduates possess required competence in requisite areas of specialization. Lastly, to confirm to the international community that programmes offered in Nigerian universities are of acceptable standards and their graduates are adequately prepared for further studies. In reality however, the accomplishment of such objectives heavily relies on the availability of resources as well as adequate and sustained funding. Despite Nigeria's rich endowments in almost all sectors, Nigerian universities and the educational sector in general are severely constrained by inadequate funding. In fact, Diso and Njoku (2007) noted that in the last two decades, funding of Nigeria's universities has been a critical issue which results to deterioration of physical facilities/learning environment, brain drain, strikes, students' unrests, and general decline in standards. Similarly, Saint, Hartnett and Strassner (2003)

reported that the source of much of the problems confronting Nigerian universities can be traced largely to insufficient funding of the higher education systems, because funding shortfalls have been the norm for many years as enrollments have increased more quickly than the government's capacity to maintain its proportional financial support.

The setbacks caused by inadequate funding affects the whole education subsystems in the country from the primary level up to the tertiary level. Indeed, recently, Bello, Othman, Khairiri and Sharifuddin (2017, p. 24) were more precise about the situation when they reported that "from 1999-2016, the average percentage of budgetary allocation to education sector in Nigeria was 8.54 which was grossly inadequate when compared with the country's population and the UNESCO benchmark for allocation to the education sector". In summary, the poor funding scenario portrays a dark picture to the prospect and survival of Nigerian education system especially in this present knowledge-based society. Surely, there is a long way to go for the Nigerian university education in this regard.

LIS Education Context in Nigeria: State of The Art
The foregoing section of this article aptly explains the framework within which education in Nigeria is patterned. This section will be more specific on the historical context of LIS education in Nigeria and some of the basic requirements for accreditation. It is imperative however to note that LIS education in the country has witnessed tremendous expansion since its commencement. From the global point of view, it is vital to note that some significant milestones have happened in the LIS education and training since the establishment of Melvil Dewey's "School of Library Economy," which officially started on the 5th January, 1887 at Columbia University, to the emergence of the Williamson's Report in 1923 in the United States, to the KALIPER (ALISE, 2000) study findings, to the European Association for Library and Information Education and Research (EUCLID) conference (2002; 2005), as well as other similar regional conferences and professional meetings. In the Nigerian context, a peep into the annals of history of LIS education indicated that its origin can be traced back to the 1953 UNESCO organized seminar on the "Development of Public Libraries in Africa" held at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria, which apparently identified the need for the establishment of professional courses, as well as the need for libraries development in the country.

The seminar plausibly recommended among others; that a limited number of library schools of high caliber should be established in Africa to provide full-scale professional training at the leadership level (Lawal, 2000). Prior to that period, education and training in librarianship was only offered abroad mostly in the United Kingdom and later United States and the certificates acquired were mostly non-graduate type like the British ALA Examinations. In addition to that, most of the librarians during that period were expatriates. The foundation of actual university-based LIS education in Nigeria started with the establishment of the first Library School in 1960 at the University College Ibadan, (as it was then called), later on known as the Department of Library, Archival, and Information Studies. The LIS School was created with the support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York who developed interest in the development of the profession, and subsequently sent Harold Lancour in 1957 to survey the library situation and advised how the Corporation can render assistance in terms of library development.

After Harold Lancour's two months survey, he recommended that a postgraduate level LIS education be established, which was consequently launched at the Institute of Librarianship. According to Carroll, Kerr, Musa and Afzal (2013), a grant of US $88,000 was made available by the Carnegie Corporation of New York for the establishment of the Ibadan LIS School. Also, the school started with a Diploma in librarianship meant for graduate students. Moreover, the second school of librarianship in Nigeria was opened at the

Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria which commenced with an undergraduate programme. Mohammed (2008) reported that the 1963 F.A. Sharr's report on library needs in Northern Nigeria led to the founding of the second LIS School in Nigeria in 1965 to educate and train librarians at the undergraduate level as against that of Ibadan's postgraduate level programme. Aside the two LIS schools, other LIS schools were afterward established at various universities, which are: Bayero University, Kano (1977); University of Maiduguri (1978); Imo State University (1981); and University of Nigeria Nsukka (1983). In fact, the beginning of the 1990s brought about unprecedented increase in the number of LIS schools in Nigeria. Currently, there are 25 LIS schools in Nigerian universities offering different programmes at one level or the other (LRCN, 2014; Abubakar and Farouk, 2016). Furthermore, according to Issa, Amusan, Aliyu and Ladan (2014) the pattern of development in the number of library schools in Nigerian universities had been sufficiently replicated in Nigerian polytechnics and to a smaller extent, in colleges of education across the country.

LIS education being significantly part of Nigeria's educational system is therefore regularly evaluated by the quality assurance agency in the country, the National Universities Commission (NUC). The NUC usually accredits LIS programmes by given priority to the quality indicators i.e. curricular content, its sufficiency in respect of quantity and quality, academic staff, teaching and learning facilities/equipment, as well as funding the LIS programmes. The evaluation or rather the accreditation of the LIS programmes is performed largely with the use of the Minimum Academic Standards (MAS). The NUC uses the MAS documents as a major instrument of accreditation (NUC, 2007, p.2) of LIS programmes. Additionally, emphasis is usually given to specific areas that should be complied by all universities undergoing accreditation in the country. Consequently, areas of coverage include programmes goals, objectives and philosophy, academic contents, existing degrees programme and courses, core/compulsory courses, title and course description, evaluation, personnel, library and computer laboratory (Diso and Njoku, 2007).

In respect of the philosophy and objectives, the document clearly specifies that LIS education is anticipated to:

1. Produce Library and Information professionals for all types of libraries, information and documentation centers.

2. Equip the graduates of the programme with relevant theoretical knowledge; practical skills and techniques to develop and enhance their job performance.

3. Encourage the spirit of enquiry and creativity among the Library and Information professionals so that they are capable of understanding the emerging concepts on the role of information in a complex multi-cultural, multiethnic and largely non-literate society like Nigeria.

4. Provide prospective Library and Information professionals with the intellectual and professional background that is enough for their assignments and make them adaptable to any changing situation.

5. Provide an understanding of the role of new communication technology (e.g. Internet) in the handling of information (NUC, 2007, p. 34).

Admission requirements and mode of entry into the Bachelor's degree courses are similar with that of most degree programmes in the country. In terms of course requirements, courses are categorized in the following manner:

1. Core/Compulsory Courses: The core courses are central to the degree in view and are usually offered by the Department offering the degree.

2. Cognate Courses: Cognate courses are prescribed course units from related fields which are required for an understanding and appreciation of the student's major field.

3.   Restricted Electives: They are optional courses taken from different areas from which students are to choose specific courses. Additionally, they are normally offered by the departments within the same Faculty.

4.   Unrestricted Electives: They are courses which are opted for by the students in accordance with their interest and usually offered from outside the Faculty. Their status is normally determined by the faculty.

5.   Pre-requisite Courses: They are courses that must be passed by students as the understanding and offering of successive courses depend on understanding them. Furthermore, each programme determines its restricted and unrestricted electives.

6.   Course Credit Unit: A credit unit is the equivalent of one lecture/tutorial hour per week per semester (NUC, 2007, p. 344).

The evaluation criteria for assessing students in the LIS schools is normally done through a number of techniques that include written essay examinations, written objective examination, individual and group projects, term paper presentation, seminar paper presentation, oral examination, open-book examination, laboratory and field experience assessment. In terms of final grading for the students, Continuous Assessment (CA) mode is applied which ranges between 30% and 40% of the final grade for each course as the case maybe and 60% or 70% for every semester examination (NUC, 2007, p. 9). Similarly, for a student to earn a BLIS or B.Sc. LIS degree, a student must pass at least 120 credit units in a four-year programme or at least 90 credit units in a three-year programme (Diso and Njoku, 2007, p. 125). It is worth nothing that the system uses both external and internal examination pattern to finally grade the students.

The Four Case Studies ABU Zaria, LIS School

The Department of Library and Information Science, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria was founded in 1968. It is the second LIS School in Nigeria and the first to offer the Bachelor of Library Science as its basic professional programme (https://lis.abu.edu.ng, 2016). Diploma programme as well as Master's and PhD degrees were later introduced.. Specifically, the Doctor of Philosophy in Library and Information Science was introduced in 2004. At present, the Department offers a Bachelor degree in Library and Information Science (BLIS), Post-Graduate Diploma in Information Management (PGDIM), Masters in Information Management (MIM), Masters in Records and Archives Management (MARM), Masters in Information Science, Masters in Library and Information Science (MLIS), MPhil Library and Information Science, PhD in Information Science and in LIS as well. The periods for the programmes differ. For the undergraduate degree programme, the duration is either four years for candidates joining from secondary schools through Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examinations (UTME), or three years for candidates with diploma or relevant "A" level qualification. ABU LIS School's entry requirement for Post-Graduate Diploma is a Bachelor degree with a minimum of 2:2 (Lower Second Class) or Higher National Diploma (HND) with Credit and 2 years postgraduate experience. The programme lasts for one academic year.

Existing courses in the ABU LIS School at the undergraduate level which are normally distributed across levels and programmes comprise the following: Foundation of Information Studies, Introduction to Information Systems and Services, Information Organization, Reference and Information services, Sociology of Information

Systems and Services, Information Users, Introduction to Telecommunications, Public Information Systems and

Services, Bibliographic Information Systems and Services, Introduction to Records and Archives Management,

Library Services for Young People, Rural Information Systems and Services, Introduction to Computer Operating

Systems, Computers in Information Work, Media Resources and Services, Business Information Systems and services, Introduction to Information Science, Information and Communication technologies, Management of different types of Libraries, Research Methods, Serials Management, Quantitative Methods in LIS, Marketing of LIS Services, Financial Management in Library and Information Centres, Library and Information Resource Development, Information Representation and Packaging, Specialized Information Systems and Services, Introduction to Application Packages, SIWES in Libraries and Information Centres, Introduction to Digital Information Systems and

Services, Personnel Management in Library and Information Centre, Publishing and Advertising, Oral Tradition and Oral Information, and Preservation and Security of Information Resources and Services. All of these listed courses are designated either core or elective based on their significance. Additionally, they all have credit value. Furthermore, some of these courses are usually taught at different levels throughout the programme in a semester based system. The Department has a total of twenty (20) lecturers that spread across all levels from Graduate Assistant to Professor Cadre, Over 200 PG and 300 UG students enroll each year (https://lis.abu.edu.ng, 2016).

In respect of teaching and learning facilities, the ABU LIS School has a Computer Laboratory stocked with more than 30 computers with Internet connectivity. Also, there is a departmental library which serves as departmental library and laboratory for students practicals. In addition, the departmental library is also serving as a public library that provides library and information services to the general public in Samaru and the surrounding villages.

Bayero University, Kano, LIS School

The Department of Library and Information Sciences, Bayero, University, Kano was founded in 1977, with the major aim of producing subject librarians/graduates that are equipped with the specialized knowledge of Library and Information Science (LIS), as well as in one other academic discipline such as the Humanities, Social Sciences, Arts or Pure Sciences. It started with a two-year diploma programme-Diploma in Library Science (DLS) up to 1980, when the Bachelor's Degree courses [BA/B.Sc. (LS)] were established. Presently, the department provides various programmes of study, specifically:

Bachelor of Science (Library and Information Science) [B.Sc. (LIS)], Bachelor of Arts (Library and Information Science) [BA (LIS)], Post-Graduate Diploma in Information Management (PGDIM), Master's Degree in Library and Information Science (MILS), Masters in Information Management (MIM) and a Ph.D Degree in LIS. The minimum admission requirement for the Bachelor's degree is the same with that of the ABU LIS School. The available courses that are offered by the LIS School at the undergraduate level include: Learning and Communication Skills, Introduction to Information Work, Introduction to printing Publishing and Book Trade, Information Services for Young People, Information and Communication Technologies, Introduction to Information Resources, African Library and Information Environment, Philosophy and Theory of Information, Information Organization, Principles of Information Management, Library in Nigerian Society, Public Relations in Library and Information Work, Computer Practical, Information Retrieval, Reference and Information Services, Education and Information Services, Indexing and Abstracting Procedure, Management of different types of Libraries, Information Resources

Development, Research Methods, Introduction to Information Science, Bibliography and Citation Techniques,
Electronic Information Resources, Entrepreneurship Education, Behaviural and Communication Science, Community
Analysis, Management of Archival Information Centres, Introduction to Epistemology, Industrial Training, Politics of
Information, Resource Sharing and Networking in Libraries, Information Resources in various Disciplines, Introduction to Information Policy Analysis, Management of Serials and Government Publications, Economics of Information, Information Analysis and Repackaging, Developing Information Infrastructure, Change Management, Preservation of Information Resources and Information Systems Component.

The Master's degree in Library and Information Science (MLIS) was established in 1990. The minimum admission requirement into the programme is a first degree certificate preferably in Library and Information Science with a minimum CGPA of 2.75. The programme duration is two years minimum, and the maximum period is three years. The graduation requirements for the MLS programme include a satisfactory completion of 24 credit hours of course-work that comprises of core and elective courses. This is followed by the writing of thesis as a partial requirement which carries 6 credit loads (Abubakar and Abbas, 2014). Similarly, at the MLIS level, different courses that have some elements of modernity are offered. These courses comprise: Research Methodology, Information Seeking Behaviour, Bibliography and Citation Techniques, Introduction to Epistemology, Advanced Information Retrieval, Knowledge Management, Advanced Information Resource Description, Information Literacy, Information Systems Management, Management of Library and Information Institutions, Information Systems Analysis and Design, Information Networks and Transfer, Archival Theory and Management, Electronic Records Management,
Practice of Records Management, Statistics for Information Science, Information and Communication Technologies,
Education for Library and Information Sciences, Advanced Indexing and Abstracting, Advanced Knowledge Organization, Advanced Internet and Information Searching, Reference and Information Services, Information Policy
Analysis, Marketing of Library and Information Services, Information Management in Organizations, Bibliometrics, Digital Libraries and E-resources Management and Principles of Records Management. Presently, the Department has twenty two (22) lecturers (from Graduate Assistant to Professor levels). In addition, the LIS School has one (1) system analyst. In terms of facilities, the BUK LIS School has a departmental computer laboratory, recognized as the Information Technology Centre (Infortech Centre) with 32 computers and Internet connectivity. Additional facilities available comprise a faculty based e-library, 4 overhead projectors, 2 multimedia Power Point projectors, 2 television sets, 2 TV receivers, 1 digital video camera, as well as 3 overhead projectors. Besides these, the department utilizes the facilities provided at the University's Central Laboratory, known as the Centre for Information Technology (CIT), as well as the University Library for teaching purposes (Abubakar and Abbas, 2014)

Umaru Musa Yar'adua University Katsina, LIS School
The Department of Library and Information Science, Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina was established in 2007, with the major aim of training professional librarians that will be equipped in handling all aspects of librarianship. It started with Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS). The objectives of the BLIS programme are as follows:

1.   To produce high-level manpower needed in the field of information science for human and national development;

2.   To provide sufficient manpower well grounded in general knowledge and equipped with the highest level of skills needed in the management and dissemination of information;

3.   To provide necessary training and exposure for graduates capable of handling issues related to information access, utilization, dissemination and, management and administration;

4.   Finally, to inculcate the spirit of independent work/entrepreneurship to the graduates of the Department.

At the moment, the Department offers a Bachelor's degree in Library and Information Science (BLIS), and Post-Graduate Diploma in Records and Archives Management. Furthermore, the minimum admission requirements for the Bachelor's degree and the Postgraduate Diploma are similar with that of the ABU and BUK LIS schools. The courses offered at the undergraduate level include: History of Library and Information Centres, Introduction to Library and Information Resources, Library Services to Young People, Information User, Libraries and Society,

Introduction to Library and Information Centres, Sociology of Information Services, Reference and Information Services, Information Organization, Computers in Information Work, Introduction to Telecommunications, Agricultural Information Systems and Services, Public Information Systems and Services, Bibliographic Information Systems in Information Work, Management of Information Systems and Services, Media Resources and Services in Information Work, Introduction to Computer Operating Services, Introduction to Records and Archives Management, Rural Information Systems and Services, Research Methodology, Information and Communication Technology, Introduction to Information Science, Marketing of Library and Information Services, Humanities Information Systems and Services, Promotion of Information Systems and Services, School Information Systems and Services, Serial Management in Libraries and Information Centres, Technical Services in Libraries and Information

Centres, National Information Systems and Services, Library and Information Resources Development, Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES), Government Publications, Information Representation, Academic Information Systems and Services, Introduction to Application Packages, Introduction to Digital Information Systems and Services, Quantitative Methods in Library and Information Centres, Specialized Information Systems and Services, Financial Management in Library and Information Centres, Science and Technology Information Systems and Services, Information Management in Library and Information Centres, Preservation and Security of Information Resources and Services, Social Science Information Systems and Services, Personnel Management in Library and Information Science, Oral Tradition and Oral Information, Publishing and Advertising Industries, Ethics of Library and Information Systems and Services and Business Information System and Services.

Just like the two previous LIS schools, the courses are distributed into different levels with each having a credit value based on its supposed significance and necessities. However, it is apparent from these courses, that one can discern that the courses offered by the UMYUK LIS School at the undergraduate level, share some strong similarities with that of the ABU LIS School. At the Postgraduate Diploma in Records and Archives Management, the following courses are offered by the LIS School: Information Systems Analysis, Design and Evaluation, Management of Electronic Information and Photographic Records, Information and Records Security, Principles and Theories of Management, Research Project, Automation in Archives and Records Management, Management of Indigenous Records, Management of Change, Information Policy Analysis, Archival Coding and Description Techniques, Archival Theory and Management, Principles and

Practices of Information Records Management, History and Archives Administration, Preservation and Conservation of Archival Resources, Information and Communication Technologies. in Information and Records Management, Research Methodology in Information and Records Management, Statistics in Information and Records Management and Elements of Law in Archives and Records Management. The UMYUK LIS School has a total of 24 lecturers that spread across all ranks and a total of 590 students. In respect of facilities for teaching and learning, the School has a Departmental Library stocked with fair collections, a Computer Laboratory equipped with 41 computers and Internet connectivity.

However, considering the total number of students, one can see that the available facilities are grossly inadequate when compared with the basic requirements of the NUC MAS

Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano, LIS School
The Department of Library and Information Science, Yusuf Maitama Sule University, Kano, was established in 2014, with the major aim of educating and training graduates with requisite professional education, knowledge, skills and conceptual competencies to manage information in libraries and other related agencies in both public and private organizations. It started by offering an Undergraduate programme in Library and Information Science, leading to the award of Single Honours Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS) degree in the 2015/2016 academic session. The broad objectives of the BLIS programme are as follows:

1.   To produce Library and Information professionals for all types of libraries, information and documentation centres.
2.   To equip the products of the progrmme with relevant theoretical knowledge, practical skills and techniques to develop and enhance their job performance.
3.   To encourage the spirit of inquiry and creativity among the Library and Information professionals so that they are capable of understanding the emerging concepts of the role of information in a complex multi-cultural, multiethnic and largely non-literate society like Nigeria.
4.   To provide prospective Library and Information professionals with the intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignments and to make them adaptable to any changing situation.
5.   Finally, to provide an understanding of the role of the new communication technology (e.g. Internet) in the handling of information.

It is important to note that just like the three previous LIS schools; the mode of entry, the minimum admission requirements, as well as the duration for the Bachelor's degree are the same with that of the ABU, BUK, and UMYUK LIS schools. Additionally, the courses are distributed into different levels with each having a credit value based on its perceived importance and necessities. The Department, as well, operates full Course Credit System (CCS) just like the three previous LIS schools, meaning that students admitted through the UTME will spend 8 semesters; while those from the DE will spend 6 semesters with adequate provisions for spill-over as the case maybe. The available undergraduate courses at Yusuf Maitama Sule University, LIS School are distributed across different levels with diverse depths of handling. These courses comprise the following: Information Literacy, Libraries and Society, Introduction to Library and Information Work, Introduction to ICT in Library and Information Services, Information Systems, Resources and Services, History of Writing, Publishing and Book Trade, Basic Computer Skills and Operating Systems, Foundations of Information Systems, Institutions and Services, Introduction to African Information Environment, Knowledge Organization, Information Retrieval, Multimedia Application in Libraries and Information Centres, Learning and Communication Skills, Internet and Information

Searching, Introduction to Information Science, Bibliography and Citation Techniques, Library Application Software Packages, Indigenous

Knowledge, Library and Information Services to People with Special Needs, Rural Information Systems and Services, Information User, Business Information Systems and Services, Public Information Systems and Services, Introduction to Telecommunication, Information Resources Development, Management of Libraries and Information Centres,

Research Methodology and Statistics in Library and Information Science, Indexing and Abstracting, Preservation and

Security of Library and Information Resources, Entrepreneurship in Library and Information Services, Records

Other courses include Management and Archives Administration, Management of Digital/Virtual Libraries, Management of Schools and Media Resources Centres, Advocacy and Marketing of Library and Information Services, Public Information Systems and Services, Financial Management and Fund Raising in Libraries and Information Centres, Database Design and Management, Academic Information Systems and Services, Management of Serials and Government Publications, Resource Sharing and Networking, Social Science Information Systems and Services,

School Information Systems and Services, Humanities Information Systems and Services, Science and Technology Information Systems and Services, Specialized Information Systems and Services, National Information Systems and Services, SIWES, Library Automation, Information Seeking Behaviour, Information Policy Analysis, Indigenous Knowledge Management, Web Technologies, Information System Analysis and Design, Management of Libraries and Information Centres, Knowledge Management, Politics and Economics of Information, Management of Change in Information Work, Publishing and Advertising Industries, Information Management in Libraries and Information

Centres, Bibliometrics, Project Management and Evaluation and Library Architecture. The Yusuf Maitama Sule LIS School has a total of 9 lecturers and a total of 300 students. In the area of facilities for teaching and learning, the School has a Departmental Library, a Computer Laboratory stocked with 47 computers without Internet connectivity.

Challenges Faced By the LIS Schools

The previous section described the actual scenario in the four university-based LIS schools in the North-west Geopolitical zone of Nigeria. However, LIS education anywhere is expected to be in tandem with global best practices and at the same time give consideration to prevailing local conditions in a particular environment in terms of philosophical foundation and curricula content. From the presentation made on the four LIS schools, it can be discerned that the LIS schools have varying programmes, varying curricular in terms of the number of courses offered, but with strong similarity, different number of lecturers and the existence of some form of differences in terms of teaching and learning resources. Despite that, myriad of challenges are faced by the LIS schools in the zone and the country at large. These can be summarized as follows:

1.   Gross under funding of the education sector to which LIS education belongs. Successive Nigerian governments have failed to give adequate priority to the educational sector which continues to degenerate to a very low level. Education in Nigeria is therefore in total shambles (Abubakar, 2015, Abubakar and Harande, 2016, Diso and Njoku, 2007)
2.   Shortage of information technology facilities as a result of the above factor.

3.   The existence of underdeveloped infrastructure as well as poor state of teaching and learning resources and environment which tend to create a hostile learning situation.

4.   Non involvement of relevant stakeholders in curricula issues.

5.   Indifferent attitude of the professional associations to LIS education in Nigeria.

6.   Low ICT literacy among LIS faculty in Nigeria which tend to affect the trainings provided.

7.   Lack of proper motivation of the LIS faculty as well as their counterparts in other fields which brings about chaotic situation, low productivity among the academic staff and general brain drain in the Nigerian educational sector. The result is that lecturers seek for greener pasture elsewhere (Abubakar, 2015)

8.   Crisis of Nomenclature and organizational placement.

9.   Inadequate collaboration, exchange and linkages programmes (Abubakar and Harande, 2016).

Suggestions and Recommendations

For LIS schools to carry along their main mandate of educating and training of LIS professionals in the North-west Geopolitical zone of Nigeria and the country at large, and to join the present trend of globalization of LIS education, LIS schools must re-examine themselves and regularly evaluate the content of their courses so that they can remain relevant to the rapidly changing world. Hence, balance must be made between the global best practices and prevailing local conditions. This requires repositioning LIS schools and their missions together with their philosophical foundations. It is thus necessary to look at the following areas critically:

1.   The need for improvement in funding. This demands a change of attitude from the government and relevant authorities sponsoring authorities of LIS schools. In addition, LIS schools should develop new means of generating more funds for a sustainable LIS education.

2.   The need for enhancement in teaching staff. The quality of teaching staff in the LIS schools in the zone and the country in general is something that cannot be taken lightly. There is therefore, the need for recruitment of lecturers with strong ICT skills who can train graduates that would be relevant in the changing market.

3.   The need of ICT-based Curricular. The development and inclusion of ICT based courses in the curriculum is the backbone of success in the emerging market for LIS professionals. LIS schools should therefore constantly improve, and evaluate their curriculum to incorporate new emerging areas.

4.   The need for enhancement in teaching and learning facilities. This demands the provision of state of the art facilities that are relevant to the training of LIS professionals in the digital age. Moreover, the learning environment should be made pleasant to the learners.

5.   Finally, there is the need for strong collaboration among the LIS schools in the zone and the country at large.

Conclusion

In today's world, the training of librarians and information professionals has fundamentally changed due to advancements in ICTs and the changing LIS marketplace which requires new competencies. Based on the presentation, it is apparent that the training of LIS professionals in the zone and perhaps the country at large is insufficient and, therefore requires serious and radical transformation. LIS schools in the zone and the country in general need to be amenable to developments and changes taking place in the profession globally. Hence, there is the need for them to be innovative, purposeful and enterprising in all ramifications. The need for robust curriculum, relevant teaching resources and facilities as well as dynamic faculty is also inevitable. Additionally, consideration should be given to the changing market place for LIS graduates.

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