

Characteristics and choice of librarianship as a career among librarians in Ogun state, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study examined characteristics and choice of librarianship as a career among librarians in Ogun State. Purposive sampling technique was used to select ninety librarians. Questionnaire was used as main instrument for gathering of data. The findings revealed that previous working experience in the libraries is the major reason for the choice of librarianship and also many picked career in the profession while working after secondary schools and friends and relatives were the major sources of information. Recommendations was basically that Library use should be introduced in all secondary schools in the country and the Registration Council of Nigerian Library Association need to engage in a massive campaign and the need to create awareness about librarianship as noble profession to the public.

INTRODUCTION

Library is the nerve center of every academic institution in Nigeria. However, Libraries and Librarianship have evolved gradually overtime in Nigeria but they have not yet taken their proper place among the institutions and professions in the country. In order to express the importance of Libraries, Aguolu(1989)cited by Owolabi and Attama (2008) defined Libraries "As collection of records of human culture in diverse formats and languages presented, organized and interpreted

to meet broad and varying need of individual for information this may be in different forms for the use of the users"

In spite of the vast and diverse knowledge and information resources available in libraries, they still remain the least popular institution and the least sought profession in Nigeria (Okoro, 2009) Given the fact that strong academic background breeds career success, it is not difficult to understand why professional such as lawyers, doctors, engineers or accountants are traditionally held in high esteem because they all demand solid academic backgrounds. However, there are some professions that require advance training but never receive due respect in which Librarianship belong. Librarianship is a profession that is dedicated to serve the general public, to provide timely and accurate information at the same time contributing a great impact to the development of the society. However, the profession hardly share the glamour and respect of those other professions mentioned above. Contributing to this,

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Igbinosa (2007) maintained that people particularly students do not like to pursue career in Librarianship because the public do not give the profession the prestige given to other professions. They forgot that Librarians are the silent heroes behind the uncountable successful stories of students, researchers, and medical doctors etc.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nigerian youths are often faced with a lot of problems in the process of deciding a life career. In deed many adolescents do carry these problems into adulthood. Geshinde (1986) cited by Adeyemo(2003) maintained that there is a danger inherent in making wrong career choices, they highlighted the dangers to include adverse effect on physical health, wrong company of friends and job insecurity. Issa and Nwalo (2008) supported the position by saying that wrong choice of career can lead to frustration and low productivity.

Wiljers and Mijers(1996) defined career as process of describing individual's life time of learning and work. Ferry (2006) highlighted the factors that determine adolescent occupational choice which include life context, personal attitude and educational attainment. Tella (2007) identified various factors that can promote choice of career in Librarianship which include attractive salary, good condition of service and job security.

Agumanu (1989) conducted a studied on factors that influenced the students in Imo State University Library School to pick career in librarianship. It was discovered that 80% of the respondents agreed that they picked the profession when they failed to secure admission into other professions such as law and engineering while 20% students admitted that they pick the profession due to the influence of Librarians in their family. In the same vein Alemna (1991) conducted a study on the characteristics of the post graduates of the University of Ghana library school. It was discovered that most of the student graduates picked career in Librarianship after

failing in other options; he also discovered that opportunity for intellectual development and ability to further education were the main reasons for choosing a career in the profession. This corroborated the finding of Nzotta(1982) on the reasons for choice of Librarianship among the post graduate students of University of Ibadan. In which he discovered that majority of the respondents (58%) admitted that they choose the profession because it gives room for intellectual development.

In addition Issa and Nwalo(2008)in their studies on factors affecting the career choice of undergraduates in Nigeria library and information science schools, *they* discovered that 68.86% respondents claimed that they choose the profession because of their previous working experience in the Library, while 15.68% admitted that they opted for the profession in other to secure a good job.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To identify the reasons for the choice of Librarianship as a profession
- To identify the sources of information used in choosing the profession
- To identify the level of satisfaction

METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive survey design and a questionnaire tagged characteristics and choice of Librarianship as a career (CCLC) was used for the collection of data for the study. Descriptive statistical techniques like table of frequency counts and percentages were employed in the analysis. The target population of the study was library personnel in eight selected libraries in Ogun State which include five (5) Academic libraries, one (1) Public library, one (1) Special library and the branch of the National library in the state. Purposive Sampling Technique (PST) was used

to select 90 library personnel. The breakdown is as follows:

	Name of Library Institution	Population
1	Nimbe Adedipe Library, University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Ogun State	20
2	Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, Ogun State	15
3	Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago- Iwoye, Ogun State	20
4	Moshood Abiola Polytechnic Abeokuta	06
5	Redeemers University, Mowe, Ogun State	08
6	Simeon Adebo Library Abeokuta	10
7	National Library of Nigeria Abeokuta	10
8	Neuropsychiatry Hospital, Abeokuta	06
	Total	90

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Table 1: Educational Attainment of the respondents

Academic Qualification	Frequency	Percentage
OND/DLS	23	25.6
BLS/BSC	12	13.3
MLS	53	58.9
PhD	02	1.8
Total	90	100

The above table examined the educational attainment of the respondents. The result showed that 53(58.9%) had Master in Library Science (MLS). The reason for may not be far from the presence of five academic institutions used for the study in which they placed emphasized on higher degrees.

Table 2: Reason for the choice of librarianship

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
It gives room for intellectual development	23	26
Employment Opportunity	19	21.1
Previous working experience in the libraries	33	37
Love for books and reading	06	07
Prospect for good salary	03	03
Attractive working environment	02	02
By accident	02	02

Responding to a question on reasons for the choice of librarianship as a profession majority 33(37%) admitted that they picked the career in the profession because of their previous working experience in the libraries as shown in table 2. This supported the finding of Nwalo and Issa (2008) that previous working experiences in the libraries encourage many to choice career in the profession.

Table 3: Time of choice

Time of choice	Frequency	Percentage
While working after secondary school.	43	48
While in the university	22	24
While working after NYSC	12	13
During NYSC	10	11
While in secondary school	03	03
Before attending secondary school	01	01
Total	90	100

The finding in table 3 revealed that 43(48%) developed interest in the profession when they were working in the library after their secondary schools. This contradicts the finding of Nzotta

(1982) that many people consider the profession during their first degrees courses in the universities.

Table 4: Sources of information used in choosing the profession

Time of choice	Frequency	Percentage
While working after secondary school.	43	48
While in the university	22	24
While working after NYSC	12	13
During NYSC	10	11
While in secondary school	03	03
Before attending secondary school	01	01
Total	90	100

The finding in table 4 revealed that friends and relatives were the major sources of information in choosing the profession. This is in agreement with the finding of Agumanu (1989) that family members were the sources of information to the students of Imo State University, Nigeria on the choice librarianship.

Table 5: Level of satisfaction

Level of Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	61	68
Satisfied	23	26
Not Satisfied	06	06

Table 5 provides information on the level of satisfaction with the profession 61(68%) of the respondents admitted that they were highly satisfied. Sought to identify the level of satisfaction 61(68%) claimed that they were highly satisfied with the profession.

IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The finding of this study revealed that Librarianship has not been put in right place among other professions such as Law or Medicine. That many librarians choose the profession because of their working experience in the Library is not a good development for the profession this is to show that there is no proper awareness for

secondary school students to come afresh to the profession. This supported Nwalo and Isaac (2008) that working experience in the libraries prompts many Librarians in choice of librarianship as a profession. Also those librarians that choose the profession when working in the libraries after secondary schools do this just to secure their jobs as well as promotion in that line. This is to show that the profession is for "work and study people" that there is no adequate information about the profession.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study showed that prior working in the libraries served as the major reason for the choice of librarianship among librarians in the state. In order words some started their career as Library Assistants and Library Officers they latter decided to toll the line of librarianship after their secondary schools education. On the other hands some librarians got to know about the profession through friends and relatives. It was also gathered that many of the respondents affirmed that they were satisfied with their choice of librarianship as a career.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study.

- Library use should be introduced in all secondary schools in the country.
- There is a need for special salary and allowances for librarians
- The Registration Council of Nigerian Library Association need to engage in a massive campaign and awareness about librarianship as a noble profession to the public.
- There is a need for massive campaign and awareness about librarianship as a noble profession.

- There is a need for inclusion of librarianship during career talk for secondary school students.

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