

## **DEVELOPING LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROGRAMMES FOR EMERGING MARKET IN NIGERIA IN THE 21ST CENTURY: THE NEED FOR APPROPRIATE ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Tracing the development of library and information science (LIS) education in Nigeria, the paper provides a perspective for developing LIS courses for the emerging job market in Nigeria. Considering the recent happenings in the LIS field which is predominated by advancements in Information and Communications Technology (ICT), the paper argues that the education and training of LIS professionals in Nigeria has to be in such a way that will make them function effectively in the contemporary information society and also to be self reliant whenever the need arises. The LIS curriculum in Nigeria, therefore, has to be in line with the current global trends and at the same time take cognizance of the local situation if Nigerian LIS schools are to leap-frog into the global LIS scene. However, within this context, the paper also discusses some of the major challenges that hinders the development of LIS curriculum in Nigeria which include lack of proper funding, poverty of ICT facilities and low ICT literacy rate etc. the paper concludes by stressing that Nigerian LIS schools must develop courses that are relevant to the emerging market if Nigerian LIS graduates are to be active participants in the contemporary information world and also all relevant stakeholders should be involved in all curricular matters.*

**Keywords:** *Library Education-Nigeria, Library Schools-Nigeria, LIS professionals, LIS courses, LIS field-global trend*

### **Introduction**

The development in Information and communication technologies is having a great impact on library and information profession. This is, because, it has permeated all aspects of library and information services. Equally, it affects all spheres of human endeavor because ICTs are now changing the way we communicate, the way interact as well as the way we think. Indeed, its development is considered pervasive. ICTs like computers, Internet, Intranet, and other new technologies have positive impact on all segments of library and information profession including education and training.

This is, therefore, a changing society where information technology has taken the centre stage in all our affairs and accompanied by a massive increase in knowledge, leading to a new paradigm in the LIS field. The advances and influence of the ICTs therefore, requires new information professionals to acquire new skills and training necessary for survival in the changing society. This development requires Library and Information Science (LIS) schools to develop and re-design their curricular in order to meet the demands of the new information age which also calls for appropriate entrepreneurship skills. Issa, M'bashir and Saka (2011) acknowledged that improved and sustainable

global economic advancement depends on a strong entrepreneurship education, partially explaining why high schools in the developed countries provide such entrepreneurship education for life-long trade to their students. Furthermore, according to them, they offer courses that enable them to meet their general academic requirements as well as learning a trade.

Additionally, schools have shifted emphasis to training in computers, information technology and related fields. In line with this, Minishi-Majanja (2009) observes that library and information science education and training in Africa, which shoulders the responsibility of providing qualified staff to the library and information professions, is currently challenged to ensure that graduates have competencies that align the profession with current trends and perspectives. LIS education and training must therefore take into cognizance the challenges posed by the emerging technologies and make adequate preparation to accommodate such challenges. Obviously, this has consequences on the LIS curriculum. Lancaster (1994) has noted that the library profession, more than any other field finds itself severely challenged by a technologically and social environment that is rapidly changing, and therefore requires a visionary curriculum.

Equally, Noh, Ahn and Choi (2012), observes that as traditional libraries changes into highly modernized ones, such as semantic libraries, semantic digital libraries, and libraries 3.0, the need for transformation in the library and information science curricula to foster information professionals who will be able to manage such libraries and provide appropriate user services is more intense than ever. The word, 'entrepreneurship, has been considered from various angles. For instance, Ifegbo, (2002) cited in Ugwu and Ezeani (2011) defines entrepreneurship as competency on resourceful skills capable of steering an individual to be self-reliant, independent and productive. Similarly, BusinessDictionary.com (2015) views entrepreneurship as the capacity and willingness to develop, organize and manage a business venture along with any of its risks in order to make profit.

The development and designing of new and emerging courses by LIS schools will therefore serve as a coping strategy method and a viable option for transforming the LIS field into a modern one. In fact, Rehman (2006) has observed that during the last few decades, LIS has transformed itself into almost a new field of practice, and that change in context, technologies, and organizational approaches have changed roles and functions of all types of LIS organizations. In addition, Minishi-Majanja (2007) has equally noted that LIS schools must harness the opportunities offered by ICTs, in teaching and learning so as to develop an appropriate market-driven curricular. This paper is an attempt to provide a perspectives for developing LIS courses for the emerging market in Nigeria taken into consideration the major trends in the LIS profession that have brought new challenges and requirements for LIS practitioners. It also proposed a viable curriculum for the LIS schools that would cater for the changing LIS discipline in Nigeria and even beyond.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of this study were to:

- i. explore the current situation of the LIS programmes in Nigerian LIS schools;
- ii. identify the current happenings in the global LIS community regarding curricula and their relevance in the LIS job market place; and
- iii. recommend courses for inclusion in the curricula of LIS schools in Nigeria.

### **Development of Library Education in Nigeria**

The development of LIS education in Nigeria 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. The seminar recommended that a limited number of library schools of high caliber

be established in Africa to provide full-scale professional training at the leadership level (Lawal, 2000). Prior to that period, training in librarianship was only provided abroad mostly in the U.K and U.S. and the certificates obtained were mostly non-graduate type like the British ALA Examinations. Also, most of the librarians during that period were expatriates. The beginning of real education for LIS in Nigeria, started with the establishment of the first Library School in 1959 at the University College Ibadan, (as it was then called). The School was established with the assistance of the Carnegie Corporation of New York who took interest in the development of the profession, and consequently sent Harold Lancour in 1957 to survey the library situation and advised how the Corporation can assist in terms of library development. After his two months survey, he recommended that a postgraduate level LIS education be established, which was subsequently mounted at the Institute of Librarianship (now called the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies). The school began with a Diploma in librarianship meant for graduate students.

After the establishment of the Ibadan Library School, the second school of librarianship in Nigeria was opened at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria which started with an undergraduate programme. According to Mohammed (2008), the 1963 F.A. Sharr's report on library needs in Northern Nigeria gave birth to the establishment of the second LIS School in Nigeria in 1965 to educate and train librarians at the undergraduate level as opposed to that of Ibadan's postgraduate Diploma programme. After the establishment of the first and second school of librarianship in Nigeria, other library schools were subsequently opened at different 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 witnessed the sudden increase of LIS schools in Nigeria. At present, there are 25 LIS schools in Nigerian universities (Table 1) offering different programmes at one level or the other (LRCN, 2014). Also, a number of Federal and State Polytechnics, as well as Colleges of Education are now offering LIS programmes at different levels.

**Table 1. List of Approved/Accredited Nigerian University LIS Programmes**

S/No.	LIS Schools	Approved Programme
1.	Abia State University, Uturu	Library and Information Science
2.	Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi	Library and Information Science
3.	Adeleke University, Ede	Library Science
4.	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Library and Information Science
5.	Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma	Library and Information Science
6.	Bayero University, Kano	Library and Information Science
7.	Baze University, Abuja	Library and Information Science
8.	Benson Idahosa University, Benin City	Library and Information Science
9.	Benue State University, Makurdi	Library and Information Science
10.	Delta State University, Abraka	Library and Information Science
11.	Federal University of Technology, Minna	Library and Information Science
12.	Federal University of Technology, Yola	Library and Information Science
13.	Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai	Library and Information Science
14.	Imo State University, Owerri	Library and Information Science
15.	Kwara State University, Ilorin	Library and Information Science
16.	Madonna University, Okija	Library and Information Science
17.	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka	Library and Information Science

18.	Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijebu-Ode	Library and Information Science
19.	Umaru Musa Yar'adua University, Katsina	Library and Information Science
20.	University of Calabar, Calabar	Library and Information Science
21.	University of Ibadan, Ibadan	Library, Archival & Information Studies
22.	University of Ilorin, Ilorin	Library and Information Science
23.	University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri	Library and Information Science
24.	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	Library and Information Science
25.	University of Uyo, Uyo	Library and Information Science

**Source: LRCN 2014**

### **Current Global Trends in the LIS Education and Curricular**

LIS schools across the globe now face a number of challenges that arises as a result of certain changes i.e. advancements in ICTs, changes in the information needs of sophisticated and evolving users, context, as well as organizational changes. The challenges posed by those forces demands that LIS schools, globally, should evaluate and modify the contents of their curricula with the aim of preparing their graduates with the knowledge and skills that would enable them succeed in the changing information environment. In line with this, existing literature points to the fact that LIS curriculum has been radically and constantly changing in many countries across the globe. Saladyanant (2014) reported that LIS curricula have been changing continuously in many countries. In the same way, Buarki, Hepworth and Murray (2011), accounted that LIS programmes in USA have introduced new ICT courses (such as introduction to ICT, management of ICT, and library automation) into their curriculum.

Similarly, a landmark study conducted by Kaliper (2000) had identified six key aspects that had advanced new trends in the LIS education. The six trends indicated that LIS schools were increasingly:

- i. addressing broad-array of information environments and information problems, even though the library settings remain the heart of many LIS programmes;
- ii. witnessing the emergence of user-centered courses and has also continued to incorporate different perspectives from other fields of study i.e. multidisciplinary issues;
- iii. increasing the infusion of IT into the LIS curricula i.e. information technology has underlies all aspects of the curriculum. As such, it was expected that the LIS programmes would bear the responsibility of keeping their students on the cutting edge of the existing and new technologies as they become available;
- iv. experimenting with flexible programming to provide specialization within the curriculum;
- v. offering instruction in diverse formats (e.g. course length, day and time of course offering, and on-or off-campus meetings, as well as distance education via the World Wide Web) to provide students with more flexibility; and
- vi. expanding their curricula by means of offering related degrees at the undergraduate, master's and doctoral levels.

Furthermore, the changing scenario in the LIS field has made library schools worldwide to devise new means in order to be responsive to the call for change in their programmes and courses. Existing literature indicates that more trends are taking place in the LIS field globally. For instance, some scholars (Ameen, 2007; Rehman, 2003; Ocholla & Bothma, 2007; Gojeh & Bayissa, 2008; Tang, 1999) reported that LIS schools were altering the content of their courses and changing the names of their schools, nomenclature, as well as programmes offerings. In addition, some were

introducing new courses to their curricula which consist of new areas like knowledge management, information literacy, multimedia, media and publishing, digital libraries, information architecture and website design (Ocholla & Bothma, 2007; The-Lam, 1999; Chu, 2006; Chu, 2010; Callison & Tilley, 2001).

It is important to note that in recent years, internationalization of LIS education has become one of the major areas of concern to the global LIS community. In fact, Abdullahi & Kajberg (2004) argued that internationalization of LIS education is not only desirable but also critically essential. Similarly, Welch and Murray (2007) as cited in Mammo (2011) also emphasized that internationalization of LIS curricula has been an area of study, focusing on the dissemination of international standards and codes of education in the international context. Thus, developing and re-designing of LIS courses to comprise new areas such as digital libraries, website designing and maintenance, knowledge management, electronic information resources, networking, entrepreneurial skills, public relations and communication skills, Internet skills, as well as a host of other emerging areas has become a common practice among LIS schools in the world.

Therefore, if the LIS professionals are to survive and flourish in today's competitive job market, then, LIS schools need to develop courses that will give their students the required competencies that will enable them to meet up with the requirements of the changing market. Rehman (2006) argued that new roles demand fresh sets of competencies. Also, Issa, M'bashir and Saka (2011) argued that the teaching of Information Business has become imperative in developing countries and Nigeria in particular where the rate of unemployment is increasingly high, and that LIS schools are expected to take that into consideration. The foregoing represents series of attempts made by LIS schools to diversify their courses and programmes in order to satisfy the needs of employers in both the public and private sectors, become self reliant whenever the situation demands for that, and also to meet the dynamics of globalization of information services and provisions. This will in turn ensures that they remain within the global road map of the 21<sup>st</sup> century changing society. Nigerian LIS schools are therefore not expected to be left behind in this regard.

**Table 2: Top LIS programmes in the UK and USA ICT offerings at undergraduate level**

S/No.	LIS School	Degree offered	ICT related courses offered
1.	Loughborough University, Department of Information Science	B.Sc. (Hons.) Information Management and Computing	Information & Knowledge Organization & Retrieval; Computer Systems; Knowledge, Data and Information Systems; Managing Projects: Managing Knowledge; Management of Information Systems and Services
2.	Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	Information Technology	Literacy in the Information Age; IT and Organizations; and Social Aspects of Information Systems.
3.	School of Information Studies, Syracuse University	Information Management and Technology	Introduction to Database Management System; Introduction to Computer Networking; Applications of Information Systems and Services.
4.	Information School, University of Washington	Informatics	Information Structures; Database Management and Information Retrieval; Web Technologies; Information Systems

			Analysis and Management.
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### **Developing LIS Courses for the Emerging Market in Nigeria**

The paradigm shift in the LIS field, as well as the dramatic changes in the information environment which arises as a result of advancements in ICTs, as well as other forces, have necessitated that the education of information professionals in Nigeria should be in such a way that will meet the requirements of the emerging job market in the country. Indeed, the challenges posed by the above forces calls for continuous development of new courses and the review of the existing ones by Nigerian LIS schools in order to meet up with the challenges. However, the development and designing of the LIS courses must provide a mixture of the traditional and emerging areas. This is, because, the traditional courses will continue to provide a strong foundation upon which other skills will be formed in the training programmes especially in developing countries. Gorman (1999), stated that the LIS curriculum of the future have to contain those basic elements that have characterized education for librarianship since its origin.

According to Zaharadeen (1994), the design of courses, based upon the development of the library profession internationally, and in the Nigerian and African context, must produce effective information professionals who can measure up to the expectations of employers which according to him should be the priority of LIS schools. Carroll et-al (2013) have noted that in order to move forward in the provision of effective library services in Nigeria, library schools in the country require a new paradigm of librarianship. However, it is worthy to note that the dilemma of LIS training in Nigeria and other developing countries is the fact that LIS education and training is still heavily reliant on traditional practices and methods. Despite this, however, the development and the review of LIS courses must take care of the needs of the local setting as well as the requirements of the global trends for obvious reasons. Also, the view of employers of LIS products, both in the private and the public sectors is also desirable.

Aina and Moahi (2005) who cited Cronin (1993) have classified the markets for information professionals into three, the heartland, the hinterland and the horizon. The heartland according to them, is concerned with the traditional library or information units, the hinterland in terms of world of libraries-without-walls; while the horizon market as the natural habitat of software engineers, business computing specialists, which focused more on hardware and systems component, rather than information content and packaging.

Based on the foregoing, it has therefore become imperative that the design and development of LIS courses in Nigerian LIS schools must encompass all the three categorized areas above if Nigerian LIS schools are to produce proactive graduates that can compete in the dynamic and dramatically changing society. Therefore, the development of LIS courses by Nigerian LIS schools should give priority to the following:

- a. The diversification of courses to include new subjects such as knowledge management, IT skills (networking, Internet skills, database management, web site designs, online reference chart), publishing, multi-media applications, electronic resources management, information literacy etc. in order to make the training more relevant to the emerging market and also to attract prospective students to the programmes.
- b. The design of courses in Management sciences as well as the adoption of multidisciplinary approach to LIS education. This will go a long way in ensuring that LIS graduates are not confined only to the four walls of the library, and it will also give them the ample opportunity to function effectively in non-library organizations and adapt to changing situations.



- c. The design of courses in entrepreneurial skills that will make LIS graduates to be enterprising and also have the ability to be self reliant whenever the situation demands for that. This calls for courses in business skills, information brokering, contingency skills, as well as policy, critical, reflective and creative thinking as well as strategic planning.
- d. Courses with digital library background.
- e. Courses on Information Management and sources to enable LIS professionals to provide convenient, accessible and effective information services to whatever organization they may function.
- f. Information retrieval and organization.
- g. Indexing and abstracting services.
- h. Courses on information policy analysis as well as information architecture.
- i. Technical writing and translation.

It is important to state that if the above courses are properly mounted, Nigerian LIS schools will certainly leap-frog into the global trends in LIS practice and also meet the requirements of the job market in this information age.

**Table 3: Proposed Curriculum for LIS Programmes in Nigeria**

S/No	Core Courses	S/No.	Elective Courses
1.	Organization of Information/ Knowledge, Information Retrieval	1.	Oral Literature and Libraries
2.	Reference and Information Services	2.	Africana Information Sources and Services
3.	Information Resources Development and Management (Collection Development)	3.	Multimedia Resources and Services
4.	Management/Administration of Information Institutions	4.	Serials Management in Information Centres and Libraries
5.	Libraries in Nigerian Society/ Community	5.	Archives and Records Management
6.	Research and Statistical Methods	6.	Information Sources, Resources and Services in Different Fields (Social Sciences, Humanities, Law, Science and Technology and Arts
7.	Indexing and Abstracting Services/ Metadata	7.	Public Relations and Advocacy/Marketing in LIS
8.	Foundation of Information Studies/ Information Work	8.	Information Services for Young People
9.	Bibliography and Citation Skills/ Bibliometrics	9.	Library Software Packages
10.	Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)	10.	Academic, Special Libraries and Information Centres
11.	Practical Cataloguing and Classification	11.	Resource Sharing and Networking in Libraries and Information Centres
12.	Basic Computer Operations and Skills	12.	National and Public Libraries and Information Centres/Services
13.	Information Literacy/Lifelong Learning	13.	Digital Publishing/Digitization
14.	Electronic Information Resources Management	14.	School Libraries and Media Resources Centres
15.	Internet Skills/Website Design	15.	Technical Writing and Translation
16.	Database Design and Management	16.	Networking/Data Communication and Administration

17.	Introduction to Epistemology	17.	Publishing, Printing and Book Trade
18.	Information System and Networks	18.	Education and Information Services
19.	Computer Application in Information Work/Telecomm.	19.	Government and Official Information Sources and Services
20.	Information Policy Analysis	20.	Community Analysis/Needs and Information Services
21.	Politics of Information	21.	Information Structure and System Components
22.	Information Architecture	22.	Economics and Marketing of Information/Information Ethics
23.	Development of Information Infrastructure	23.	Financial Management in Libraries
24.	Entrepreneurship in the LIS Field	24.	Client Service Skills
25.	Dissertation/Thesis/Independent Study	25.	Information Brokerage
26.	Practicum/SIWES	26.	Information User/Behavioural Stud.
27.	Copyright and Legal Issues in LIS	27.	Self Management Skills
28.	Information Seeking Behaviour	28.	History of Libraries and Information Centres/Intellectual History
29.	Library and Information Service Policies	29.	Nigerian/African Information Environment
30.	Ethics in LIS Work	30.	Library and Information Services to Rural Communities
31.		31.	Preservation and Conservation of Information Resources/Digitization
32.		32.	Learning and Communication Skills
33.		33.	Library Automation
34.		34.	Critical, Reflective, and Creative Thinking
35.		35.	Introduction to Knowledge Management (KM)
36.		36.	Change Management
		37.	Information Analysis and Repackaging
		38.	Courses in Social Sciences, Arts/Humanities, Natural Sciences

### **Challenges and Prospects**

Despite the advancement in ICTs and the efforts been made by LIS schools globally to respond positively to the changing scenario, the efforts of Nigerian LIS schools in developing effective courses for the emerging market is hindered by a number of factors. These include:

#### *Challenges*

- 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.
- Poverty of information technology facilities as a result of the above factor.
- 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.
- Non involvement of relevant stakeholders in curricula issues.
- Non-challant attitude of the professional associations to LIS education in Nigeria.



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

### *Prospects*

- a. Improvement in funding. This requires a change of attitude from the government and sponsoring authorities of LIS schools. Also, LIS schools should device new means of generating more funds for a sustainable LIS education in the country.
- b. Improvement in teaching staff. The quality of teaching staff in LIS schools in Nigeria is not something that cannot be compromised. There is, therefore, the need for recruitment of lecturers with strong ICT background who can train graduates that will be relevant to the emerging market.
- c. ICT-driven Curricular. The development of a strong curriculum is the foundation for success in the emerging market for LIS professionals. LIS schools should therefore continuously upgrade, and review their curriculum to encompass new and emerging areas and also there should be an expanded market for prospective LIS professionals. In addition, the curriculum should also have local relevance.
- d. Improvement in teaching and learning resources. This requires the provision of state of the art facilities that are relevant to the training of LIS professionals in the information age. Also, the learning environment should be made friendly to the learners.

### **Conclusion**

It can be concluded that for LIS education to prosper and survive in Nigeria in the 21<sup>st</sup> century changing society, it must certainly develop courses that will match the requirements of the emerging market in the country. This, therefore, calls for re-adjustment of the LIS courses to be in line with the recent happenings at the global level. It is expected that the education and training of LIS professionals must be in a way that will make them become active participants' not just watchers in the global information society. But the 'bottom line' lies with the ability of the LIS schools to develop courses that are relevant to the emerging market for LIS graduates in Nigeria to function fully and effectively as well.

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