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Editorial

The vision of this journal is to launch African researchers in particular into the global market place where intellectual democracy and superiority reign supreme. This is why the journal carefully filters and publishes meaningful and relevant articles that are empirical or theoretical. The journal also publishes book reviews, letters to the editor, news items and brief communications. It equally welcomes advertisements. It is published yearly in May and November. The articles published here reflect the diverse interests and the current directions of scholarship in the disciplines of library, archival and information science in this part of the world.

Appreciation and Pledge

Children do not drop from heaven. They are always parented and nurtured to maturity. We (members of Oyo State Chapter of the Nigerian Library Association) in the library, archival and information professions stand in ovation to the great scholars, professionals and the great minds that started this scholarly and noble journal. We also salute their offsprings who took over from them as editors. As your editorial grand-children who are relying on your support, we pledge to always add positive innovation and creativity to ensure professional and regular publishing of the journal. Thank you for the vision and mission for the journal.

Library, Archival and Information Studies (LARIS) Curricula as Determinant of Professional Job Performance in Librarianship in Nigeria

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Abstract

A comparison of the performance of LARIS graduates with the departmental curricula was made with a view to identifying the strengths and weaknesses of LARIS graduates at their various places of work. The participants for the study consist of three hundred and ten (310) graduates of LARIS Department randomly selected. The four point Likert Scale fixed response questionnaire was used to obtain information on the perception of LARIS graduates on professional job performance. The *t*-test statistics was utilised to analyse the data collected for the study. The results indicated that significant relationship existed between the curricula and learning outcomes of LARIS graduates; the characteristics of LARIS curricula is not a determinant of professional job performance in the field of librarianship; and there is no noticeable professionalism in the field of librarianship in Nigeria at present. The study then recommended improvement in the areas of teaching-learning activities; provision of library equipment and tools; and prompt appraisal of present LARIS curricula if the Department must meet its strategic roles in elevating the standard of practicing librarians to a professional one in Nigeria.

Keywords: Librarianship, Professionalism, Job performance, Curricula, Teaching, Learning.

Introduction/Historical Background of LARIS Department

In 1957, the Carnegie Corporation commissioned Professor Harold Lancour of the University of Illinois to survey library conditions in West Africa as a basis for further Library Development Project. Lancour reported that the greatest need for further Library Development in West Africa was an adequate supply of qualified librarians. He strongly recommended that a library school be established at the then University College, Ibadan (now University of Ibadan). As a result, the Carnegie Corporation gave an initial sum of \$88,000 to the University College to set up the Library School.

The Institute of Librarianship (Library School) was opened in October 1959 and admitted its first batch of six students in October 1960. The Carnegies Corporation gave two more grants of \$112,000 in 1963 and \$84,000 in 1966 to the Library School. In 1971 the Library School (Institute) became a full-fledged department (Department of Library Studies) within the Faculty of Education of the University of Ibadan, to reflect the full breadth of the disciplines covered in its programmes, as the years went by, the name of the department was changed to the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies in 1986. Except, perhaps in the Republic of South Africa, the department is the oldest Library School in sub-Saharan Africa.

The Department offers the following programmes *viz* Diploma in Library Studies (DLS), Bachelor in Library, Archival and Information Studies (BLIS), Masters in Library Studies (MLS), Masters in Archival Studies and Records Management (MAS), Masters of Philosophy (M.Phil.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D.).

It should be noted that the University of Ibadan was chosen because as earlier said it was the first and remained the only Library School in Nigeria for many years before others were established. It is therefore evident that the products of this school have had a great influence on the wherewithal of librarianship in the country.

Sequel upon the aforementioned brief on LARIS Department, one need to ask whether or not the products of the department exhibit any form of professional job performance in the labour market.

Although, Ajayi (1999) quoted by Osuagwu (2000) opined that University graduates perform better in the labour market because they are vast in researches and can handle administrative work competently.

If the above submission is true, the much talked about paperless library or digital library that made some librarians feel that their job is on the line or their relevance gradually being eroded in the present computer age is an empty threat.

To really appreciate the causes of ill-performance, impact of the training and best way to bring out the potentials of the professionally trained librarians in their fields of calling therefore, relationship between curriculum, teaching, learning outcomes and job performance is essential *vis-a-vis* professionalism and librarianship.

Relationship between Curriculum, Teaching, Learning Outcomes and Job Performance

Case (1974) revealed that the decade of the sixties was a period of great educational change in response to societal upheavals and technological advances. Thrust into the centre of this revolutionary movement, the definition

of school librarianship needed to be re-defined and the educational role of the school librarian resolved. Changing school curriculum, new applications of teaching methodologies and learning strategies, the impact of federal programmes, and new methods of storage, retrieval and dissemination of information were having a direct effect upon the librarians role in meeting informational, educational and research needs, according to him. Also, he was of the opinion that the diversity of job responsibilities in school library programmes among others mandated the need for mastery of new concepts in the profession to meet changing responsibilities in curriculum and teaching.

The American Library Association (1974) discovered that a new approach to school library media education would be required if the theory was ever to be put into relevant practice and if school library media specialist were ever to have the required knowledge, skills and competencies for effectiveness on-the-job performance. Lawrey (1974) as reported by Ladele (1977) submitted that for this to be achieved, two of the most important characteristics of a curriculum content and methods by which it is implemented in instruction must be considered. He recommended development and implementation of an "individual, modularised training programme" to train professional personnel for work in librarianship. Ozigi *et al* (1978) also postulated that all schools must have a curriculum and must be directed towards achieving a goal - professionalism.

Cover *et al* (1996) as revealed by Lawal (1998) opined that it is essential to have a well-planned curriculum for the purported learning outcomes to be achieved. They recommended three ways which teachers can, and should develop the curriculum. In the first

place, the teacher must realise that curriculum is not a law which commands that certain things be done in a certain way because the curriculum is made for the students- the students are not made for the curriculum and that curriculum lays down certain objectives which must be reached sometimes. Going further, they stated that teachers can develop the curriculum by making it much more of a co-operative business than it often is at present. Finally they stressed that teachers can develop the curriculum by doing some research. Another supportive expression to Cover's *et al* opinion is the view of Werdell (1997) who pointed out that if colleges and universities are to take teaching seriously, they must make the private needs and concerns of students a dominant thrust in their policy.

Professionalism and Librarianship

Professionalism according to Webster's (1986) *Third New International Dictionary* is the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterise or make a profession or a professional person. To this end, some factors that tend to be widely accepted in professional life are identified and examined for its prominence in different professions (Librarianship inclusive).

Fasanya (1984) puts the identified factors as follows: length of training; content of professional knowledge; importance of profession to human life; risk of the job; versatility of practitioners in the profession; chance(s) of comfortable living; regulatory factors within the profession; and effect on/appeal to offspring. Hughes (1963) asserted that professions profess. They profess to know better than others do in the nature of certain matters, and know better than their clients what ails them or their affairs. He submitted also

that professions are changing, and that education of the future professional is changing. This process, according to him, can be allowed to happen through a series of evolutionary and revolutionary steps as the needs of society, of students, and of professionals themselves interact. Parsons (1959) opined that a professional does not have a license to be a "wise man" outside the area defined by his training. This, in way complements Hughes assertion.

Goode (1957) earlier stated that the ultimate criterion of professionalisation according to most sociologist is the achievement of "autonomy" which implies (a) knowing better what is good for the clientele than anyone else because of extended technical education or training, (b) subjecting one's decisions only to the review of colleagues, and (c) setting all one's standards pertaining to jurisdiction of the profession and entry into it through peer group associations. It must be noted that these characteristics give rise to professions "communities" implying a common sense of identity, self-regulation, lifetime membership, shared values, a common language, clear social boundaries and strong socialisation of new members. In fact, this is where Nigeria Library Association (NLA) emanated from. Shein and Kommers (1972) referred to such profession as one of today's mass of professions developed in a similar way from a few "ancient and learned" such as theology, law and medicine.

While they noted it may be claimed in some respects that technological advances, allied to changing perceptions of the growing significance of information in social, economic and other aspects of contemporary life, are influencing librarianship in more fundamental manner than many other professions. Robert

and Konn (1991) revealed that there is hardly an occupation uninfluenced by change. Despite the visible changes, sociologists, according to Goode (1969) viewed librarianship as one of a number of occupations found to be lacking the full range of attributes needed for recognition as an established profession. Although librarianship had come to display many of the distinctive external features of accepted professions there was general agreement that members of this group could aspire to semi-professional status at best.

In the process of this study therefore, attempt is made to find out whether:

- various skills acquired by LARIS graduates are adequate and how they put them in use at their different places of work;
- LARIS graduates are efficient and effective in performing their work activities;
- the elements of the LARIS curricula determine professional job performance of LARIS graduates in librarianship; and
- there is any noticeable professionalism in the field of librarianship in Nigeria with particular reference to the labour market job performance.

To solve the already identified problems, answers were provided to the following questions that pilot this study:

- (1) Is there any significant relationship between the curricula and learning outcomes?
- (2) What are the characteristics of the curricula that determine professional job performance of LARIS graduates?
- (3) Is there any noticeable professionalism in the field of librarianship in Nigeria?

Methodology

Research Design

The descriptive survey research design was used in this study. This was predicated in the attempt to determine the relationship between learning and performance.

Subjects

A simple random sampling technique was used in selecting three hundred and ten (310) subjects from an estimated population of 2,338. Mainly because the study entails a large population, which cannot be studied at the same time, a quota sampling was used for gathering information from LARIS graduates that identified major employers based on the concept of relativity.

Instrumentation

A questionnaire designed by the researchers based on a four point Likert scale fixed response was used in this study. The questionnaire, which comprised of 45 items, sought information on biographic data, intrinsic and extrinsic aspect of professional job performance, motivation, conflict management, training, participation in decision making, supervision and skill acquisition.

Data Analysis

The one sample test and paired samples test were used to analyse the data collected. The results of the analysis are shown below:

Results

Question 1: Is there any significant relationship between the curricula and learning outcomes:

Table 1: showing significant relationship between the curricula and learning outcomes

Paired Samples Test

Paired Differences

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2 = tailed)
Pair 1 How will you rank LARIS curricula						
How will you rank the learning outcomes of LARIS graduates	-1.4839	.6422	3,647E-02	40.685	309	.000

From the paired samples test in table 1 above using T-test at 5% level of significance with a degree of freedom of 309. The table value is 1.96 while the t-calculated is 40.685. This means $t_{cal} < t_{tab}$. Therefore, the H_0 is accepted which says there is significant

relationship between curricula of LARIS Department and learning outcomes

Question 2: What are the characteristics of the curricula that determine professional job performance of LARIS graduates?

Table 2: showing the rated level of performance of LARIS graduates**One Sample Test**

Test Value = 0

95% Confidence Interval of
Difference

	t	df	Sig. (2=taileds)	Mean Different	Lower	Upper
The level of LARIS graduates performance is very good		35.810	309	.000	1.7032	1.6096 1.7968

The one-sample test above shows the test of the characteristics of the curricula, which determines professional job performance of the LARIS graduates. Using t-table at 5% level of significance with a degree of freedom of 309. The table value is 1.96 while the t-calculated is 35.81. Therefore, $t_{cal} > t_{tab}$. It could be deduced that H_0 is rejected which

says the characteristics of the curricula determines professional job performance of LARIS graduates because there is no any correlation between the two as shown on the above table.

Question 3: Is there any noticeable professionalism in the field of librarianship in Nigeria?

Table 3: showing professionalism in the field of librarianship in Nigeria**One Sample Test**

Test Value = 0

95% Confidence Interval of
Difference

	t	df	Sig. (2=taileds)	Mean Different	Lower	Upper
LARIS curricula are up-to-date in information science as in developed nations	47.719	309	.000	2.6645	2.5591	2.7700

Using t table at 5% level of significance, from table three, which is 1.96 and t-calculated which is 35.81, $t_{cal} > t_{tab}$. Therefore, the null hypothesis which says there is a noticeable professionalism in the field of librarianship in

Nigeria is rejected. The test however is insignificant because there is no any observed professionalism in the field of librarianship in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The overriding conclusion emanating from the above discourse is that LARIS curricula would be a very useful instrument that can stand in the gap between the much-talked about professionalism and non-professionalism in the librarianship profession in Nigeria if well-implemented through quality teaching-learning processes. This will however, negate the prediction of sociologists that librarians would never succeed in crossing the dividing line between occupation and profession as reported by Goode (1969).

This also complement the assertion of Parsons (1959). What obtains in the profession in Nigeria at present can not be said to be at par with overseas standard. It is however, expected that the newly constituted Librarian Registration Council would affect the profession positively and make the necessary impact to establish it.

It should be noted that the results of this research finding would in no doubt raise dust among the librarians in Nigeria. Nevertheless, the research field is open for anybody with a contrary view.

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