



### Training the Trainer: Emerging Trends in the Course Content of Library and Information Science Education in Nigeria

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#### *Abstract*

*The explosion of knowledge in this world and in the 21<sup>st</sup> century necessitates an ability to learn throughout life. Though the current age of information communication technology if the digitized world has made tremendous adjustments in the way of teaching and learning which has made the trainee and the trainer to go for more knowledge to meet with the current age of information explosion. Therefore, library and information science professionals need to be up to date to enable them deliver and produce versatile information scientist. In a bid to do this, all professionals must be in dire need to acquire the relevant skills and expertise required in the world of information and become competent enough to provide the best services to the trainee and users. Accordingly, the growth of information resources and having access to technologies have created new avenues to exploit to meet with the needs of information consumers and in filtering outs irrelevancies in all course contents of LIS education. This work reveals that all educators need to go for more knowledge to be able to deliver maximally. It also examines the competencies which will be required by the library and information scientist of the twenty first century. Comparisons of developing and developed countries' course contents of LIS programme is made to ascertain major differences. Emphases are placed on those new technology skills for the future challenges towards the success for actualizing the emerging trends in the course content of LIS in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** *Training methods, LIS Education, Course contents, technology skills, professional competencies*

#### **11.0 Introduction**

Education as it stands is the key to knowledge, it refines individuals that care to be part of it, no wonder it is regarded as a powerful weapon which can refine and change one's perspective. According to Mandala (1993) in Obura and Bukenya (2011) Education is the most powerful weapon which

you can use to change the world. Borrowing from this word, with well spelt out course contents in LIS education programs across early higher institutions, LIS challenges in terms of training will have little work to do. That is why in this modern time the competence of all trainers is required to meet with the current vision of library and

information science, hence the need of training in the profession. Any training that takes place is for the future benefit to all.

Training can be said to be a process of assisting a person in enhancing his efficiency and effectiveness at work by improving and up-grading his knowledge, developing skills relevant to his work, and cultivating appropriate attitudes and behavior towards work. (Charid and Dheer, 2009). In order words for a professional in a particular field to be effective, training either in service or out service is needed.

Training could be organized either to improve the existing capabilities or for preparing a person for higher responsibilities which may call for a new knowledge and skills. In the case of library and information science educators, looking at the present situation of information explosion and digitization which Nigerians are running along with as a new vision, training for this new task is needed to embrace new areas in the curriculum rather than dwelling on the old system which has change over time.

Training according to Reitz (2004) is an instruction designed to teach a person or group of people (trainees) a specific skill or set of skills. According to him, these skills are to embrace new ideas which are meant to improve or to extirpate some ideas or workability that do not meet up to expectation with the new trend. In this training of the professionals, it should be research-based as well as practically oriented at the same time, (Audunson & Gjestrum, 2012). Why it should be in this platform is to enable the trainer to have deep knowledge of the course content of LIS education before impacting it on the trainee. Until this is done practically, the training of librarians/his educators may be facing dual challenges as other professional training programmes.

### **1.1 The Need for Training**

The emerging trends in the course content of library and information science in Nigeria education calls for a serious or urgent attention to meet with the global world curriculum, in reflecting the digital contents. The weakness of the most of the higher institutions offering library and information science is that the curriculum is not up dated frequently according to the new emerging information technologies.

Chad and Dheer (2009) ascertain that, advances in computing and information resources in computing and information resources have shifted library professional's roles toward influencing information resource contents away from managing containers of information.

The growth of information resources and access technologies has created new roles and areas for librarians and LIS educators in dealing with the heterogeneous needs of information consumers and in filtering out irrelevances.

The library and information science is witnessing a vast change, upheaval and revolution today, with the changing environment caused by automation, digitization, communication technologies, network, and globalization. Because of this tremendous innovation and development in information technology, the world in her modern day has shrunk into a global village and fast bridging the gap between countries, people, technologies and information and the educators are not left out.

Therefore, in this age of e-environment, the library and information science professionals need to realize the fact or need to develop and provide up-to-date information services to meet the requirements of users and trainee. Based on the above facts it is important for every LIS educators in Nigeria to be trained to bridge the gap between other contemporaries of developed countries.

## 1.2 Library and Information Science Education

According to Edegbo (2011), librarianship today has arrived at the information age where the role of information is increasingly emphasized as an economic resource, a marketable commodity and as a social wealth. In this contest according to him; the roles of librarians which could also be equated with LIS educators are of much importance. They act as a facilitator, advisor, consultants, instructor, navigator, searcher, researcher, evaluator, organizer, preserver, promoter, communicator, technical experts, as well as a manager, leader, entrepreneur and visionary. To have success in all library and information centers, there is need to have effective communication system, and on this the provision of reliable and efficient manpower need to be in place, hence the need for library and information science, education.

Therefore the effectiveness and relevance of library and information science education cannot be in place without the preparation of new breed (wine) of generation of librarians to properly acquaint themselves with the new technological tools and the only way is for the education of the educators to be in place which is the LIS education. Edegbo (2011), opined that, the education and training of LIS professionals had to be such that it empowers them to unleash their potential as they endeavour to offer relevant and efficient services within the current levels of technological sophistication.

## 1.3 Professional Competencies

Techangalova (2014) saw LIS education as a platform of personal competencies to include; intellectual curiosity, strong communication, flexibility, positive mind, and adaptability. Outside these personal competencies in the course of the training for the trainer, he went further by saying that the trainer, after acquiring the skills, should have the professional competencies of the

following:

- (a) Developing and managing information services
- (b) Managing information resources
- (c) Understanding the library as an information organization and supporting cooperation and collaboration.
- (d) Applying information tools and technologies in this LIS education training of the trainer, if only it is properly carried out, the emerging trends in the course contents of library and information science education in Nigeria would have been covered to reasonable extents.

Curry in Edegbo (2011), said the environment of new areas in LIS has made it important for LIS education and training to strive to improve their quality of programmes. This could be explained that in order to participate in educational networks and develop innovative strategies in planning and administration of LIS education to produce graduate where its work place spans the whole world.

One thing for sure is that the course contents or the curriculum of library and information science programmes all over Nigerian institution of higher learning should be formulated or designed to equip the trainee (students) to meet with the current technological base of LIS.

In line with the above, Mangla (1980) ascertain that library and information science programmes should be so designed as to equip the student with the following knowledge.

Techniques to handle the immediate job requirements in an efficient manner; and To develop programmes, procedure and services on modern lines in future where the use of various techniques, computers etc, could provide better, quicker and efficient services.

In view of the above, it is discovered that the professional practice of librarianship has changed and the educators of LIS need to change alongside. So it is imperative that LIS educators require new skill to meet with the global change in the curriculum of LIS.

## 2.0 Twenty First Century Course Content of LIS in Nigeria

In order to critically bring the researcher point to lime light some higher institution curriculum was looked at.

According to Oparah (2006) in Edegbo (2011) some few ICT courses are offered at the undergraduate level, to include:

Basic computer operations I

Basic computer operations II

According to him this two courses were designed to acquaint students with the parts functions and operation of the computer and introduction to computer software.

Information structure and system I

Information structure and system II

These two cover electronic network database, internet access, information systems, programming language etc.

Information system and networks

Data base management

Automation of library and information centers.

Edegbo (2011) provides some ICT courses that are offered in some other higher institutions to include:

Introduction to computer

Computer application to library process

Introduction to computer programming

Computer application to library processes

Introduction to database management system

Information science and modern technology

Information and development

Information technology

Computer in libraries

The stated courses as analyzed by Edegbo (2011) are offered by Abia State University, Delta State University, and the University of Ibadan Library Schools, though there are other Universities in Nigeria that are also offering these courses but were not reflected in the course of this work since these courses are part of NUC minimum standard.

These courses according to Edegbo (2011) covers contemporary information technologies to library and information centers, multimedia information system, non-book communication technology, networking, internets, etc.

The emerging trends so far seen are yet to be fully incorporated into LIS course content, though the LIS seminars in Nigeria are commendable in this aspect, but there is need for improvement.

## 2.1 Twenty First Century course content of LIS in Developed Countries

In order to strike a balance for areas of training for the trainer over the emerging trends in the course content of library and information science education in Nigeria, looking at foreign contents became imperatives. Therefore, these aspects of foreign course contents will also serve as a guide whenever LIS course of study is planned and developed.

The course contents were derived from the “University of Pittsburgh, Catholics University of America, University of Washington, Wayne state University and University of Kentucky”, which were all retrieved in 2014 from the web as follows:

Introduction to data base

Information and communication Technology in society

Systems Analysis

Technology Security

E-commerce Regulation  
Information Technology  
Introduction to Records and Information Management  
Software productivity tools for information  
Website Design  
Building Web-based information services.  
Integrated library systems (system configuration)  
Data Analytics.  
Introduction to Health informatics and E-Science  
Digital imaging, meta data, digital preservation, graphics and video processing  
Story telling in a Digital Age  
Resources for Digital Age Children & Teen (this is separated)  
Libraries as learning labs in a Digital Age  
Computers methods in Humanities.  
Library and Archival computing  
Technology in the lives of children and youth.  
Digital libraries  
Preserving Digital Culture  
Database design and application  
Information visualization  
Geographic information systems for libraries etc. The listed emerging trends in the course content of library and information science in foreign countries is not extortive, but the choice of them is based on the new trends.

In evaluating the above course content, it is crystal clear that most LIS educators may not have covered some of these areas which show that the training of the trainer is importance.

### 3.0 Training Methods

Training is an essential tool for developing staff in their fields of endeavour

(Akpokurerie, 2006). Therefore, training the trainer must be properly planned to have good result, and for it to be more effective such organizer of the training need to know the various methods of training and choose which one is most suitable for its targets audience.

Three major methods are involved as analyze by (Akpokurerie, 2006): they are:

- (a) On the job training (OJM 1)
- (b) Off the Job Training (OJM 2)
- (c) The simulation Method (SM)

#### 3.1 On the Job Training (OJM 1)

This is a practical performance of every staff either as LIS educator or librarian. It is the training of a person to learn a job while working at it or doing the particular job. This includes; job rotation, internship, apprenticeship, special or study assignment and coaching.

#### 3.2 Off the job training method (OJM 2)

Akpokurerie (2006) saw this method as whereby employees seek external training from the one they acquired through on the job process. The objective of this is to broaden the knowledge and experience of the trainee beyond what have been acquired overtime. This method is so relevant to the training of the trainer in this emerging trend of LIS educators. This also include, vestibule training, computer assisted instruction, lecture or classroom method, organizational development, programme instruction, and extension or correspondences course.

#### 3.3 Simulation Methods

This technique is commonly used in developing managers or heads of schools, libraries, Heads of departments etc. they include case study, business games, role playing, critical incidents and in-basket methods.

Ojidahun (2007) supporting

Akpokurerie (2008) identify these techniques of training:

- (a) On-the-job training
- (b) Vestibule Training
- (c) Classroom/lecture method
- (d) Case study, in-basket, case history methods
- (e) Self-study
- (f) Electronic teaching media
- (g) Simulations, games and role playing
- (h) T groups, encounter groups and sensitive training
- (i) Schools and outside seminars and
- (j) Consultants and special training.

#### **4.0 Benefits of training the trainer in LIS education**

Training and development of no doubt is an important means of changing the life style of humans. There are a lot to benefit but few to mention, which include:

- a. Increased knowledge, skills, and the development of positive behaviour and attitude towards LIS education.
- b. It leads to fulfillment of modern day librarianship.
- c. Increased organizational productivity, quality products and high rate of recognition in the LIS educational sector at large.
- d. Brings about better coordination of human, non-human and educational resources within the organization.
- e. It boosts the morale of the parental/workers institution.
- f. It leads to mastering of LIS courses.
- g. It give room for proper evaluation and feed back

#### **4.1 Who are to participate?**

Participation in this regard should involve all academic staff of the school of library and information science across Nigeria, academic and curriculum planners, institutional

management staff and if possible students depending on the method adopted for the training.

#### **5.0 Limitations of Training**

In every sphere of life, nothing good comes without a limitation such limitation as analyze by Chand & Dheer (2009):

- i. Training cannot solve problems of faulty organizations. Poor organizational structure in any establishment can be a barrier and tends to prevent the translation of acquired knowledge and skills into improved performance and it could serve as a substitute for sound initial selection and careful placement of employees.
- ii. Training cannot increase the learning potential of individuals. While training may stimulate further use of the available area capacities, it cannot create new potentials.
- iii. Training cannot ensure improved performance or greater efficiency in an unerring manner. Consequently upon training, there must be a transfer of acquired knowledge, skills or improved attitudes into the work situation for improvement to take place. This transfer is not automatic and is controlled by factors outside the scope of the training.
- iv. Training cannot overcome the psychological fact that forgetting is easier and quicker than learning. The remedy is repetition. Only continued practice in the use of newly acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes can combat forgetting.
- v. Training cannot make any one learn anything. Training can only provide the means for learning to take place. As a result, if potential learners do not want to

learn, then the chances are that they will not learn.

### Conclusion

The issue of training and development of staff irrespective of their status in the educational, LIS School and in the world should not be taken for granted. No one is all knowing, there are limits to learning, and therefore, until you are properly informed you may not be able to inform others. Training as earlier said is a process of teaching either the basic skills they need to perform a particular task or introducing a new knowledge to an employee in a particular field. On this basis LIS educators should embark on self research and see how they can measure up with the new innovations in the field as spelt out in the course of this work. This work has been able to exposed us to the fact that the course content of LIS in most of our Universities are yet all embracing, therefore, there should be an urgent step to review the course content to cover most of the ones the researchers of this work has analysed to reflect the 21<sup>st</sup> century Library and Information Science (Technology) content.

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