

Analytical Study of Library and Information Science Dissertations (1996 – 2015) at the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria

By

Yahaya Aliyu (PhD.) & Tukur Abba (PhD.)

Abstract

The study analysed eighty-one (81) masters of library and information science dissertations accepted by the school of postgraduate studies, University of Maiduguri, between 1996 and 2015 academic sessions. The analysis focused on productivity of dissertation by a academic year, subject areas, type of libraries, geographical areas covered and the gender of the students that presented the dissertations. The analysis revealed that the 2014 academic year recorded the highest productivity of dissertations with thirteen (13) representing 19.8 percent, Library Personnel Management was the most researched subject area, Academic Librarianship was the type of library most researched and Borno State was the most focused geographical area in the dissertations presented during the years covered by the study. Finally, the study suggests among other things, the need for the department to encourage prospective candidates to carryout research in other areas of specialization such as Bibliographical Studies and Bibliometrics, Organization of Knowledge, Foundations of Library and Information Science, Manuscripts and Archival Management, which are yet to receive attention.

Keywords: Analytical study, Library and Information Science, Dissertations, Nigeria

Introduction

The Department of Library Science, University of Maiduguri, was established in December 1977. The undergraduate degree programme began in the 1982/83 academic session. In 2010 the name of the department was changed from library science to library and information science. The masters in library science programme began in 1993/94 academic session with the following areas of specialisation. Foundations of Library and Information Science, Bibliographical Studies and Information Services, Library Management, Organisation of Knowledge,

and Information Science. The objectives of the masters' programme include;

- To educate graduates to understand and appreciate the changing library and information needs of the Nigerian society.
- To provide students with advanced theoretical knowledge and their relevant application to library and information problems.
- To provide students with advanced management skills and techniques for application in libraries and other library-oriented institutions such as publishing for library schools

- To provide the personnel for library schools
- To educate students in the theory and practice of communication to enable them to relate information effectively to the needs of their communities.
- To train students to acquire advanced skills in one or more areas of library and information science.
- To promote professionals who are competent in identifying problems and conducting research in various aspects of library, information and archival science (MLS Handbook, 2000)

The doctor of philosophy (PhD) in library and information science programme began in 2006/2007 academic session. As stated in the PhD handbook (n.d.), the department, having enhanced its trained manpower capability with the masters' programme for more than ten years, was faced with a pressing demand for a doctoral programme. The programme is designed to train academics and professionals with relevant theoretical knowledge for public and private organisations and to develop advanced management personnel with technical and conceptual skills for the organisation and administration of modern libraries and related institutions. The programme will also produce teaching personnel for department.

The dissertation is one of the major requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Library Science and Information in the University of Maiduguri. Usually there is an approved topic on any aspect of Library Information and Archival work to be researched and reported upon. A seminar is required on the approved topic prior to the completion and submission of the dissertation to the School of Postgraduate Studies. Duck and Beck's work as quoted by Fosu and Ajemna (2006), states that the goals of a dissertation are to meet the requirements of a degree, proving that one has mastered the skills necessary to one's chosen scholarly field, while at the same time, making an original contribution to that field.

Literature on analytical studies on undergraduate final year projects and postgraduate dissertations/theses on library and information science has generated a considerable amount of research over the years. Afolabi and Mohammed (1984) analysed 371 final year undergraduate projects submitted to the Department of Library Science, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, between 1972 and 1983. Their study showed that the aspect of Librarianship most of the students concentrated on was Library

Services, the type of library most discussed was the Public Library and the geographical area most covered by the researchers was Kaduna State. Momoh (1993) studied the Statistical analysis of final year undergraduate library science projects at the University of Maiduguri, between 1981 and 1990. The findings of the study showed that Library history is the most concentrated subject area and the most discussed type of library was the Academic Library. It recommended that heavily concentrated areas should be de-emphasised while the future focus should be on the least/non-discussed areas. Fosu and Alemna (2006) analysed masters dissertations written on the Balme library, University of Ghana by students of the Department of Information Studies, University of Ghana between 1998 and 2005, with a view to ascertaining how the management of Balme library has implemented the recommendations from the dissertations. The analysis takes the form of the type and year of dissertations, subject of dissertation and whether written by Balme library staff or not.

Objectives of the Study

The study analysed the dissertations submitted to the School of Postgraduate Studies, University of Maiduguri between

1996 and 2015, with the view to determining the following:

- The total number of dissertations by academic year.
- The subject areas covered.
- The type of library focused.
- The geographical areas covered.
- The gender of the researchers.

This study being first of its kind on the analysis of master of library and information science dissertations in the University of Maiduguri, its findings would hopefully reveal the research trends of postgraduate students in the department of library and information science, University of Maiduguri. This would in no small measure help both the department and prospective postgraduate students to focus their researches on areas that are least or not concentrated upon by previous dissertations. Similarly, the study would serve as a database for the department which could be updated periodically.

Methodology

The data for this study were gathered from the dissertations accepted by the School of Postgraduate Studies, University of Maiduguri and deposited in the Ramat Library and the Department of Library Science Laboratory, University of

Maiduguri. Each dissertation was analysed thoroughly in terms of the year of dissertation, subject area, and type of library, geographical area covered and the

gender of the students that presented the dissertations. The data gathered were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentage scores.

Results

The results of the study presented in tables below:

Table 1: Distribution of Dissertations by Academic year

Academic Year	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1996	1	1.2
1997	2	2.5
1998	2	2.5
2000	4	4.9
2001	3	3.7
2002	3	3.7
2003	2	2.5
2004	4	4.9
2005	7	8.6
2006	9	11.1
2008	11	13.6
2009	4	4.9
2010	2	2.5
2012	4	4.9
2014	16	19.8
2015	7	8.6
Total	81	100

Table 1 shows the distribution of master of library science dissertations by academic year. A total of eighty-one (81) dissertations were produced between 1996

and 2015. The 2014 academic year recorded the highest productivity of dissertations with sixteen (16) representing 19.8 percent

Table 2: Distribution of Dissertations by Subject Area

Subject Area of Dissertations	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Library Personnel Management	13	16
Library Services	10	12.2
Information Science	9	11.1
Library Resources	9	11.1
Information and Communication Tech.	7	8.6
Library Resources	5	6.2
Conservation/Preservation	4	4.9
Serial Librarianship	4	4.9
Library Administration	4	4.9
Collection Development	3	3.7
Library Services to Children/Adolescents	3	3.7
Library Automation	3	3.7
User Education	3	3.7
Library Standards	1	1.2
History of Libraries	1	1.2
Publishing and Book Trade	1	1.2
Library of Association	1	1.2
Library Profession		
Total	81	100

Table 2: shows the distribution of the subject areas of the dissertations, ranked in the order of their scores from the highest to the lowest. Library Personnel Management with 13 scores representing 16 percent, Library Services with 10 scores representing 12.3 percent, Information Science and Library Resources followed with Nine (9) scores, representing 11.1 percent each. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Libraries recorded seven (7) scores representing 8.6 percent. Library Resources

Conservation/Preservation recorded five (5) scores representing 6.2 percent. Serial Librarianship, Library Administration and Collection Development recorded four (4) scores representing 4.9 percent each. Library Automation, User Education, Library Services to Children Adolescents and Library Standards recorded three (3) scores representing 3.7 percent each. While History of Libraries, Library Association, Library Profession and Publishing and Book Trade recorded one score each representing 1.2 percent.

Table 3: Distribution of Dissertations by Type of Library

Types of Library	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Academic Library	59	68.6
Public Library	10	11.6
Special Library	6	7
School Library	5	5.8
None	5	5.8
Private Library	1	1.2
Total	86	100

Table 3 shows the distribution of dissertations by type of library covered. The table reveals that a total of 86 scores were recorded for the type of library covered by the dissertations. The figure 86 is above the total number of dissertations produced between 1996 and 2015 covered by the study. This increase is due to the fact that some of the dissertations covered more than one type of Library. The table further

revealed that Academic Library recorded the highest scores of 59 representing 68.6 percent; Public Library recorded 10 scores representing 11.6 percent. Five dissertations representing 5.8 percent did not focus on any type of library. Special Libraries recorded 6 scores representing 7 percent and School Library recorded 5 scores (5.8%) while Private Collection/Library recorded one score representing 1.2 percent.

Table 4 Distribution of Dissertations by Geographical Area

Geographical Area	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Borno State	32	35.6
Adamawa State	19	21.1
North-Eastern Nigeria	13	14.1
Bauchi State	5	5.6
Benue State	5	5.6
Gombe State	2	2.2
Kwara State	2	2.2
Niger State	2	2.2
Oyo State	2	2.2
Plateau State	2	2.2
Taraba State	2	2.2
Yobe State	2	2.2
Northern Nigeria	2	2.2
North-Western Nigeria	1	1.1
Republic of Cameroun	1	1.1
Total	90	100

Table 4 shows the distribution of dissertations by geographical area. The table reveals that the total of 90 scores was recorded for dissertations by geographical area covered. This is above the total number of dissertations 81 produced between 1996 and 2015 covered by the study. This increase is due to the fact that some of the dissertations covered more than one geographical area. The table further revealed that Borno State ranked first with 32 scores, representing 35.6 percent; Adamawa State 19 scores, representing 21.1 percent; North Eastern Nigeria 13 score, 14.4 percent, Bauchi and Benue State 5 scores each representing 5.6 percent. Gombe, Kwara, Niger, Oyo, Plateau, Taraba, and Yobe State had 2-scores each (2.2%) North Western Zone of Nigeria and the Republic of Cameroun had one score each representing 2.2 percent.

Discussion

Table 1 reveals that the department of library and information science, University of Maiduguri has produced eighty-one (81) dissertations in the master of library science programme, from 1996 and 2015. The subject-matter of the dissertations as shown in table 2 revealed that the most researched subject area was the Library

Personnel Management, followed by Information Science and Library Resources. The choice of Library Personnel Management as the most researched area among the postgraduate students could be probably associated to the fact that majority of these students are professionals managing various libraries and might have identified problems in the management of modern libraries, hence the interest to conduct research in the area. However it is not out of place to suggest to the Department to encourage prospective postgraduate students to carry research into other areas of specialisation such as Bibliographical Studies and Information Services, Organisation of Knowledge and Foundations of Library and Information Science, which are hitherto, yet to receive attention from the postgraduate students.

The distribution of dissertations by type of library covered as shown in table 3 revealed that Academic Librarianship is the type of library most widely focused in the dissertations. The interests in the Academic Library could be attributed to the fact that majority of these students are working in academic libraries in institutions of higher learning such as Universities, Polytechnics,

Monotechnics and Colleges of Education. Private Libraries had the least score despite the fact that numerous private collections of Islamic scholars and traditional rulers which are bound in Borno State. Also, Aguolu (1986) lamented that there are still many extant Arabic manuscripts, scattered here and there among Emirs, Alkalis and Mallams, these records, which are largely of a theological, legal or administrative nature, and vital for research. In a similar finding Mommoh (1993) in his study on statistical analysis of final year undergraduate library science projects at the University of Maiduguri rightly suggested that the department should encourage students to bring such collections to the lime-light. Also, the National Library of Nigeria is the type of library that did not receive focus at all in the dissertations analysed, hence the need for the department to encourage prospective students into the master of library science programme to take interest in conducting research.

The geographical areas focused in the dissertations as shown in table 4 revealed that Borno State is the most concentrated area covered by the dissertation, followed by Adamawa State, North-East Nigeria, Bauchi and Plateau

States. This finding may be likely due to the fact that the master of library science programme attracts more students in these states being the catchment area of the university and the only institution that offers master of library science programme in North-Eastern Zone of Nigeria. Benue, Gombe, Kwara, Niger, Oyo, Taraba , Yobe States , North Western zone of Nigeria and Republic of Cameroun recorded the least in the geographical focus of the dissertations. Similarly, the gender of the students who presented the dissertations revealed that majority 42 (51.9%) were male while 39 (48.1%) were female respectively.

Conclusion

The study analysed 81 masters of library and information science dissertations accepted by the School of Postgraduate Studies, University of Maiduguri, between 1996 and 2015 academic sessions. The analysis focused on productivity of dissertation by academic year, subject area and type of library, geographical area covered and gender of the students that presented the dissertations. The analysis revealed that the 2014 academic year recorded the highest productivity of dissertations with thirteen (13) representing 19.8 percent, the most researched subject

area was Library Personnel Management, the type of library most research was Academic Librarianship and Borno State was the most focused geographical area in the dissertations presented during the years covered by the study.

References

Afolabi, M. & Mohammed, Z. (1984). Subject and geographical analysis of final year undergraduate library science projects. *The Library Scientists* 2: 32-44

Aguolu, C.C. (1986). Public library services in Borno State: An assessment. *Annals of Borno* 3:67-80.

Fosu, V. K., & Ajemna, A A. (2006) An analytical study of masters dissertations on the Balme library, university of Ghana, Legon. *African Journal of Library Archive and Information Science* 16 (2) 71-78.

Mommoh, C. M. (1993). A statistical analysis of final year undergraduate library science projects at the university of Maiduguri, Nigeria *Annals of Borno* 8/9 96-103.

Department of Library Science (2000). Handbook of the master of library science programme: courses and regulations. Revised edition. Maiduguri: Department of Library Science. University of Maiduguri. 1-2

Department of Library Science (n.d). Handbook of the doctor of philosophy (PhD) in library science by research programme. Maiduguri: Department of Library Science, University of Maiduguri. 1-2. Entrepreneurship Education. *Journal of Business Venturing*, 12 (5), 403-421.