

RE-ASSESSING EDUCATION POLICY OF LIBRARIANS REGISTRATION COUNCIL OF NIGERIA (LRCN) FOR LIBRARIANS FOR GLOBAL BEST PRACTICE IN DELIVERY OF EFFECTIVE INFORMATION SERVICES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated re-assessing education policy of Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) for librarians for global best practice in delivery of effective information services Nigeria. The objectives of the study are: to determine education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for Librarians effective delivery of information service and to identify challenges education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for Librarians effective delivery of information service. This study was guided by descriptive research design. The study population consisted of 294 registered youths across various strata of the country. Simple random sampling in probability sampling techniques was used for this study and the sample size of the study was 169. The findings of the study indicated that the education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria have improve in recent times to provides guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for professional development of libraries for effective information service delivery. The study also found that challenges education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for librarians' effective delivery of information service were still prominent among the respondents. The study concludes that that the education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria have improve in recent times to provides guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for professional development of libraries for effective information service delivery. It's recommends that There is the needs for training and continuous training on adequate education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for librarians effective delivery of information service.

Keywords: Education Policy Librarians, Librarians Registration Council of Nig., Information Services

Introduction

Education as an instrument for development has been the great force used by man to bring about positive changes in the society. This is why government, individuals and corporate bodies have provided education policies for best practices. These policies could be standards, professionalism, resources, skills and productivity. Libraries and librarians are engine room of education. This is because libraries as social institutions responsible for

systematic selection, acquisition, organization, and dissemination for achieving the goals of effective learning. To some scholars and writers, libraries are communication system whose basic function is to prepare, transmit and inform individuals and societies of the available knowledge and ideas useful for the overall development of mental and physical abilities through sustainable education policies (Adamu, 2023). It was a general consensus among many schools of thought that no society can develop in all phenomenon without the library because the concept of information, knowledge, ideas, and wisdom, which are by-products of education which are centered on reading and learning, emanate from libraries. Writers like Madu and Adeniran (2006) and Alex-Nwecha and Horsfall (2019) supported this assertion by agreeing that libraries are associated with the concept of acquisition and storage of literary output as a by-product of formal education and literary development. Therefore, re-assessing the policy on education cannot be overemphasized without focusing on activities of Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) towards providing policy framework for librarians. Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria is a regulatory body for Library and Information Science professionals, which was enacted into law by degree 12 of 1995 and was signed into law by the then head of state in the person of General Sani Abacha. LRCN is a parastatal under the ministry of education and the body is charged with responsibilities that are geared towards ensuring best professional practices and standardization among and within library and information profession. It also performs other functions which include the publication of minimum standard requirement for all types of libraries among others. In 2014 the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Education published the minimum standard and guidelines for practicing librarians in Nigeria; these minimum standards contain the essential requirement that every librarians in Nigeria to acquire and assess resources both human and material resources in order to meet the information needs of users (Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria, 2014). LRCN standards stated the acceptable minimum standards and guidelines for university library systems which are as follows: university library personnel and library services. However, gaps still exist as lack of framework on education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria due to poor guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for professional development for effective information service delivery are still prominent among professional development of librarians.

Literature Review

Education is an important instrument for social, economic, political transformation and sustainability in any society. Librarians are the bedrock of any educational policy and national development. This is because through educational policy, librarians are transformed into finished product as a custodian of knowledge. The provision of resources, services, policies and other activities have assisted librarians to bridge the gaps in information service delivery in the libraries. The standards and quality of education in any nation does not only count on policy directives or standards but more importantly depends on quality of information service delivery as well as skills and competencies of librarians. It is on this basis that Librarians Registration Council was established not only to provide policy framework that would guide the operations of librarians but also to provide concretize educational policy

that would enable librarians to contribute meaningfully in national development. The standards for the librarians in Nigeria are set out by the Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN). Librarian Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) is a regulatory body established with the responsibility of overseeing the activities and practices of all librarians and types of libraries (LRCN, 2015). LRCN is charged with the task of ensuring best professional practices and ensuring that standards are maintained among and within library and library professions. They set out the standards that every library is expected to take in delivery or carrying out their functions. Although, these standards are expected to be in conformity with the international bodies, they are slightly restructured to suit the local needs of the public libraries in Nigeria (LRCN 2015). It is to be noted that the standards serve as a pathway in teaching and assisting Librarians toward providing effective and efficient public library service delivery as no two communities are the same (Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria 2015). The LRCN standard covers different sections of the library, including the area of library furniture and equipment. Library furniture and equipment are those gadgets used to furnish the library. Adequate and suitable furniture and equipment should be provided; it could be purchased through vendors or locally made but meet up with the international standard, for both print information resources and computer laboratories. There should be comfortable chairs, reading tables, book shelves, periodical racks, study carrels, newspaper racks, kardex, catalogue cabinets and so on (LRCN, 2015). There should be room furnished with couch where users can relax and read newspapers. Suitable reading chairs and tables should be in the children's section to ease their reading, story hour programs and group discussions with colleagues.

Assessment could be seen as a determinant of the importance, size, value of something, be it an organization, institution, programs or libraries. Wright and Fagan (2014) defined library assessment as the means used by library personnel to assess what resources human or materials they have in the library and the services being rendered to its users. The assessment is used to assess how and how well they are serving their users. Connaway, Harvey, Kitzi, and Mikitish (2017) conceptualized assessment as examining how library facilities which could be material or human impact are perceived by library users, Connaway, Harvey, Kitzi, and Mikitish they are of the opinion that assessment is fundamental for positioning academic libraries within an institution and effectively demonstrating how the library further projects the parent's institution's goals. The library strives to re-assess accessibility through resource sharing and networking. The library also engage in those activities that promote gainful use of the library resources so as to meet the information needs of the users such as readership campaign, library shelf guides, orientations and current awareness programs. It is obvious that the quality of personnel in the library will determine to a great extent the services that will be provided. It is therefore vital that competent hands are employed in the university libraries for effective information dissemination. Services provided by librarians as recommended by LRCN minimum Standards and guidelines (2014) are those services guided by education policy to enhance information service delivery. The standards and guidelines opined that services that will be provided in the academic libraries should be directly related to the vision and mission of their parent institutions. The library is expected to meet the various services that will aid the teaching, learning and research at the

university. Therefore, LRCN enumerated some of the services that should be provided for the university community, these services include: circulation, inter-library loan, reference services, current awareness, selective dissemination of information (SDI), user-Education, literature search, compilation of bibliographies, indexing and abstracting, knowledge management, preservation and conservation, bindery services, information literacy, e-library services, translation services. These were among the services that LRCN listed for university libraries to provide for their users. Madu and Adeniran (2005) stated that library services are the services that are rendered by the library personnel to meet the information needs of its patrons; library services provide information in all its ramification of knowledge to its customers. Somarata and Peiris (2011) opined that library services are those services that the library personnel render to the library users, which could be done physical or virtually and they include but not limited to current awareness services, referral services, repacking of information, selective dissemination of information, document delivery services and bindery services. Services must be planned in such a way that, the users provided for will be opportune to access and make proper use of it, hence the university libraries should as a matter of fact, provide services that will be beneficial to their user community.

Theoretical Approach

This study adopts Inclusive and social responsibility theory to examine re-assessing education of Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) policy for librarians' global best practice in Nigeria. The proponents of the theory believe that the whole library organization has to be committed to offering excellent service through policy framework. The theory outline what would constitute successful service delivery, and they point to the importance of evaluating appropriate policy programme. The theory demonstrates that there are opportunities to develop partnerships with other community bodies and government agencies, and some of the programmes they mention show great creativity (Holt and Holt, 2010). The idea of social responsibility basically encompasses ethical dimensions. Libraries and librarians have the opportunity to provide for the human dignity of these persons and form relationships that will make the library policy an important part of their lives. As has been seen above, a better planning model and a more strategic communication and discourse, along with library organizations' commitment to eradicating barriers to inclusivity, are an essential part of building an enthusiastic working culture as well as raising awareness, thus offering support mechanisms in order to reach all members of our diverse communities. For Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN), social responsibility concerns meeting human needs through training, regulations and it involves the social dimensions of library and information services as well as how these influences improving the quality of librarians for better information service delivery. Many librarians and library staff now recognize that they are responsible to any group or individual who are impacted by or who impact their institution (DuMont, 1991; Rendtorff, 2009). The theoretical framework of this study is depicted as follows.

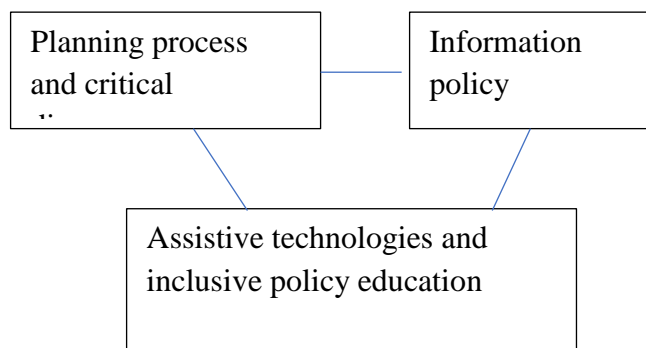


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework for Library Social Responsibility

Planning process and Critical discourse Social initiatives can enable people from all walks of life to unite around common objectives. Indeed, librarians across the globe have worked towards community-building and to empower the have-nots to possess materials they do not yet have. Library planning models have been used since 1987 that have been rather successful. For instance, a model that offers a list of services responses can communicate the ways in which a library meets the needs of specific communities. A way in which these services responses have been carried out and disseminated is through the creation of an authentic discourse which is critical and can be analyzed. Discourse analysis views a prevailing social order and social processes as constituted and sustained less by the will of individuals than by the pervasiveness of particular constructions or versions of reality, referred to as discourses. Justice, as a social virtue, is an important component of moral judgments and plays a critical role in inclusive or global education. The core values of librarianship include social equity and justice, democracy, the public good, and diversity. One of the important drivers of educational innovation and social inclusion is the school library, as it has competency in the logical organization of information. The educational problem where formal education is invested in the globalized information society is not only that of guaranteeing access to information, but rather that of evaluating and comparing whether and how a school knows how to form students who know how to understand, re-elaborate, digest, and use this information. Assistive technologies (AT) have a significant place in providing equal opportunities for persons with disability in all facets of life, because AT can compensate for their various limitations and contribute to lowering the barriers in all types of settings. A lot of the information is found in, or with the help of, web-based indices and databases in today's technology-rich education environment. For instance, the shifting of library databases and indices to networks online has created hitherto unavailable opportunities for persons with all sorts of disabilities. The extent to which these new opportunities become realized, however, depends largely on the design of the web environment (Koulikourdi, 2008; Stewart et al., 2005).

Statement of the Problem

Education policy serves as instrument of development for the nation. Education therefore is the backbone for sustainable development and determinant of technological, political and socio-economic development of any nation. This is because no country can grow above the level of its education. No country can also achieve sound policy on education without investment in librarianship. Libraries are the heart of educational advancement and development. While education is the key to potential development, providing policy that would guide the activities for librarians enhance effective information service delivery. However, poor policy led to poor information service delivery of librarians. The central argument in various studies indicated that many librarians in developing countries especially Nigeria find it difficult to compete with others because of lack of required policy standardization and education (Raju, 2017; Hussain, 2019). Therefore, this study became necessary to identify and Re-assessed education of Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) policy for librarians for global best practice in delivery of effective information services Nigeria

Objectives of the Study

1. To determine education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for Librarians effective delivery of information service
2. To identify challenges education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for Librarians effective delivery of information service

Methodology

This study was guided by descriptive research design. The study population consisted of 294 Librarians across various libraries on the education policy of Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria policy for effective information service delivery. Simple random sampling in probability sampling techniques was used for this study. Probability sampling is a sampling technique that permits the researcher to specify the probability or chance, that each member of a defined population that were selected for the sample (Croswell, 2012). According table1, a sample size for a population of 294 to 300 (N) is 169 (S). 'N' is a population size and 'S' is a sample size. However, the Librarians across various libraries on the education policy of Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria policy for effective information service delivery are 294 which fall under the range of 169 as given in the Krejcie and Morgan's table. Therefore, the sample size of the youths is 169. Therefore One-hundred and sixty-nine copies of a structured questionnaire were randomly distributed to the study population of the respondents across the country. Of the 169 copies of the questionnaire administered, 110 copies were returned. Data analysis was done using frequency count and simple percentages. Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software version 24.0 was used as tool for data analysis in research.

Results

This section is concerned with data presentation, analysis, interpretation and discussion of findings. The results are presented and analyzed based on the objectives of the study.

Research Objective 1: To determine education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for Librarians effective delivery of information service

The first objective sought to determine education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for librarians' effective delivery of information service. To address this objective the researcher identified sub- themes that addressed education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for librarians effective delivery of information service. The respondents were given statements to answer by stating their level of agreement with them using a scale: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) =3, Disagree (D)=2 and , Strongly Disagree (SD)= 1 respectively. Table 1 shows the statements that the respondents were presented with and how they responded

Table 1: Education Policy for Librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria

| Education Policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria | Strongly Agree | Agree | Strongly Disagree | Disagree |
|--|----------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| | Count% | Count% | Count% | Count% |
| The education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria provides platform for the delivery of quality library and information services that would promote curriculum contents for librarians | 39 (35.4%) | 29 (26.3%) | 24 (21.8%) | 18 (16.3%) |
| The education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria enhance professional excellence by determining professionalism in information service delivery | 38 (34.5%) | 28 (25.4%) | 25 (22.7%) | 19 (17.2%) |
| The education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria provides guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for professional development of libraries for effective information service delivery | 37 (33.65) | 32 (29.0%) | 23 (20.9%) | 18 (16.3%) |
| The education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria provides platform for increase collaboration and resource sharing by libraries for effective information service delivery | 22 (20.0%) | 15 (13.6%) | 45 (40.9%) | 28 (25.4%) |
| The education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria facilitates the growth and development of librarians for effective information service delivery | 39 (35.5%) | 29 (26.3%) | 24 (21.8%) | 18 (16.3%) |

| | | | | |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| The education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria set standards of knowledge and skills required for effective practice in information service delivery | 39 (35.4%) | 29 (26.3%) | 24 (21.8%) | 18 (16.3%) |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|

Source: field data, 2023

The findings revealed that 68 (61.8%) of the respondents indicated that the education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria provides platform for the delivery of quality library and information services that would promote curriculum contents for librarians, while 42 (38.1%) had a divergent view. Similarly, the finding also showed that 66 (60%) of the respondents revealed that the education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria enhance professional excellence by determining professionalism in information service delivery, while 44 (40%) had contrary view. On the aspect of the education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria provides guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for professional development of libraries for effective information service delivery, 69 (62.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, while 41 (37.2%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The findings also reveals that 68 (61.8%) of the respondents shows that strongly agree or agree that the education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria provides platform for increase collaboration and resource sharing by libraries for effective information service delivery, while 42 (38.1%) strongly disagree or disagree with the statement. On the aspects of the education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria facilitates the growth and development of librarians for effective information service delivery, (61.8%) of agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, while 42 (38.1%) indicated otherwise. Also 66 (60%) of the respondents indicated that they are lazy when it comes to reading and also consider those attending western education as wasting time, while 44 (40%) of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. The findings also revealed that 68 (61.8%) of the respondents indicated that the education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria set standards of knowledge and skills required for effective practice in information service delivery, while 42 (38.1%) had a divergent view. The findings of this study Implies that the education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria have improve in recent times to provides guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for professional development of libraries for effective information service delivery.

Research Objective 2: To identify challenges education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for Librarians effective delivery of information service

Table 2: Challenges education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for Librarians effective delivery of information service

| challenges education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for Librarians effective delivery of information service | Strongly Agree | Agree | Strongly Disagree | Disagree |
|---|----------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| | Count% | Count% | Count% | Count% |
| Poor policy on education led to poor policy framework of Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria to enhance professional excellence in information service deliver | 39 (35.4%) | 29 (26.3%) | 24 (21.8%) | 18 (16.3%) |
| The inconsistency in education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria enhance poor professional excellence by in information service delivery | 37 (33.65) | 32 (29.0%) | 23 (20.9%) | 18 (16.3%) |
| Lack of framework on education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria led to poor guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for professional development for effective information service delivery | 38 (34.5%) | 28 (25.4%) | 25 (22.7%) | 19 (17.2%) |
| Poor knowledge of education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for effective information service delivery | 45 (40.9%) | 38 (25.4%) | 25 (22.7%) | 19 (17.2%) |
| Poor skills education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria set poor standards of knowledge and skills required for effective practice in information service delivery | 39 (35.5%) | 29 (26.3%) | 24 (21.8%) | 18 (16.3%) |

Source: field data, 2023

The finding aligned with the gaps identified in the literature, the respondents identify challenges education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for librarians' effective delivery of information service. This was demonstrated as 68 (61.8%) of the respondents revealed that poor policy on education led to poor policy framework of Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria to enhance professional excellence in information service deliver While, 42 (38.1%) of the respondents had different perspectives with the statement. Also, 83 (75.4%) of the respondents also agreed that inconsistency in education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria enhance poor professional excellence by in information service delivery, while 27 (24.5%) had a divergent opinion. On the aspects of Lack of framework on education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria led to poor guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for professional development for effective information service delivery, 68 (61.8%) of the respondents accept the statement while 86 (38.1%) claimed otherwise. Similarly, 66 (60.0%) of the respondents indicated poor knowledge of education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for effective information service delivery, while 44 (40.0%) disagreed with the statement. Again, 68 (61.8%) of the respondents also indicates that they have poor skills education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria set poor standards of knowledge and

skills required for effective practice in information service delivery, while 42 (38.1%) of the respondents disagreed with the statement. This implies that challenges education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for librarians' effective delivery of information service were still prominent among the respondents.

Discussion of findings

Objective one of the studies was to determine education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for librarians' effective delivery of information service. The study found that education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria provides platform for the delivery of quality library and information services that would promote curriculum contents for librarians. The study also shows that the education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria enhance professional excellence by determining professionalism in information service delivery. The study also revealed that the education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria provides guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for professional development of libraries for effective information service delivery. The finding is in line with a study by LRCN (2022) mandates which revealed that education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria facilitates the growth and development of librarians for effective information service delivery through training and retraining for libraries and librarians across Nigeria. In a same development, Premium Times (2023) indicates that the policy framework of LRCN had improves in recent times due to consistent approach towards developing new skills and knowledge for librarians to remain relevant in their work place.

Objective two also revealed that poor policy on education led to poor policy framework of Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria to enhance professional excellence in information service deliver. The findings of the study also indicated that the inconsistency in education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria enhance poor professional excellence by in information service delivery. The finding of the study also justified that Lack of framework on education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria led to poor guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for professional development for effective information service delivery. The findings of this study is in line with the National Policy on Education, 2014, revived edition) who stated that despite challenges confronting the educational policy on LRCN. The policy maintained that libraries are established in the country (including Librarian Registration Council of Nigeria) provide the basic aim of enriching the mind and intellectual well-being of every librarians as well as to promote the literary development of the individual and society at large. UNESCO (2022) reports is of the view that libraries are established in the country with the view to promote literacy through reading and research as well as promote the reading abilities of students as well as researchers as well as reviving the readers club to boost value of reading and learning as a central element of academic achievement of individuals. The findings also corroborates with the policy statement of the Federal Ministry of Education which makes it clear that the promotion of reading culture is one of the top priorities of the Ministry's mandate. This is reflected in Pillar 10 (Library Service in Education) of the ministry mandate whose aim is to enhance the culture of reading for personal and societal development.

Conclusions

Quality education cannot be achieved without setting policy and standards for development. This is because education policy is core issues in educational advancement of any nation. This is a demonstration of Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) in creating public education of librarians towards effective information service delivery. Despite gaps established in the literature on inconsistency policy towards educational policy towards librarians as stated by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria guidelines towards development. The study concludes that The findings of this study provides that the education policy for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria have improve in recent times to provides guidelines for accreditation and minimum standards for professional development of libraries for effective information service delivery. This study also concludes that challenges education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for librarians' effective delivery of information service were still prominent among the librarians towards effective information service delivery.

Recommendations

1. There is the needs for training and continuous training on adequate education policy for librarians as provided by Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for librarians effective delivery of information service
2. There is the needs for Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria for librarians to re-assess librarians education and skills towards effective delivery of information service

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