THE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING POTENTIALITIES IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROFESSION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract
This paper examines the guidance and counseling potentialities in library and information science profession. In the paper various issues were discussed, including a review of library profession in Nigeria, an overview of different forms of libraries, the current challenges in the library profession, a brief synopsis of guidance and counseling, importance of guidance and counseling to library profession and the guidance and counseling potentialities in library profession in Nigeria.

Keywords: guidance and counseling, potentialities, Library, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION
Guidance and counseling as an educational process provides organized transmission of collective knowledge from one generation to another. It can specially equip professionals with skills and knowledge to face challenges of the library profession. Library profession serves as acme of dynamic or static information powerhouse (Allyson, Susan, Nathan, Patrick, Brett, Tracy, and Patricia, 2015) because in the new millennium, library services have changed from mere to repositories of knowledge global gateway in accessing organized resources. Consequently, guidance and counseling through is various services can prepare the library workers to adjust to the technological advancements and challenges of digitization, e-resources as well as assist them to adjust from the ancient use of library pattern with books shelves.
In addition, guidance and counseling services can ameliorate the condition of library staff especially catalogues, who, over the years their skills, knowledge and numerical strength has generated a serious concern about profession worldwide. Consequently, their task of providing efficient and timely access, and harmonizing bibliographic control of all library databases suffer a setback. This situation is further complicated with decline in educational training that further eroded skill development and consequently decreases cataloger proficiency for information management (Gorman, 2012; Intner, 2012 and Saye, 2012).

In Nigeria the problem is aggravated by unsatisfactory learning conditions and training infrastructures, as well as apathetic attitude to cataloging courses both by educators and students alike (Nwalo, 2005; Okorafor & Iheaturu, 2005). Subsequently, the catalogers are assumed to be of lacking adequate and sufficient skills needed to perform their duties.

Guidance and counseling provide information to different clients regardless of the profession they belong to. Library profession in Nigeria is recently affected by some phenomenal changes. These changes can be non-phenomenal with awareness through guidance and counseling. For instance, the planned changes with Kargbo (1999) identified include the expanding, frontiers of knowledge the need for skills on improvement in the application of modern technologies and the increased awareness and complexity in demand for information by the society, which the library exists to serve.

To address this, guidance and counseling need to raise the awareness of the librarian on the pressing need to acquire information and knowledge on the library and information manpower towards a sustainable professional competence. Hence, the need to be equipped with necessary skills and competence to satisfy the high level, complex and ever-growing multifarious information needs of the users. Until librarians explore ICT skills, they will not have greater access to rich and diverse range of electronic library and information services.

**HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF LIBRARY PROFESSION IN NIGERIA**

For educational institutions to serve their role of centres academic excellence, they most depend on the services provided by libraries in form
of providing all the relevant information resources necessary for sustaining the teaching, learning and research functions of these institutions. The academic, and health, intellectual vitality effectiveness of theses educational institutions in producing high qualify graduates to the labour market depend largely on the quality of information resources available in their libraries to support the teaching, learning and research activities. Library profession as observed by Aguolu (1986).

Most make available essential information including the possession of a specialized body of knowledge and skills acquired during a prolonged period of education and training; existence of an effective guideline for admission into the profession and training requirements, licensing and other formal requirements, and career lines, professional autonomy or discretion of numbers to take final decisions in their areas of competence; a code of ethics, regulation of relations of professionals with their clients and colleagues, service orientation and assurance of public or societal recognition. It was in the 19th Century that librarians emerged as a professional group in USA. Furthermore, Harris (1970) stated that between 1949 and 1950, the new profession of librarianship was born in Nigeria and was christened in 1953. The UNESCO Seminar on Public Library Development in Africa was held at Ibadan, Nigeria in 1953. This seminar gave birth to the formation of the West African Library Association, comprising Anglophone countries of West Africa. With the attainment of independence by Ghana and Nigeria from Britain in 1957 and 1960 respectively, the Ghana Library Association and Nigerian Library Association were subsequently formed. The birth of these two National Associations led to the dissolution of the West African Library Association in 1961.

Library education in Nigeria is very much tied up with the general socio-historical country. As such, those who aspired to become librarians went to Britain to qualify for the Associate of the Library Association (ALA). The library profession in Nigeria can be traced back to the Nigerian pre-colonial era. In 1900, the justice ministry Library was established in Lagos out of the need for bibliographic control of growing colonial legal documents. The only library then was the European Community or Club library whose membership was restricted to the Europeans except for non-Europeans.
who could afford a registration fee of one guinea per adult. This prohibitive
cost led to consultations with the colonial government and Lagos Town
Council about the possibility of setting up a new library for Lagos. In 1948,
the British Council opened the Lagos Municipal Library (L.M.C). After three
years of joint management, the British Council handed over the library to
the Lagos Municipal Council in 1952 (Harris, 1970).
However with the attainment of independence in 1960, the country
witnessed the establishment of tertiary institutions at various levels. The
first library school was established at University College Ibadan in 1960.
Equally, the stage for the development of library profession in Nigeria was
set up with the arrival of John Harris as the librarian of the University
College Ibadan, in 1948. He was not only instrumental to the development
of the University College Library, but also organized the Native Authority
Libraries, the first organized Library Training course in 1950. (Dean
(1966) cited in (Harris, 1970). Similarly in 1952, Joan Allen organized a
course for reading room attendants under the Northern Regional Library
Service, while the Eastern Regional Library Board, which was created in
1935, introduced a training course for library assistants in 1956.
The UNESCO seminar on Public Library Development in Africa held in 1953
at Ibadan was another turning point in the history of librarianship in the
country. Aguolu and Mohammed (1987), observed that “it laid the
foundation of modern libraries in Nigeria and help crystallize the concept
of the library profession and librarianship itself.”
Similarly, it was established that some education and training of library
personnel stated in libraries in Nigerian before 1950; the formal library
education program was not introduced until 1960. Before 1960 Nigerian
trained librarians received their education in Great Britain by taking the
Library Association Associateship examinations as external candidates.
The first recorded training course in Nigeria was organized by the
University college of Ibadan Library for local authority librarians. The
institute later became the Ibadan University Library School. The first
prospectus of the school stated that: “The course has been established to
help the development of libraries by training librarians and to investigate
problems of librarianship and bibliography with special reference to West
Africa and with special attention to the leadership level”.

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The decision of the Ibadan school to give priority to training at the leadership level and therefore postgraduate level aroused some controversy in Nigeria. The admission requirements for the candidate were literacy in English and Middle II (the equivalent of eight years of education). The UNESCO Public Library Seminar gave impetus to concrete discussion on planning for library development in Africa. The Ideas on Library education formulated at this seminar have since formed the basis for library education objectives in Nigeria.

It apparently became clear that in the mid of 1970s the two existing library schools despite their parallel philosophical orientation cannot meet the nation’s library needs. Thus, in 1977 and 1978 two additional library schools were established at Bayero University Kano and University of Maiduguri respectively. Presently, there are over fifty institutions including Universities (Federal, States and Private) Polytechnics and Colleges across the country that offer Library and information science programs at certificate, ordinary, national and higher diploma, degree and higher degree levels. The proliferation of library programmes in different types of institutions can be seen as a good development for the profession as this has given rise to divergent opinions on the education of librarians especially from the perspectives of curriculum, resources and faculty.

The importance of information resources in the education of any discipline cannot be over-emphasized. At this stage of the profession’s development in Nigeria the need to focus attention on the adequacy of information resources produced locally rather than foreign is imminent. At the moment Dipeolu (1975) stated that “it is hardly an exaggeration to observe that more than ninety percent of books purchased by African university libraries emanate from Europe and America. The remaining 10% or less is published in different parts of Africa. “This is a dangerous trend in library education in the country. Thus, while the issue of relevance and appropriateness is emphasized, it might be difficult to embrace them entirely since majority of such resources are published outside the country. Bozimo (1985) stated that “our commitment to the proper training of future generations of library professionals require that we as educators find and create the literature that will serve as effective learning tools, the literature in other words, that is relevant to our educational purposes.”
OVERVIEW OF DIFFERENT FORMS OF LIBRARIES
The realization of the enormous power of information has made libraries and information resources centers inevitably present in all sectors of a nation’s economy. Today, libraries are found in all the three levels of our educational system including public libraries, research institutions and private organizations such as banks and insurance companies (Umar, 2004). Libraries have always served as tools for educational advancement at all levels of education (Akintunde, 2004). This is because libraries contain information which is a vital tool for the pursuit of academic excellence at all levels of education.

In Nigeria, libraries are found in all levels of education from primary to secondary school levels and up to tertiary institutions. Libraries are tools for all round development being the intellectual centre of any school. Ibrahim (1997), sees the school library as a place in the primary and secondary schools where a full range of materials and accompanying services are accessible to both teachers and students. It represents the unified programme involving the use of audio-visual, printed resources and tools necessary to satisfy the educational needs and recreational interests of pupils, students and their teachers. This include a variety of information resources such as textbooks, journals, reference books, multimedia which are selected systematically, organized and disseminated to pupils, students and teachers with the sole aim of supporting and enriching with the sole aim of supporting and enriching the school curriculum (Umar, 2004).

The federal government of Nigeria realizes the importance of libraries to educational development, hence as far back as 1981, it stressed the need for school libraries in the Nigerian educational system in the national policy of educational and reiterated this further in the revised National Policy of Education, (1998) as follows: As libraries are one of the most important educational services, proprietors of schools shall provide functional libraries in all their educational institutions, in accordance with the established standards. They shall also provide for training librarians and library assistants for this service.
In tertiary institutions of learning which include colleges of education, polytechnics, universities, research institutes, libraries have been the centre of intellectual activities, convergence for both staff and students. Akintunde (2004) observed that libraries in many tertiary institutions have either earned the institutions accreditation or failed attaining because of their roles as tools for academic excellence. The libraries in tertiary institutions assist in the discharge of acquiring the varied and relevant and in-depth information resources necessary for pursuing the teaching, learning research, as well as provide public services that enable them to produce high caliber of graduates into the labour market for national development. Thus, academic institutions play a major role in the manpower development of any nation through providing high, low and middle level manpower for the acceleration of social, economic and political advancement of a nation.

According to Edoka (2000), the general functions of academic libraries are as follows:

a) To provide information materials required for the academic programmes of the parent institution;

b) To provide research information resources in consonance with the needs of faculty and research students;

c) To provide information resources for recreation and for personal self-development of users;

d) To provide study accommodation in a useful variety of locations;

e) To provide protection and security for these materials;

f) To co-operate with other libraries at appropriate levels for improved information service delivery.

g) To provide specialized information service to appropriate segments of the wider community

The public library is an organization which is established, supported and funded by the community either through local, regional or national government or through some other form of community organization. It provides access to knowledge, information and works of imagination through a wide range of resources and services making it available equally to all members of the community regardless of race, nationality, age,
gender, religion, language, disability, economic and employment status and educational attainment. (IFLA Publications, 1997).

National and public libraries are regarded as the people’s university being the local gateway to knowledge, providing opportunities for lifelong learning, independent decision making and cultural development of individual and social groups (Oyegade, Nasarawa and Mokogwu, 2003), the public library seeks to meet a wide variety of readers needs, providing varied information resources such as textbooks, journals, literary books, etc. The collections also contain information on social sciences, reference work; recreational information and extension services. In this way, the public library functions as a ready source of information on all activities in all walks of life for people to take advantage of in decision making for development activities and for educational advancement.

Special libraries are libraries established in governmental and private institutions to help manage information resources for the benefit of workers and the institution so that the goals of these special libraries can be attained. Special libraries can be grouped into the following categories: private educational institutions, international organizations, foreign governments, in the governmental and professional associations, etc (Ajibero, 2001). Special libraries contribute to national development by providing in depth and relevant information resources for scientists, researchers, government officials, business executives, lawyers, etc, so that they can have the necessary information at the right time to effectively and efficiently carry out their research and the duties that would impact positively on the development of the nation. This category of people is in constant need of quick and relevant information to resolve issues and take decision.

In this regard, special libraries house information resources such as books, periodicals, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, documents, manuscripts, pictures, maps, musical scores, non-print media such as transparencies, slides, records, audio-cassettes, microfiches, microfilms, filmstrips, motion pictures, video cassettes and in recent times, computers and the associated peripherals.

On general note, libraries whether academic institutional, public and special serve the basic purpose of promoting knowledge and academic
excellence which guidance and counseling as profession can play significant towards that direction.

CURRENT CHALLENGES IN THE LIBRARY PROFESSION
As Kargbo (1999) observed, the changes affecting librarianship especially in recent times were phenomenal. These changes include: expanding frontiers of knowledge, the improvement in and application of modern technology and hardware, and the increased awareness and complexity in demand for information by the society the library exists to serve among other lead to implication of the need to education and train the library and information manpower towards a sustainable professional competence and production of manpower that will meet in the near future the new challenges on the impact of information technology on library and information science envisages in making substantial contribution to the ever-perpetuating information society. Consequently, the changes that affect the field of librarianship further greener the need to equip the library personnel with necessary skills and competence to satisfy the high level, complex and ever-growing multifarious information needs of the users.

However, another negative challenges librarianship is capacity building. Library and information services over the years, has had its share of capacity problems. The common place nature of dilapidated and ill equipped libraries and information centre’s in human and material terms, are evidences of weak capacity. The challenges thrust upon library and information services by globalization, digitization and indeed information and communication technology use, has largely necessitated the need for capacity building and utilization initiatives and programmers. This will only achieve positive results if done on a long term. The situation of built capacity in Nigerian libraries and information centres leave much to be cherished. The human and institutional dimensions of it, reminds one that a great deal of works needs to be done, Nawe (1996) described the situation of built capacity in the field as laxity on the part of library and information managers and professionals in striking a balance between planning for resources in general and human resources which she added, has substantially contributed to professional slowness in facing up to challenges.
In view of this, the library and information science course faced various challenges which demand for review in its philosophy and content continuously so as to respond to the changing realities of the workplace and to the changing roles and expectations of the information professional. Similarly, Burke and Peter (1992) opened another “challenge to the profession they stated that, it is clear that student come to the course with sometimes, vague expectations, often base on elderly ideas of what the library profession involves, or with a fixed intention to follow down a specific road”.

Consequently, there is need for the emergence of the library and information science curriculum which would shape the new philosophies, and foster new attitudes in the library profession. This need has identified as one of the most significant aspects of the evolution of librarianship in the 21st Century (Kargbo, 1999). However, the problems identified by Alasa and Kelechukwu (1999), as militating against the use of information technology and creates challenges to libraries in Nigeria and creates challenges to library profession include the following:

- a) Poor and inadequate telecommunication facilities;
- b) Poor level of computer literacy even within the academic community;
- c) Poor community facilities;
- d) Low level of awareness of internet facilities in the academic community;
- e) Minimum involvement of academic institutions in network building and diffusion in Africa;
- f) Ignorance of decision or policy makers on the power of information network on the economic and industrial development of a nation.

Zakari (1997) has also identified gross under-funding of libraries as a major obstacle in the acquisition and application of information technology in their services. The challenges highlighted above raised a lot of implication, particularly on the integration of some discipline into especially guidance and counseling which provide some services that assist the library and information profession to serve as a catalyst for academic development for national development.
GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING IN NIGERIAN

The most significant giant stride in the field for education at the end of 19th Century and beginning of 20th Century is the guidance movement. It begins with the first systematic work of George Mervill in 1885 at the California School of Mechanical in San Francisco, and the works of Frank Parsons (1908) on provision of vocational assistance to young people. The ideas of these two pioneers of guidance and counseling can be translated into three aspects of modern terminology, namely: the appraisal of the individuals, the furnishing or occupational information and the provision of counseling (Salawu, 2008).

Guidance and counseling is a relatively new discipline but fast growing profession in Nigerian educational scene. The beginning of this discipline in Nigeria can be date back to 1959 when a group of catholic sisters of St. Theresa’s College, Oke-Ado Ibadan felt the need to provide vocational guidance and placement to their final year students (Makinde, 1984). The effort of the catholic sisters led to the formation of the nucleus of the then Ibadan Careers Council. Because of its national outlook, the council changed its name to Nigerian Careers Council and by the 11th day of December, 1976 the counseling Association of Nigeria (CASSON) was inaugurated. One of the objectives of CAASSON is to promote effective guidance and counseling in the interest of individuals and society (Okon, 1984). Guidance and counseling therefore, intends to cater for the individuals regardless of age, area of specialization and profession.

It is important to note that before the advent of modern guidance and counseling in the 1959 in this country, there was the existence of what is popularly referred as “traditional counseling”. Most of the societies have been held together by “traditional helpers” and they provide important services to the local people in their communities. They are known by various names depending on the locality which they names depending on the locality which they operate. They are the “Babalawos Dibia” ”Alfa”, “Ebra idiong”, “Abia ibok”, “Tsibbu”, “Bokayes, Prophets, fortune tellers and host of others” (Okon, 1984; Salawu, 2008).

Most of these people apart from being recognized by many Nigerians as those who could help others when they have personal concerns and problems which they said could solve easily, the equally provides some
elements of guidance and counseling in form of giving advice and sharing wisdom. That is, they provide traditional counseling. In the modern sense’ counseling goes beyond giving advice and showing wisdom. But the point of difference between modern and traditional counseling is that in the traditional counseling, the counselor is seen as having solution to the client’s problem. But the best the counselor can do is to assist the client to have an insight to the possible cause of his/her problem and how to go finding solutions to it (Salawu, 2008).

**IMPORTANCE OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING TO LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROFESSION**

The guidance and counseling at the moment in the Nigerian educational system can prepare students at different level of education to have a good understanding of the functioning and significance of libraries and other information media and their uses. Knowledge of the importance of libraries will enable children to learn to use, react to, select, reject, classify, check, interpret and search for information.

Similarly, through the use of functional information services, guidance and counseling can provide pupils and students with the skills on how to navigate their ways through libraries and the world of information including the use of ICT. They should be taught not simply to reproduce knowledge from information sources but to construct knowledge in new and creative ways. They also need digital literacy. This is the ability of an individual to identify any information required to satisfy a need, know how to use computers and digital systems to source the information as well as know how to use the information collected to adjust the current global changes. These are the skills that would empower the products of our educational system to fit well into the modern industrial system to which highly skilled manpower has become indispensable which a functional information service can equip and empower the pupils and student.

Moreover, the modern societies now depend, to a large extent, on intensive information transfer by means of Information Communication Technologies (ICT). Therefore, Nigerian students must be given the kind of training that assist them to have sufficient understanding of the technology that powers the information society. Thus, guidance and counseling
programme need to focus on information literacy programme which encourage incorporation into curriculum of schools to provide students with a wider range of information handling skills which encompass accessing, processing and retrieving relevant, timely and accurate information to meet their needs. Such skills will empower students to be conscious of the power of information in all spheres of life and hence be able to apply the same in decision making and the construction of structures that make for enduring political, social and economic development of a nation.

Counseling can equally equip the librarians in all types of libraries with literacy skills which will improve their competencies so that they can adequately guide library users.

Accordingly, the counseling need specifically improve the competencies of librarians in the following areas: concepts of the organization of knowledge, skills in information transfer theories, skills in synthesis of information, sensitivity to information transfer issues, appreciations of the use of information to gain competitive advantages, training in worldwide information resources, techniques and skills of information retrieval and training in information dissemination techniques.

The guidance and counselors in schools will have an important role to play in the provision of adequate and sustained publicity, especially among the youths in the primary and post-primary schools. The guidance counselor needs to liaise with the Nigerian library association in order to increase awareness on the benefits of librarianship to society and so popularize the profession. This publicity must be made in collaboration with government and other non governmental agencies to reach the grassroots especially primary and secondary schools, particularly through the use of community based counseling resources which serve as outlet for the dissemination of information to create awareness.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING POTENTIALITIES IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE PROFESSION IN NIGERIA

The library is central to the provision of right type of information resources that empower the educational institutions to produce highly resourceful people to impact positively on national development. In the same vein, the
recent practice in library profession requires the expansion of new frontiers of knowledge in order to meet the demand of the 21st Century as an age that is powered by information in all its ramifications. It is age of information explosion in which the internet and its associated technologies are being used to take advantage of the immense benefit of the accelerated development of society. It is the information society. Consequently, it is only a nation which is conscious of the importance of libraries and information in the drive towards the accelerated development of a nation. Guidance and counseling profession have the potentials to assist in meeting up the current need of a developing nation like Nigeria which experience some changes that require the right type of information. Similarly, for library and information profession to champion its prime role of provision of right type of information resources that empower the educational institutions to produce highly resourceful people who can impact positively to national development; they information service of guidance and counseling will not guide the librarian and all the stakeholder with relevant information but stir them on how to search and locate information resources.

In view of the foregoing, the prospect of guidance and counseling to library profession is bright because of the following:

a) Guidance and counseling as a discipline is concerned with provision of usable and current information that facilitates the process of meeting up the global challenges in the field of library profession which emerge as a result of the shift in the paradigms and development of new frontiers in knowledge.

b) As Opeke (2004) opined that information today has received a widespread acceptance as the essential feature of production, consumption and exchange, the fact is that, the world has entered an era where the source of wealth and power in increasingly from information and human mental creativity, the library profession can attain this when the awareness of people to possess a stock of knowledge which enables them to use creative and enormous potential information was raised. Consequently, guidance and counseling as field of study is tailored towards creation of awareness on the current demand globally by the use of systematic
and organized services that are designed and targeted towards awareness creation.

c) The use of modern libraries by library users who access, distill and utilize information is tasking because modern libraries contain well-stocked up-to-date and relevant books including electronic libraries, but guidance and counseling as a provider can ease the utilization of those information resources through formation and organization of guided instruction, use of outreach counseling strategies like public lecture and orientation for the user on how to access and use the available information resources.

d) Nigeria as nation has different libraries located at different places and serving different purposes with different rules and regulations guiding their operation. Guidance and counseling can provide relevant information on the location, purpose and rules and regulation guiding their operation. This can be done through providing services such as library users guide, a directory containing the location and type; and the purpose the library serve.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Based on the identified specific importance and prospects of guidance and counseling in the field of library and information science, it is recommended that guidance and counseling need to be integrated into the curriculum and practice of library and information science in form of the following; counseling library users, information service for digital library users, guidance and counseling needs of users, guidance and counseling induction course for library personnel among.

Secondly, in the sphere of practice libraries of any form need to open counselors’ office to liaise with library personnel on how to meet the demand of users.

Thirdly, counselors association in conjunction with library heads organizes refresher courses for library personnel on how best they can counsel library users.

Conclusion
The prospect of guidance and counseling in library profession in Nigeria is examined and this prospect is a central feature in facilitating the ability of the library users to meet up with current global change in information
resources, sourcing and utilization, particularly in consideration of the status of library and library profession in Nigeria. Therefore, the services of guidance and counselors as “helpers” and guidance and counseling as helping profession can rescue the ugly situation of library profession which emanated from the criminal neglect of the profession by government.

REFERENCES


