

Gender Perspectives of Motivational Factors Influencing Career Choice in Library Studies: A Case of Laris, University of Ibadan

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Abstract The study was carried out to investigate gender perspectives of professional inclination in library studies using LARIS, Ibadan as case study. A total of 120 respondents randomly selected from 100-400 levels were used for the study and data was collected through a questionnaire. Results show that the modal age of the male and female respondents fell within 21-27 years. Their mean ages were 26 and 22.5 years respectively. There was no distinction between the religion practices of the male and female students studying library science. The parents of most of the students lived in urban areas. Although most of the parents were literates but the father's literacy level is higher than that of the mothers. The parents were mostly civil servants, business men/women and farmers. A small fraction of the parents and siblings of the respondents have worked or are still working in the library. Both gender perceived the library profession as lucrative, educative, and innovative and a dynamic profession. They saw the librarians as book experts and helpful. However, there are gender differences in the perception as the male gender perceives the librarians as research experts but the female students did not see them that way. The female gender saw the library profession as stereotyped and dull profession with limited job prospects. Four factors motivate the male gender to the library profession against seven for the female. The greatest factors that motivate the male gender to Library studies profession is career prospects. This is followed by personal interests while that of the female is no other alternative/ by chance and parental influence. The study revealed that the school counsellor, media and mentors influence were not significant in motivating either the male or female students to the library profession. The study recommends professional guidance for students on the library profession and the development of more positive attitude about the profession among the female students to stimulate their personal interest rather than being influenced by their parents. The school counsellors in secondary schools should intensify efforts on career guidance before student's enrolment for University entrance examination.

Keywords Gender, Educational career, Motivation, Perception, Library profession

1. Introduction

The demands for professional librarians are changing every day. Globally, there is an explosion in demand for librarians with high technical skills (Rurak, 2004). The high demands result from the technological revolution in the information systems. Several companies suffer from information overload. Library professionals are needed to gather, analyse and filter information in all facets of life (Warner, ---). Librarians work for local government, colleges and universities, businesses and corporations as well as elementary and secondary schools (U.S Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2014). They work full time and part-time. These Librarians work with firms and financial organizations as

high-tech wizards to navigate the Internet, establish Intranets, search databases and classify information (Rurak, 2004). Librarians give out information used for high-stakes decisions in the financial industries, and they are accountable for such information (Warner, ---). Data shows that the salaries of skilled professional librarians are rising. According to the U.S Bureau of Labour Statistics (2014), the median annual wage for librarians was \$55,370 in May 2012. They can earn between \$40,000 and \$75,000 annually (Rurak, 2004).

Despite the revolution in the library profession, the choice of librarianship as a profession among Nigerian University students is dwindling. Issa and Nwalo (2008) observed that so many undergraduates of Nigerian universities apply to study library and information science as a last resort. They are either changed from other courses to library science as a result of poor performance and low scores in JAMB or did not have the pre-requisites for a desired course of study. Most of the students in this category might change or seek

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employment in other professions at graduation. In order to compound the problem is the global aging of librarians. According to the U.S NLA (2014), Librarians in Association of Research Libraries institutions are older than U.S. librarians in general and aging more rapidly. Funk (2002) indicated that the percentage of Medical Library Association members under the age of forty has dropped from 51% in 1983 to less than 21% in 2001. Also, there are three times as many health sciences librarian jobs as applicants (Funk, 2002). The scenario may not be significantly different from the Nigeria situation. With time, there might be a wide gap between the demand and supply for library professionals.

Attempts to solve the problem necessitate the investigation of what motivates (incline) people into the library profession. Motivation is a drive that spurs an action. Learning motivation could be classified into two- intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation comes from within the students or from factors inherent in the task being performed while extrinsic motivation comes from sources external to the students and the task (Shah & Shah, nd.). It can come through praise, recognition, or a system of rewards (Richard, 2011). There are several theories of motivation, (IAFCCP, 2013) but the study will make reference to a few of them. These are Maslow's hierarchy of need, reinforcement theory, and expectancy theory. According to Maslow, human needs are classified into five groups. These are psychological, safety, belongingness, self-esteem, and self-actualization. He believes that the basic need must be met before going to a higher order. In terms of job, the psychological needs include heat, air, and basic salary. The safety needs include work safety, job security, and health insurance. The belongingness includes teams, departments, co-workers, clients, supervisors and subordinates. The esteem needs include recognition, high status, and responsibilities, while the self-actualization needs entail training, advancement, growth, and creativity. According to Skinner as recorded by Edu-Article (2015) individuals are motivated by what happens in the environment external to them rather than the internal factors like impressions, feelings, attitudes and other cognitive behaviour. He believes that the only way to motivate is to keep on making positive changes in the external environment of the organization (Shah & Shah, nd.). Expectancy theory according to Vroom as reported by Csmith83 (2008.), says that an employee can be motivated to perform better when there is a belief that the better performance will lead to good performance appraisal. The good performance shall result into the reward. He concluded that motivation leads to action, action leads to result while result leads to satisfaction in the form of reward.

There are several discourses about the factors that motivate people on career choices. Literatures show that environment, opportunity, and personality played varying roles in career choices of students (Borchert, 2002). Khanna (1982) affirmed that there is a strong correlation between motivational factors and working efficiency of librarianship. Taylor *et al.* (2010) indicated that job function was the major

factors that motivates the over 75% of MLIS students in pursuance of the course. Issa and Nwalo (2008) findings stressed that there is no significant difference in the popularity of librarianship between the male and female genders. Bandura *et al.* (2001) affirmed the influence of the environment, personal aptitudes, and educational attainment on the choice of library science as a career (Singh *et al.*, 2013) stressed the importance of socio-economic background on career choice among professional librarianship. However, there are limited gender disaggregated data on inclination to the library profession in Nigeria, hence; the study was carried out to investigate gender perspectives of professional inclination in library studies. Specifically, it aimed to

- Ascertain the socio economic background of LARIS students
- Explore the perception of Library profession among the male and female gender
- Investigate the greatest factors that motivate the male and female gender in Library studies profession

2. Methodology

The study was carried out in LARIS, University of Ibadan. All the students in LARIS constitute the population for the study. However, a total of 120 students randomly selected from 100-400 level students forms the sampling frame utilized for the study. There is equal representation of both the male and female gender. A structured questionnaire was used in eliciting information from them. Data was collected by the aid of staff enumerators over a period of four months (May, 2014- August, 2014).

Data collected was coded and analysed using Special Package for Social Scientist (SPSS). Results were presented in frequencies and percentages as well as likert type scale.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Socio Economic Characteristics of the Respondents Data

Socio economic characteristics of the respondents Data in table 1 show that the male and female respondents were within the modal age of 21 to 27 years. The mean age of the male respondents was 26years while that of the female was 22.5 years. The male respondents cut across all undergraduate classes with 23.33% in 100 and 400 levels respectively and 26.67% in 200 and 300 levels.

The class distribution of the female respondents differs slightly from that of the male. Most (31.67%) of the females were from 200 levels while the least (18.33%) were in 100 level. The respondents cut across all the religious practices in the study are with 21.67, 73.00 and 5.00 percentages of the male gender practicing Islam, Christianity and African traditional religion respectively. The same situation occurs among the female gender with 30.0, 63.33 and 6.67%

practicing Islam, Christianity, and African traditional religion respectively. There is no distinction between the religion practices of the male and female students studying library science in the University of Ibadan.

More than 18% of the parents of the male students live in rural areas while 78.33% of them live in an urban area. A good proportion 30.0% of the parents of the female gender reside in rural areas while 70.0% lives in an urban area.

The study shows that the parents of most of the students studying library science lived in urban areas. It is expected that the place of residence will have great influence on their choice of career as urban parents are expected to be more enlightened than the parents living in rural areas. In terms of educational attainment, 83.33 and 85% of the fathers of both male and female genders respectively. They had one form of education or the other while 58.33 and 63.33 percent of the mothers of both male and female genders had one form of education or the other. While comparing the parents, it could be said that although most of the parents are literates but the father's literacy level is higher than that of the mothers. This is expected as men are usually heads of the family and are expected to provide for their households. They can study at all times. But most females end their education after marriage as they do household chores.

The parents participate in almost all the occupations in the environment with civil servants, businesses and farming having the highest percentages. Very few (5.0% and 16.7%) were either librarian or library workers, respectively.

There is no significant difference in the occupation of the parents of both male and female respondents. However, it is noted that about 25.01% of the fathers work in the libraries while 16.67% of the mothers work in the libraries. It might have effects on the career choice in library studies of the students. Also, very few (20.0% and 28.33%) of the siblings/relations of both male and female genders respectively work in the library. Also, very few (10 and 5%) of the male and female genders respectively had worked in the library before embarking on the study of library science in the University of Ibadan. It shows that very few of the parents and siblings of the respondents are still working in the library.

3.2. Perception of the Respondents about Library Profession

The perception of the respondents about library profession was subjected to a five point Likert type scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree and Strongly Dis-agree with scores of 5,4,3,2, and 1 respectively.

Based on the mean of 3.0, variables with average score equal or above 3 were perceived to be significant while those below 3 are not. Going by the mean, according to table 2, the

library profession was perceived by the male gender to be lucrative, educative, and innovative and a dynamic profession with means of 4.05, 4.62, 3.61 and 4.13 respectively. The librarians were seen to be book and research experts means 4.4 and 3.53 respectively and also being helpful (mean = 4.41) variables that were not significant among the male gender includes a stereotyped profession, have limited work prospect and being a dull profession with means of 2.9, 1.92, and 1.43 respectively. It implies that the male gender did not consider library profession to be either a stereotype profession, dull, with limited work prospects. The female gender shared the same perception with the males in most cases except that they saw the library profession as stereotyped and dull profession. This is in line with the views of Attebury (2010) whose discourse compares video creators of librarians and non-librarians on the perception of librarians as being Stereotyped.

There are several debates on the issue of librarians as being stereotyped. It emanates from the old maid depiction of librarians whereby a female librarian is seen as a dedicated, fearless and devoted woman, whose complete allegiance to her career demands choosing between career and family. Who can become controlled by library activities and lose other essential aspects of their humanity: empathy, forgiveness, and sexuality (Attebury, 2010). In recent times, stereotypes have been considered severally both positively and negatively. In a positive manner (Shauer, 2003) views Stereotypes as sharing a group identity as a result of similar experiences and also a desire to be part of the "in-group." However, Brewerton (1993) argues "stereotypes are often based on outmoded concepts and are invariably negative." Worchel and Rothgerber (1997) asserted that stereotypes are multidimensional. He compared it to a diamond with many facets. Hence changing just one facet of a stereotype might make such to become salient in the minds of those that hold that stereotype view while other faces still remain unchanged. Attebury, (2010) opined that Stereotypes could be used in a positive manner. An example is in the instructional video titled "How Not to Conduct a Reference Interview," It makes use of the inept librarian stereotype, to remind librarians of good and not-so-good practices (Attebury, 2010). He also said that Stereotypes can be used to correct certain inevitable characters/ behaviors in library settings. Such as in the video "Rock the Library," When librarians must rid the building of two teenage pranksters who felt, it would be humorous to set up their electric guitars in the library to play (Goddard, 2007). Hutchins & Travis (2000) opined that viewing librarian profession in a negative manner might portray some sense of professional insecurity.

Table 1. Distribution of Socio-economic characteristics of the selected Respondents

| Respondent characteristics | Male | | Female | |
|---|-----------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| | Frequency(N=60) | Percentage | Frequency | Percentage |
| Age | | | | |
| 14-20 | 02 | 3.33 | 07 | 11.67 |
| 21-27 | 39 | 65.0 | 44 | 73.33 |
| 28-34 | 19 | 31.67 | 09 | 15.0 |
| >34 | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Total | | | | |
| Level | | | | |
| 100 | 14 | 23.33 | 11 | 18.33 |
| 200 | 16 | 26.67 | 19 | 31.67 |
| 300 | 16 | 26.67 | 16 | 26.67 |
| 400 | 14 | 23.33 | 14 | 23.33 |
| Religion | | | | |
| Islamic religion | 13 | 21.67 | 18 | 30.0 |
| Christianity | 44 | 73.33 | 38 | 63.33 |
| African Traditional Religion | 03 | 5.00 | 04 | 6.67 |
| Location of parents home | | | | |
| Rural | 11 | 18.33 | 18 | 30.0 |
| Urban | 47 | 78.33 | 42 | 70.0 |
| Fathers education | | | | |
| no formal education | 10 | 16.67 | 09 | 15.0 |
| Primary education completed | 11 | 18.33 | 07 | 11.67 |
| Secondary education, | 06 | 10.00 | 06 | 16.67 |
| Tertiary education | 28 | 46.67 | 36 | 60.0 |
| Adult literacy program | 05 | 8.33 | 02 | 3.33 |
| Mother's education | | | | |
| no formal education | 09 | 15.0 | 04 | 6.67 |
| Primary education completed | 15 | 25.0 | 15 | 25.0 |
| Secondary education, | 18 | 30.0 | 22 | 36.67 |
| Tertiary education | 18 | 30.0 | 16 | 26.67 |
| Adult literacy program | 0 | 0.00 | 02 | 3.33 |
| Fathers occupation | | | | |
| (a) Civil Service | 16 | 26.67 | 10 | 16.67 |
| (B) law | 03 | 5.00 | 03 | 5.00 |
| (C) Librarian | 01 | 1.67 | 04 | 6.67 |
| (D) Library worker | 03 | 5.00 | 07 | 11.67 |
| (e) Engineering | 02 | 3.33 | 05 | 8.33 |
| (f) Medical personnel | 01 | 1.67 | 04 | 6.67 |
| (g) teaching | 09 | 15.0 | 09 | 15.0 |
| (H) Farming, | 12 | 20.0 | 13 | 21.67 |
| (i) Business/ trading | 13 | 21.67 | 05 | 8.33 |
| Mother's occupation | | | | |
| (a) Civil Service | 12 | 20.0 | 10 | 16.67 |
| (B) law | 0 | 0.00 | 02 | 3.33 |
| (C) Librarian | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 |
| (D) Library worker | 06 | 10.00 | 04 | 6.67 |
| (e) Engineering | 01 | 1.67 | 02 | 3.33 |
| (f) Medical personnel | 0 | 0.00 | 01 | 1.67 |
| (g) teaching | 07 | 11.67 | 05 | 8.33 |
| (H) Farming, | 10 | 16.67 | 15 | 25.00 |
| (i) Business/ trading | 24 | 40.00 | 21 | 35.00 |
| Any of siblings/ relations working in the library | | | | |
| (a) Yes | 12 | 20.0 | 17 | 28.33 |
| (b) No | 48 | 80.0 | 43 | 71.67 |
| Previously worked in the library before admission to the University | | | | |
| (a) Yes | 10 | 16.67 | 17 | 28.33 |
| (b) No | 50 | 83.33 | 43 | 71.67 |

Source: Field Survey data, 2014

Table 2. Perception of the Respondents about Library Profession

| Variable | MALE | | | | | | | | FEMALE | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------|-----|----|----|----|-------|------|--------|--------|----|----|----|----|-------|------|--------|
| | SA | A | UD | D | SD | TOTAL | MEAN | REMARK | SA | A | UD | D | SD | TOTAL | MEAN | REMARK |
| Lucrative | 135 | 76 | 18 | 12 | 2 | 243 | 4.05 | S | 100 | 56 | 30 | 32 | 0 | 218 | 3.63 | S |
| Educative | 205 | 60 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 277 | 4.62 | S | 225 | 40 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 280 | 4.67 | S |
| Innovative | 160 | 92 | 9 | 4 | 0 | 265 | 4.41 | S | 125 | 40 | 75 | 0 | 0 | 240 | 4.0 | S |
| Field of diversity | 85 | 88 | 18 | 22 | 4 | 217 | 3.61 | S | 150 | 72 | 18 | 12 | 0 | 252 | 4.2 | S |
| Stereotyped profession | 50 | 68 | 0 | 46 | 10 | 174 | 2.9 | NS | 175 | 72 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 261 | 4.35 | S |
| Have limited work prospects | 15 | 48 | 12 | 60 | 11 | 86 | 1.43 | NS | 205 | 40 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 254 | 4.23 | S |
| A dynamic profession | 140 | 68 | 30 | 10 | 0 | 248 | 4.13 | S | 150 | 60 | 0 | 30 | 0 | 240 | 4.0 | S |
| A dull profession | 50 | 20 | 0 | 10 | 35 | 115 | 1.92 | NS | 75 | 40 | 0 | 10 | 30 | 146 | 2.43 | NS |
| Librarians are book experts | 150 | 104 | 6 | 4 | 0 | 264 | 4.4 | S | 200 | 60 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 270 | 4.5 | S |
| Librarians are research experts | 50 | 60 | 96 | 6 | 0 | 212 | 3.53 | S | 80 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 34 | 154 | 2.56 | NS |
| Librarians are helpful | 160 | 96 | 3 | 6 | 0 | 265 | 4.41 | S | 200 | 40 | 15 | 0 | 5 | 260 | 4.33 | S |

3.3. Factors Influencing Career Choice of Undergraduates in Library Studies by Gender

The study investigated factors motivating the choice of library studies by the students on gender basis. Data in table 3 reveals that of the 11 variables, only four of them were found to be important in motivating the choice of library studies among the male respondents. These are, siblings influence (mean=3.21), career prospects (mean=4.05), employment prospects (mean=3.95) and personal interest (mean=3.97). The findings contradict the findings of Issa and Nwalo that most students pursuing a course in library studies were mostly influenced by previous library work experiences. Of the four factors considered important to the male respondents, career prospects ranked first followed by personal interest. Employment prospects occupied the 3rd position followed by sibling's influence. The study shows that the greatest factors that motivate the male gender to Library studies profession are career prospects and personal interests.

The factors that motivate the female respondents to study library science are much more than that of the males. They were motivated by all the factors that motivate the male students in addition to parental background (mean=4.48) and better working environment (mean=4.23). Also, some were studying library science because they have no other alternative /by chance (mean= 4.53).

While ranking the factors motivating the female respondents to the library profession, no other alternatives/ by chance came first while parental influence came second. The respondents studying library science as a result of no

other alternatives and by chance, could be among the categories which Issa and Nwallo (2008) described as the majority who did not make the course as their first choice but ended up in the library school having as a last resort. Employment prospects and better working environment occupy the 3rd and 4th position. It agrees with the findings of Singh et al. (2013) that most of the students studying library science in India University were inclined by employment opportunities. At the fifth position of importance is siblings influence.

It is worth noting that the school counsellor, media, and mentors influence were not significant in motivating either the male or female students to the library profession. It indicates that these three sources of information are not effective in influencing the choice of career in library studies.

4. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The study was carried out to investigate gender perspectives of professional inclination in library studies using LARIS, Ibadan as a case study. A total of 120 respondents were randomly selected from 100-400 levels with equal representation of both the male and female genders. A questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. Data collected was analysed using frequency counts, percentages, and Likert type scale. Results show that the modal age of the male and female respondents fell within 21-27 years. Their mean ages were 26 and 22.5years

respectively. The male respondents cut across all undergraduate classes with 23.33% in 100 and 400 levels respectively and 26.67% in 200 and 300 levels. The class distribution of the female respondents differs slightly from that of the male. Most (31.67%) of the females were from 200 levels while the least (18.33%) were in 100 level. There is no distinction between the religion practices of the male and female students studying library science in the University of Ibadan.

The parents of most of the students studying library science lived in urban areas. While comparing the parents, it could be said that although most of the parents are literates but the father's literacy level is higher than that of the mothers. The parents participate in almost all the occupations in the environment with civil servants, businesses and farming having the highest percentages. Very few were either librarian or library workers, respectively. Very few of the parents and siblings of the respondents have worked or are still working in the library.

There are similarities and differences in the perception of the male and female students on the library profession. Both genders perceived the library profession as lucrative, educative, and innovative and a dynamic profession. They also saw the librarians as book experts and helpful. However, they differ in their opinions in the following ways. The male

gender perceives the librarians as research experts, but the female students did not see them that way.

The male gender did not consider library profession to be either a stereotype profession, dull, with limited work prospects. The female gender saw the library profession as stereotyped and dull profession with limited job prospect.

Four factors that motivate the male gender to the library profession include personal interest, career prospects, employment prospects and siblings influence. The greatest factors that motivate the male gender to Library studies profession is career prospects. This is followed by personal interests.

Seven factors motivate the female students to the library profession. These are parental background, sibling's influence, career prospects, employment prospects, personal interest, better working environment and no other alternative/ by chance. Of the seven factors, no other alternative/ by chance has the greatest influence on the female respondents. It is followed by parental influence. Employment prospects and better working environment occupy the 3rd and 4th position. The study revealed that the school counsellor; media and mentors influence were not significant in motivating either the male or female students to the library profession.

Table 3. Gender Disaggregation of factors influencing Career Choice of Undergraduates in Library Studies

| Variable | MALE | | | | | | | | FEMALE | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|------|-----|----|----|----|-------|------|--------|--------|----|----|----|----|-------|------|---------------------|
| | SA | A | UD | D | SD | TOTAL | MEAN | REMARK | SA | A | UD | D | SD | TOTAL | MEAN | REMARK |
| Parental background | 55 | 64 | 18 | 13 | 14 | 164 | 2.73 | NS | 220 | 40 | 0 | 6 | 3 | 269 | 4.48 | 2 nd S |
| Siblings influence | 35 | 108 | 6 | 40 | 4 | 193 | 3.21 | S | 150 | 20 | 45 | 10 | 5 | 230 | 3.83 | 5 th S |
| Career prospects | 120 | 100 | 3 | 20 | 0 | 243 | 4.05 | S | 150 | 40 | 6 | 4 | 14 | 214 | 3.56 | 6 th S |
| Employment prospects | 125 | 84 | 0 | 28 | 0 | 237 | 3.95 | S | 200 | 40 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 260 | 4.33 | 3 rd S |
| School counsellor | 25 | 25 | 0 | 70 | 15 | 135 | 2.25 | NS | 50 | 20 | 30 | 60 | 5 | 165 | 2.75 | 8 th NS |
| Media influence | 15 | 60 | 6 | 60 | 10 | 145 | 2.42 | NS | 10 | 0 | 0 | 10 | 43 | 63 | 1.05 | 11 th NS |
| Mentors influence | 15 | 36 | 0 | 10 | 41 | 102 | 1.70 | NS | 50 | 20 | 18 | 58 | 10 | 156 | 2.6 | 9 th NS |
| Personal interest | 95 | 124 | 3 | 16 | 0 | 238 | 3.97 | S | 60 | 50 | 0 | 70 | 3 | 183 | 3.05 | 7 th S |
| By chance/ No other alternative | 55 | 36 | 9 | 38 | 16 | 154 | 2.57 | NS | 220 | 40 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 272 | 4.53 | 1 st S |
| Better working environment | 50 | 60 | 3 | 28 | 20 | 161 | 2.68 | NS | 200 | 28 | 9 | 20 | 0 | 257 | 4.28 | 4 th S |
| Previous work experience | 25 | 40 | 9 | 60 | 12 | 146 | 2.43 | NS | 10 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 45 | 61 | 1.02 | 11 th NS |

Recommendations

Since the perception and motivating factors of the male and female students of LARIS to the Library profession is different, these will affect their attitude to work. Must professional guidance for students on the library profession. There is a need to develop more positive attitude about the profession among the female students to stimulate their personal interest rather than being influenced by their parents. The school counselors in secondary schools should intensify efforts on career guidance before student's enrollment for University entrance examination. The University libraries can embark on a school a tour to stimulate more students in the choice of library studies as a career.

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