

THE ROLE OF RESEARCH IN THE REVITALISATION OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper examined the role of research in the revitalisation of library and information science (LIS) education in Nigeria. The paper identified issues of LIS education in Nigeria to include unskilled manpower, lack of attention by the government and poor level of curriculum development. Research remains an inevitable tool for the revitalisation of LIS education in Nigeria such as curriculum development and an avenue to raise funds. The paper identified challenges of LIS research in Nigeria to include inadequate research funds, inadequate research skills, poor attitude to research and lack of infrastructure. The paper concluded that there should be training and retraining of library and information science educators on innovative research skills.

Keywords: Revitalisation; Library and Information Science Education; Research; Role; Nigeria

Introduction

The history of library and information science (LIS) education in Nigeria dates back to a seminar organised by UNESCO held at the University of Ibadan in the year 1953. The seminar was centred on the development of public libraries in Africa. At the end of the seminar, it was recommended that library schools should be established in Africa to provide professional training for would-be librarians. Before this period, the training of librarians who were to man public libraries in Nigeria was trained mainly in the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA). At the end of the programme, the certificate that was offered to participants was mostly non-graduate type like the British ALA. According to Abubakar (2015), it was also necessary to find library schools because during that period most of the libraries in Nigeria were manned by expatriates.

The first library school was founded and funded by the Carnegie Cooperation of New York. In the first instance, they surveyed the library need of the country and then recommended that a postgraduate course in a library should be established. The library school was later established at the Institute of Librarianship at the University of Ibadan. The shortcoming of the new programme was that the institute only offered post-graduate diploma in librarianship. The second library school to be established in Nigeria was at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.