

**THE ROLES AND STATUS OF WOMEN LIBRARIANS AND THEIR
LEADERSHIP IMPACTS IN SELECTED TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS
IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT: *Librarianship nowadays means different thing from what it used to, some decades ago. Libraries then were mere reservoirs and citadels of good decadence, getting in but not giving out. The 21st libraries are now active, vibrant; a living foundation of good influences, a service-oriented institution with set goals to achieve with transformative technological knowhow. This new outlook exited through formal education which was extended to the females, provide gateway for talented women to prove themselves. Despite the equal training like their male counterpart, there is much to be said on being deprived of getting to the political peak of their career and being refused promotion to a higher management post. This study, investigates women's role and impacts in selected tertiary institutions in Ogun state. It used questionnaire and data collection methods, administering 400 copies of the questionnaire in 19 institutions in the state. It also searched databases on librarianship, library services and women's socio-political roles, impacting the development and growth of librarianship in Nigeria. The result show that more female librarian's occupied leadership ladders now than before. Many institutions offer library science to PhD level, revealing a large turnout of the female librarians, not minding gender differentiation. There are more women professors, doctors, heads of libraries; outcome of die hard labor, to move the society forward.*

KEYWORD: women education, gender differentiation, librarianship, leadership and library education

INTRODUCTION

Education has been recognized to be the only viable instrument for correcting any imbalance in Nigeria. It is an instrument of socialization which can bring about a liberating force from all the social ills of our society. Okezue, (2001) notes that education is a major force for developing the talent of the individuals in all works of life within the society, man and woman inclusive. This is further asserts in Ereze, (1983) that education should be a birthright and privilege of every citizen of any country

The Nigerian National Policy on Education-(NPE), (2008) places no emphasis on any one particular sex but has opportunities open for both males and females to acquire education. It also advocates for the integration of the individual into sound and effective citizen through equal educational opportunities for all and sundry.

But it was observed that our patriarchal society, a society that places paramount importance on the existence of the male child from time immemorial, had been indifferent to making this laudable policy a reality. However, there has been the case of

gradual changes since the last three decades, precisely from the early 80s when, a massive campaign for the development of women in all the socio- economic and political sectors of Nigeria began (Udofia and Agboke, 2014). This, to them, ‘has not only uplifted women’s lives’ but has paved smooth way for their advancement and gallant participation alongside their male counterparts in those sectors as well. This massive pro-women campaign also made it possible for them to be all over the places, robbing shoulders and minds, professionally, working and complementing the efforts of their male counterparts for greater achievements (Udofia and Agboke, 2014). Equally, in the Nigerian constitution of 1999, equal position and opportunities for men and women were constitutionalized, thus paving way for equal educational attainments and trainings of both sexes. This being the case, both men and women can get similar learning opportunities needed to exhibit leadership traits anywhere.

On the above assumption, there is the need to carry out a research survey to examine the roles, progressive status- quo and the impacts of women librarians on the steady growth of librarianship as a profession and their magnanimous roles in the spread of library study and libraries in various institutions of learning in Ogun State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Need for Women Education for Self Realization

In the past, women in our society were relegated to the background and saddled with the entire responsibilities of childbearing, of their upbringing, feeding, and of impacting moral ethics and etiquettes on them (Ezeigbo, 1996). An average woman was assumed and taken to be the society’s lame dog, a weakling, who should be implicitly obedient to the husband, and be burdened with the risk of cooking, even for the husband’s larger family members. She has a lot of stresses to battle with in terms of social-cultural, matrimonial, economic, political and educational matters. The issue relating to their status quo as relate to their diverse professions, has been a serious concern in every culture and everywhere. This, to Falaiye, (2004), was because a male child’s education has been preferred to the females from the onset. And even when they struggle to get education, the matter of being gainfully employed like their male counterparts are not cheerfully welcome as they are gladly given jobs with the low paying fee and low status jobs.

As one of the laudable attempts to refuse to be destroyed under the phallic subjugation and suppression of our patriarchal society where females are subjected to continuous misconceptions and stereotypes. This seemed to gear women all over the nation into action by holding the bull by the horns and coming out in large number to be educated. This fact is confirmed in (Obi, 2001:4) that there had been an improvement on women enrolment at various levels of education in Nigeria today than ever before.

This tremendous change in women education, tailored at deconstructing the oppressed image of women and at retrieving ‘self’ from the patriarchal intimidation and chauvinism, yielded bountiful results as women begin to enter the librarianship profession, paving way for women librarians in various types of libraries in the society. In Nigeria today, our various Institutions of learning now have women librarians as heads of various sections and units of libraries, very unlike before. A woman librarian is, according to Ifidon, (2012), a female professional who has acquired competency in

applying theory and technology of librarianship to the creation, selection, organization and utilization of collection in all formats. She can also be seen as one who manages and paves way for prompt access to information; book and non-book that exist within any library.

Today's libraries are transforming from traditional series into current and update e information in response to the need for more flexibility to keep up with rapidly changing environments (Stuart & Moran, 2007). As women continue to make up the management force in countless numbers, their presence on the job ushers in transformation on the image of the modern management system. With women's bold entrance into management positions in the LIS profession, Bergman, (2005) opines that woman finally occupied over 50 percent of directorships at large Research Libraries and universities Libraries, and that they were also often earning higher salaries than their male counterparts. Deyrup, (2004) also submits the fact that women Librarians in Nigeria have risen so high both in numbers and in position that there are many female university librarians nowadays in most of the academic libraries in Nigeria. There are quiet a lots of women professors,

In comprehensive career study of librarians for ALA's Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship, Heim and Estabrook (1983) found that 78.3 percent of ALA's members were female and 21.7 percent were male. Almost half of men (49.6 percent) could be categorized as administrators, while 30.4 percent of women occupied similar positions Heim & Estabrook, (1983). Further, the study found that twice as many men were elected or were appointed to office or chair of a committee at the national association level Heim & Estabrook, (1983). Most importantly, the study found that "being male is significantly associated with receiving a higher salary even when personal, professional, and organizational variables are comparable to those of females As women continue to enter management roles in librarianship in greater numbers, a kind of gap is bridging the traditional gender differentiation that has plagued the profession over the last century as informed in Maach, (2002), This new gender divide that threatens to emerge is unique to the 21st century and is a product of the increasing role of technology in the profession and the struggle to redefine the profession to remain relevant in the growing information industry.(Udofia and Agboke , 2014)

LITERATURE REVIEW ON STATUS, CHARACTERISTICS OF FEMALE LIBRARIANS IN NIGERIA AND CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT

The Genesis of Women Education in Librarianship

With the arrival of John Harris the pioneer (founder) of libraries and library studies in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria in November 1948, hidden ideas and notions concerning women and library education began to unfold.

Harris (popularly called the father of libraries) whose life revolved around the world of books and also cared about people and what was happening to the society began to see a vital need for library studies. His guidance and persistent efforts greatly accelerated the growth of librarians in Nigeria and the subsequent training of staff (education) for effective and efficient library operations and knowledge. This training started from the

Premier University –now the University of Ibadan, where the first beneficiaries, mostly men and women who had graduated in other course areas but proceeded to the University of Ibadan to study for the Postgraduate Diploma in Librarianship and (the then staff of the University Library), were placed in positions to provide other libraries in the country with highly qualified and experienced librarians (Tamuno, 1985:18). Women librarians who revolved through this opportunity are females like: Adetoun Ogunseye, Adebimpe Ike (the first female University librarians in the country (Daniel2004). Fayose, Osazee, Atinmo, I.M, Mabawoku, Iyabo (all these are Professors) and a host of others (Aina, 1995). Harris sees these females as “librarians” and educators in the highest sense” not simply satisfying the demands of the library but creating demands’. Ever since the genesis of their training, women in librarianship have tried to “refuse to combat any arguments for or against the present status of women” But they have tried to compromise, advising other female colleagues in the business to adapt themselves to a masculine code of conducts that differed from the manners of polite society (Maachi,1996).He also advises that the female librarians should “bring the positive values of womanly culture into their work places , adapting to business norms without losing their dignity or integrity as women.

Women’s Rights and Roles in librarianship; A pointer to women Education for self-actualization

In spite of the numerous responsibilities which the society reposed on them at home and in their places of work, women have felt to operate within the constraints of time, place and gender. They have tried to transcend the stereo typical image of feminine behavior (female stereotypes) as they pursue their vision of library services. These women in the libraries have seen the need to put aside the stereotypical image of womanhood by discharging their functions without casting aside their traditional gender roles or family responsibilities. To borrow from Carmicheal (1986:377) “women Librarians demonstrate that far from being timorous library ladies, they are progressive, cultured and social leaders who, to a degree, shared a sense of missionary enterprise with other librarians through their use of indirection ,charm and diplomacy when dealing with users”

These professional women tend to affirm their gender identity through their attitude and dignity of manners which are attributes peculiar to women. One could see that through h the professional education received by these women librarians, they declare that the librarianship profession could offer a profitable field of action for ‘womanly women’: it was this vision that instigate women in Colt (1987:20) at one time to call for ‘equal gender opportunity in education and employment’s as this would bring special benefits to the society by virtue of women’s interest and capacities within the library.

In librarianship then, women professionals have arrived, that they have come to be identified with themselves (their images as women) and they have come to be resolute in their ideologies accruing from their various challenges that:

For years women librarian have worked, talked and accepted all sorts of compromise to prove their fitness on the job and that sex should have no weight where ability counts.

That men and women represent different elements, look at things from different perspective and that work together, side by side , both contribute their best, resulting in a broader, richer and wider scope than when and what a single sex alone does.

And that women qualities and contribution as librarians or library workers are not merely supplementary to those of the men but are absolutely complementary and supportive.

Objectives of the study:

In view of the above, objectives of this study are to find out the relevance of women librarians to the growth and, development of librarianship profession in tertiary institutions, to determine their career progression compared to their male counterparts and to also find out how other library staff perceive women librarians' leadership skills, especially at the managerial cadre

Research Questions

How relevant are the female librarians to the growth and development of librarianship and librarians in Nigerian institutions of learning

How progressive are women librarians on the job?

How adequate and acceptable are the women librarians' leadership /managerial style to the development of the profession?

Is there any gender differentiation in career advancement of the females and their male counterparts in these libraries?

Statement of the problem: Generally, it has been noted that women are being marginalized in work labour despite their educational advancement. So the study intends to find out the extent to which this laudable profession is affected and to knowing their impact of any, on the job progression.

Scope of the study: This study is limited to only tertiary institutions, federal, state, private in ogun state, Nigeria

Methodology: The survey research design method was used for the study.

Population and sampling methods: The population of this study comprised all the library staff in all the nineteen tertiary institution in ogun state, Nigeria.

Research instrument: The instrument used for the study is a self-structured questionnaire divided into four parts. Part one collect instruction on the demographics features of the respondents, part two on respondents' progression and choice of career and acquisition of managerial competences. Part three asked questions on the respondent perception of leadership trains in women librarians and part four on gender categorization and females likely impacts and inputs on the profession.

Data collection: The data was collected using librarian 2| and some of the library officers in most of the libraries to distribute to library staff available and collect such back

Analysis of data: Simple percentage was used to analyze the analysis includes the use of frequency and tables.

Demographics Part A

Item: Institutions

ITEMS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Universities	23	36.5%
Colleges	16	23.9%
Polytechnics	24	39.6%
Total	63	100%

The institutions used for the research work were Universities, Colleges and Polytechnics. The Universities have 36.5% respondent, Colleges have 23.9 respondents while Polytechnics have 39.6. According to the analysis, it is observed that the polytechnic contribute were to the success of the research work, this implies that the polytechnics have the highest population.

Item: Type of Institutions

ITEMS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Federal	27	42.86%
State	24	38.095%
Private	12	19.048%
Total	63	100%

These are the three types of institutions used for the success of the research work. These are Federal, State and Private. According to the analysis, it shows that most respondents were from the Federal Institution. The breakdown of the analysis goes thus; Federal institutions have 42.86% of the respondents, 38.095 of the respondents were from the state institutions while 19.04 of the respondents were from the Private institution.

Question 1: Is there any gender differentiation in career advancement of the females and their male counterpart in libraries?

Table 1

ITEM	MALE	FEMALE
LIBRARY OFFICER	3	6
ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN	1	2
LIBRARIAN 1	2	10
LIBRARIAN 2	4	4
LIBRARIAN 3	1	1
SERNIOR LIBRARIAN	2	2
PRINCIPAL LIBRARIAN	4	2
CHIEF LIBRARIANS	3	3
UNIVERSITY DL	2	1
UNIVERSITY LIBRARIANS	2	1
POLITECHNIC LIBRARIANS	4	1
COLLEGE LIBRARIANS	3	-
TOTALL	31	32

The table above shows that the number of female respondents about (51%) are more than the males but the male respondents, about (49%) occupy higher positions than the female respondents. In spite of the above response, the male librarians occupied political post than the female librarians

Question 2: How acceptable are the female librarian's leadership style to the development and growth of the profession?

Table 2

ITEM	A		D		N		%
1	22	35%	28	44%	13	21%	100
2	20	32%	33	52%	10	16%	100
3	34	54%	23	37%	6	10%	100
4	31	49%	20	32%	12	19%	100
Total	107	170%	104	165%	41	66%	400
Overall %		43%		41%		16%	

The table above statistically reveals that 43% of the respondents agreed with the female leadership style, 41% disagreed while 16% are of neutral opinion.

Question 3: How progressive are the female librarians in the library

Table 3

ITEMS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
0-5	8	13%
6-10	13	21%
11-15	18	28%
16-20	6	10%
20 and above	18	28%
Total	63	100%

The professional status shows the hierarchy of the staff in the libraries .The hierarchies are categorized into Library officer, Assistance Librarian and the Librarian. It is observed that 43.5% of the respondents were library officers, 28.7% of the respondents were Assistance librarians while 27.8% of the respondents were Librarians. It is then observed according to the analysis that most of the respondents were library officers which have the highest population. This was so because as at the time the research was done, most of the librarians were on the field for students' teaching practice supervision or the usual industrial training exercises, leaving behind the non-academic-paraprofessionals on ground, who however did justice to the served questionnaire copies on directive. On the whole, and according to the above table, 30% of the staff on ground were professional Librarians while 70% were para-professionals.

Question 4: How relevant are the female librarians to the growth and development of librarianship

	FREQUENCY						TOTAL	
	A	%	D	%	N	%		
1	39	62	19	30	5	8	63	100%
2	37	59	23	36	3	5	63	100%
3	31	49	27	43	5	8	63	100%
4	40	64	21	33	2	3	63	100%
5	34	54	23	37	6	9	63	100%
6	30	48	27	43	6	9	63	100%
Total	211	336	140	222	63	42	378	600%
Overall %		56		37		7		100

From the table above, the respondents were of the opinion that female librarians contributed well to the growth and development of librarianship. 56% of the respondents agree, 37% of the respondents disagree while 7% of the respondents are on the neutral ground, that is, neither agreed nor disagreed with the above opinion.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

It was noted that despite the inherent oppressions meted on women-librarians in their places of work, sky still becomes their limit in terms of career progression on the job.

It is also discovered that Women still aspire getting to the peak of the profession as evidenced in crops of professors of the profession in various Universities of learning in Nigeria. Furthermore, it was noted that male - librarians or, precisely, the male staff too, accepted in no small measure, that women librarians' leadership style yield notable developments on the overall achievements and growth recorded in all the institutions sampled.

Also from the results gathered from the respondents, the dint of hatred, chauvinistic ideologies still reared its ugly head as evidenced from the responses from the questions on gender differentiation. From most of the institutions' case notes, almost all the men-librarians expressed their disgust attitude towards having female librarians at the chore Centre of the headship. This was revealed from the table where it was only in three tertiaries that women were noted to be acting University Librarians. In the rest, men remained substantive heads .o

However, from the study titled "Women librarians status, role and impact in the development and growth of librarianship in tertiary institutions in Ogun State, Nigeria." Librarians in Nigerian universities are no exception to this assertion that female librarians contributed well to the growth and development of librarianship and have been pacesetters to the profession from the onset.

Recommendations

Since the roles women played in the growth and development of socio-political affairs of the nation have been analyzed as above, every effort should be made by the government to organize seminar, workshops and conferences where the need for women's education at all level are stressed there should also be strong support financially, form government to encourage to attain education. It is high time all educated women in Nigeria used the positions in all works of life to move other less privileged women- folk to shy away from the 'old school' idea that is, the tradition of women continued subjugation to patriarchal ideas: and that of restricting women to household chores and lasting oppression of endless child bearing.

Educated women are to be involved in formulation of government policies relating to women intending to be trained in librarianship. This will help to orientate all the women going for other unprofessional courses just to earn their living.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, women's roles, status and their contributions to the growth and development inherent in their educational sector have greatly enlarge the library profession in Nigeria. Although the library resources they handled in the various sections they serve and the services they render have feminine side, which can only be best interpreted naturally, the women- folk have tirelessly labored to move the society forward. Therefore, women in the libraries have won their strengths and achieved their feminine fame not in aggression but in steady quietness of action which has been that of a radiant self -actualization of all it entails to be womanly. The educated women of our profession should share equally with their male colleagues in redefining librarianship and creating a new conducive atmosphere for the young female librarians presently on the job. Fasugba (2000) argued that many women today are engaged in activities and jobs hitherto regarded as the exclusive reserve of men. In Nigeria today, the women folk have come a long way. In business, politics, education, sports and the professions. Women have made an indelible mark in their effort to conquer the limitations of the past which have sought to place them permanently in the kitchen and bedroom and have become conscious of their rights, as they have continued to slug it out with men in all areas of human endeavors.

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