

Career counselling and career information on career choice in librarianship among postgraduate library and information science (LIS) students in Southwestern Nigeria

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Abstract

Career counselling and career information are dynamic vehicles that drive students towards career pathways and self-development. Uninterrupted career counselling and career information in librarianship will result in an upturn in the number of career choices in the profession. The objective of the study was to investigate the effect of career counselling and career information on career choice in librarianship among postgraduate students in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria. A descriptive research design of correlational type was adopted for the study. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study covered one hundred and sixty one (161) master's degree students of the library and information science programme in the 2019/2020 academic year in the Southwestern Nigeria. A total of 161 copies of questionnaire were administered personally by the researchers to the respondents, and 157 were retrieved and found satisfactory for the study. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for data analysis, and the results obtained were presented in frequency and percentage, pie chart, and bar chart. The study discovered that the students were not interested in the librarianship profession at the first degree level, but they developed a passion for the profession later in life. The study recommended that librarians use all media types (television, radio, newspapers, web pages, and social media channels, among others) to create awareness and promote their profession.

Keywords: Career counselling, career information, career choice, librarianship, LIS, postgraduate students, library and information science schools, Southwestern Nigeria

Introduction

Career selection is a sensitive matter that requires thoughtfulness and serious consideration; otherwise, one may live his or her entire life in regret. Nowadays, how people perceive the problems of the future is dependent on the overall effort they put into planning for that future. Planning for a better future for students is essentially the responsibility of their parents, teachers, and career counsellors. The career path an individual chooses to follow can affect him or her in several ways. It can determine where the individual will live and the type of associations that he or she will have. The level of education one can acquire and earning capacity can also be determined by the career one chooses.

Career counselling programme is commonly used to provide career

information and aid to students, both generally and particularly on career choice and its possibilities. Career counselling at different tiers of schools is supposed to focus on career information, such as vocations and career trajectories, as well as information about different courses, their prospects, marketability, and employability. The essence of career counselling in secondary schools is to hold one-on-one interactions with students or group interviews focusing on some distinctive career issues. As a result, career counselling programmes are designed to assist students in recognizing and developing their potential.

Career counselling facilitates, career choice, career development and the ability to be aware preparing for and entering a career, being aware of chosen occupations which

includes factors influencing career choice, availability and utilization of occupational information, interpreting psychological tests relating to jobs, understanding the job environment and increasing the relevance of occupational information (Egbe, 2015). A career counselling programme is necessary to ensure that students understand the subject combination and what it entails before deciding on a career path in a particular field. Most students do not have access to expert occupational and career counselling programmes during their secondary school transitions. Because there are no career counselling programmes available, most students choose careers based on variables such as family, peer and teacher influence.

Career information programmes are designed to assist students in recognizing their potential and maximise it. It will provide students with professional services that will support them in making sophisticated career decisions. Students can use career information to help themselves in making career decisions, to manage their careers and to progress from a general grasp of life and work to a more detailed understanding of the realistic study and employment alternatives available to them. Assisting students in making well-informed decisions on subjects and disciplines can lead to a more positive outlook in life, a greater sense of purpose, and a higher degree of contribution to their families and society (Ombaba, Keraro, Sindabi & Asiayo, (2014).

Ibrahim, Olaka, Wambiya, & Raburu (2014) noted that career counselling is generally recognised as a significant and successful technique for bridging the gap between school and the workplace. It strives to help students understand themselves and is aimed to provide specialised assistance with educational, vocational, emotional and personal social decisions in a complicated and changing world. Ogundele, Feyisetan & Shaaba (2014) indicated that each school

should have a suitable career counselling clinic where the students can be counselled on their career choices to avoid future regrets, as well as periodically hold career seminars to expose students to various alternatives.

Nevertheless, it has been discovered that many postgraduate students in Nigeria aspire to pursue postgraduate programme in librarianship. This could be a result of a lack of employment opportunities in their first-degree discipline or as a result of the scarcity of librarians. It is on this note that the researchers examined the effect of career counselling and career information on career choice in librarianship among postgraduate students in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria. Career counselling and career information are essential channels to aid students in making the best choice possible in several subject areas.

The scope of the study were selected library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria which covers the universities that are federal, state and privately owned running postgraduate programme in library and information science. Five (5) LIS departments which were accredited by the National University Commission in Southwestern Nigeria were selected for the research and the participants were all masters' students' in the 2019/ 2020 academic year.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. determine the existence of career counselling in librarianship among postgraduate students in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria;
2. ascertain the availability of career information in librarianship for postgraduate students in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

Research questions

The following questions are answered in the study:

1. Does career counselling exist in librarianship among postgraduate students in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria?
2. Is career information available in librarianship for postgraduate students in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis is tested in the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between career counselling and career information on career choice in librarianship among postgraduate students in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

Literature review

Many students lose focus in life and engage in bad behaviour such as drug abuse, smoking alcoholism, truancy and other juvenile delinquencies which are recognized as major factors responsible for early school drop-out, poor grades and ineffectiveness on future jobs and general difficulties in career development (Boitt, 2016). Alutu (2004) stated that career choice information and counselling should be introduced to a child at an early stage in life that is during their nursery school years, through the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Making a wrong career choice could lead to negative consequences not only for the individual but also for the whole society. As such, preparing students with proper career decision skills in librarianship becomes extremely imperative and career counsellors can be of help. This is because, in our extensive media and culture, for instance, one hardly ever sees or hears people making

a statement that they would one day desire to become a professional librarian, even though it is common to hear them aspire to become doctors, lawyers, accountants, pharmacist's bankers among others.

Also, it is obvious from literatures that many librarians did not, from the outset wanted to become librarians (Newbutt & Sen 2009 and Simon & Taylor 2011). According to Newbutt & Sen (2009), the lack of understanding of the role of a librarian, and lack of awareness of librarianship as a profession, results in avoiding librarianship profession. Many students do not initially decide to pursue a career in librarianship (Newbutt & Sen 2009), suggesting that librarianship profession is not appealing to them.

Researchers by Lo et al. (2016) looked into Canadian and Hong Kong second-care librarians. They changed careers because they were unhappy in their previous jobs or were having trouble obtaining work in their original fields. The reasons behind selecting LIS included the following: a library setting dedicated to knowledge pursuits, chances for skill and knowledge transfer, career stability, job security, convenient working hours, less competitive work, and enthusiasm in LIS. According to Moniarou-Papaconstantinou et al. (2015), work insecurity, job changes, and an inappropriate first career choice are the main causes of career transitions to LIS. The appeal of working in information, a passion for reading and libraries, an interest in technology and information retrieval, the ability to work with clients, the variety of the job, the chance to pursue advanced education, and the ability to better balance work and family life are the main reasons people choose to pursue LIS.

In a similar vein, Deeming and Chelin (2001), referenced by Dukic (2017), found that although they were aware of the low status and negative perception of librarianship, most people who changed careers were content with their new

positions. A study conducted by Hart (2010) on academic librarians revealed that just over half of them were satisfied with their jobs overall, while slightly less than half were looking for new options because of their low salaries and sense of stagnation. According to Alansari (2011) research, Kuwaiti professional librarians employed in university, public, and special libraries reported relatively mediocre job satisfaction. Salary, perks, working conditions, and opportunities for advancement were the main causes of employment discontent among Kuwaiti professional librarians. In a similar vein, Croatian librarians gave their occupations a positive review, according to a study by Dukic and Dukic (2014), however they had lower levels of satisfaction with their social standing, pay, working conditions, and opportunities for professional growth.

Ard et al. (2006) study found that almost 90% of respondents chose to pursue an LIS career during or after college. About 31 percent did not consider LIS as career until five or more years after college. Only 3 percent indicated LIS career as a lifetime ambition and just 2 percent listed LIS career

goal since high school. The results raises an interesting question; why don't many people choose librarianship from the start but rather wait until later in life to become librarians?

A study of how secondary school students view librarianship was carried out at the United States of America. It was discovered that high school or college career counsellors don't usually promote the field of librarianship. One student noted that librarianship was not listed in a career directory he had consulted (Newbutt & Sen, 2009). This obviously result in their lack of knowledge about the profession. Olamide & Olawaiye (2013) study supported the findings of Newbutt and Sen (2009), who discovered in their study that secondary school students in Nigeria lacked the services of a career counsellor to guide them. This has made it difficult, if not impossible, for many youths to make the right career choice. Olayinka (2008) was also in agreement, when it was revealed in her study about the choice of librarianship as a career in public senior secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria, that the guidance and counselling units of many secondary schools are not functioning.

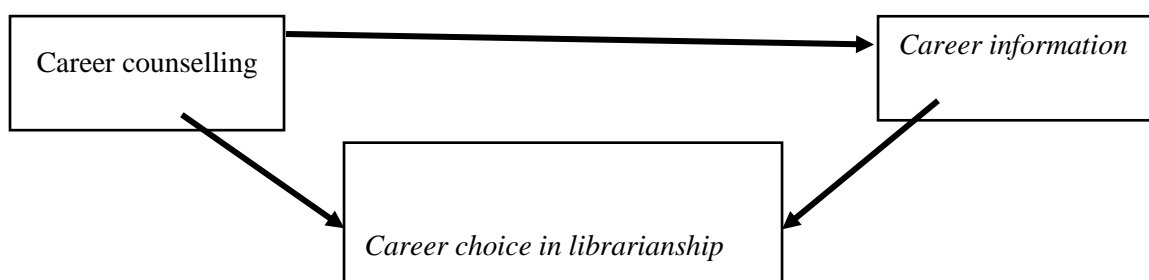


Fig. 1: Conceptual model

As shown in Figure 1: Career counselling and *Career information* are seen as the independent variables, while *Career choice in librarianship* is seen as the dependent variable for this study. The career counselling in librarianship among postgraduate students directly influences their career choice. Similarly, the

career information available to postgraduate students directly influence their *Career choice in librarianship*. Based on the self-constructed model, career counselling has an influence on career information of postgraduate students.

Theoretical framework

From literatures, there are several theories identified to be related to career counselling, career information, and career choice. However, the researchers will focus on Krumboltz's Learning Theory.

Krumboltz's Learning Theory

With Krumboltz's learning theory, career development professionals began to study how individual cognitions and learning experiences affect career decision-making (Krumboltz, Mitchell and Jones, 1976). The theory emphasised the importance of both behaviour (actions) and cognitions (knowing/thinking) and it was based on cognitive behaviour therapy's idea that learning is mediated by what people say to themselves, consciously or unconsciously (Yost and Corbishley 1987). Krumboltz divided the concept into two parts: which are the Social Learning Theory of career decision making and the learning theory of career counseling. The concept explains how interactions between a person's endowment, social and cultural surroundings and previous learning experiences influence his or her approach to learning, goal-setting, value clarity, producing career prospects, and obtaining professional information. Interactions between these four sets of components also result in emotional responses (Krumboltz, Mitchell, and Jones 1976).

In addition, Krumboltz developed the Learning Theory of Career Choice and Counseling (LTCC) as a guide for practical career counsellors who want to know what they can do to help people who are dealing with a variety of vocational issues. Krumboltz, Mitchell, and Jones (1976) identified four key patterns that people must consider when making career decisions in modern society and that career counsellors must help them navigate. People must first broaden their horizons in terms of their

abilities and interests. As a result, rather than directing clients based on assessed interests based on limited past experiences, counsellors should encourage clients to try new things. Second, employees must be willing to learn new skills. As a result, learning new skills for a changing job environment can be tremendously stressful for clients, a problem that can be effectively handled through the use of practical interventions. Counsellors play a critical role in supporting them in dealing with stress as they learn new abilities. Third, people must be empowered to take action. To put it another way, many variables of professional decisions (for example, a family's attitude toward a particular occupation) are typically overlooked in guiding practice.

This can result in a fear of making decisions (referred to by Krumboltz as zeteophobia) or a delay in making a decision. Counsellors must be willing to collaborate to address these issues and provide effective assistance throughout the exploration process. Fourth, career counsellors must assume a more prominent role. This demand combining career and personal counselling, burnout, job changes, peer relationships, hurdles to professional progress and the work role itself, as well as its impact on other life roles, are all examples of potential challenges that a career practitioner should address. Concerning career counselling, the teachers, school counsellors and librarians in Southwestern Nigeria should place more emphasis on career counselling and provide career information on librarianship as a profession and academic discipline to influence students' career choice.

Methods

Career counselling and career information are vital mediums for assisting students in their career pathways. The descriptive survey research design of the correlational type was adopted for the study. The population of the study covered one hundred

and sixty-one (161) masters' students of library and information science programme, 2019/2020 academic year in the Southwestern Nigeria. Based on the data obtained from each library school through personal contact, there were thirty-five (35) masters students in the library school at Tai Solarin University of Education, eight (7) at Adeleke University, nine (9) at Lead City University, forty (40) at Babcock University and Seventy (70) at University of Ibadan. Five (5) accredited library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria were selected for the study, comprising one (1) federal university; one (1) state university and three (3) private universities (Librarian Registration Council of Nigeria, 2022).

A total enumeration approach was adopted for this study to cover the entire

population size of one hundred and sixty-one (161) library and information science postgraduate (masters) students in the five selected library schools. The questionnaire was the research instrument used for data collection. A total of 161 copies of questionnaire were administered personally by the researchers to the respondents and 157 were retrieved and found useful for the study. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for data analyses and results obtained were presented in frequency and percentages, pie chart, bar chart and Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient.

Results

The findings of the stud are presented in this section,

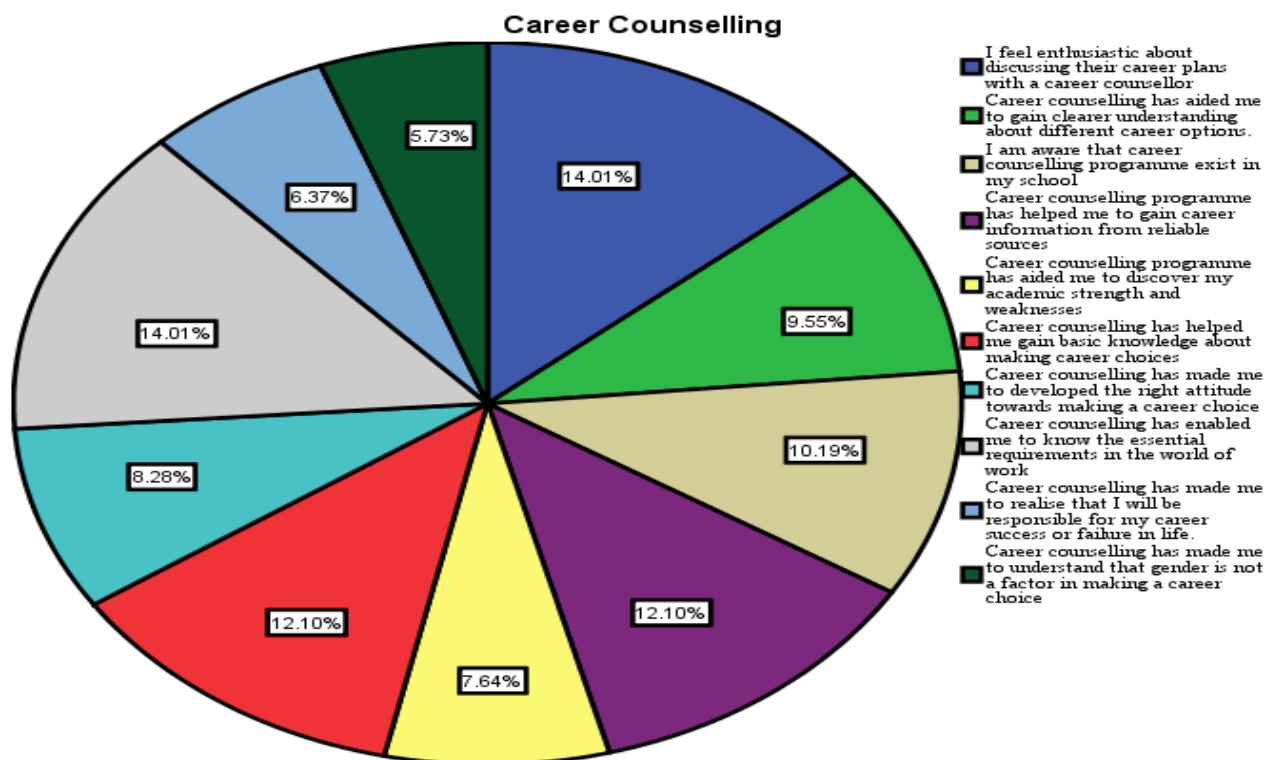


Fig.1: Existence of career counselling in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria

From Figure 1, the findings revealed that the majority of the respondents, 22 (14.01%), feel enthusiastic about discussing their career plans with a career counsellor,

and another 22 (14.01%) agreed that career counselling has enabled them to know the essential requirements in the world of work. 19 (12.10%) of the respondents agreed that

the career counselling programme has helped them gain career information from reliable sources. Likewise, another 19 (12.10%) agreed that career counselling has helped them gain basic knowledge about making career choices. 16 (10.2%) of the respondents agreed that they were aware that a career counselling programme exists in their school; 15 (9.6%) of the respondents agreed that career counselling has aided them in gaining a clearer understanding of different career options; Also, 13 (8.3%) of the respondents agreed that career counselling has enabled them to develop the right attitude towards making a career

choice; 12 (7.6%) of the respondents agreed that the career counselling programme has helped them to discover their academic strengths and weaknesses; 10 (6.4%) of the respondents agreed that career counselling has made them realise that they would be responsible for their career success or failure in life; and 9 (5.7%) of the respondents agreed that career counselling has made them understand that gender is not a factor in making a career choice. The results imply that career counselling programme exist in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria.

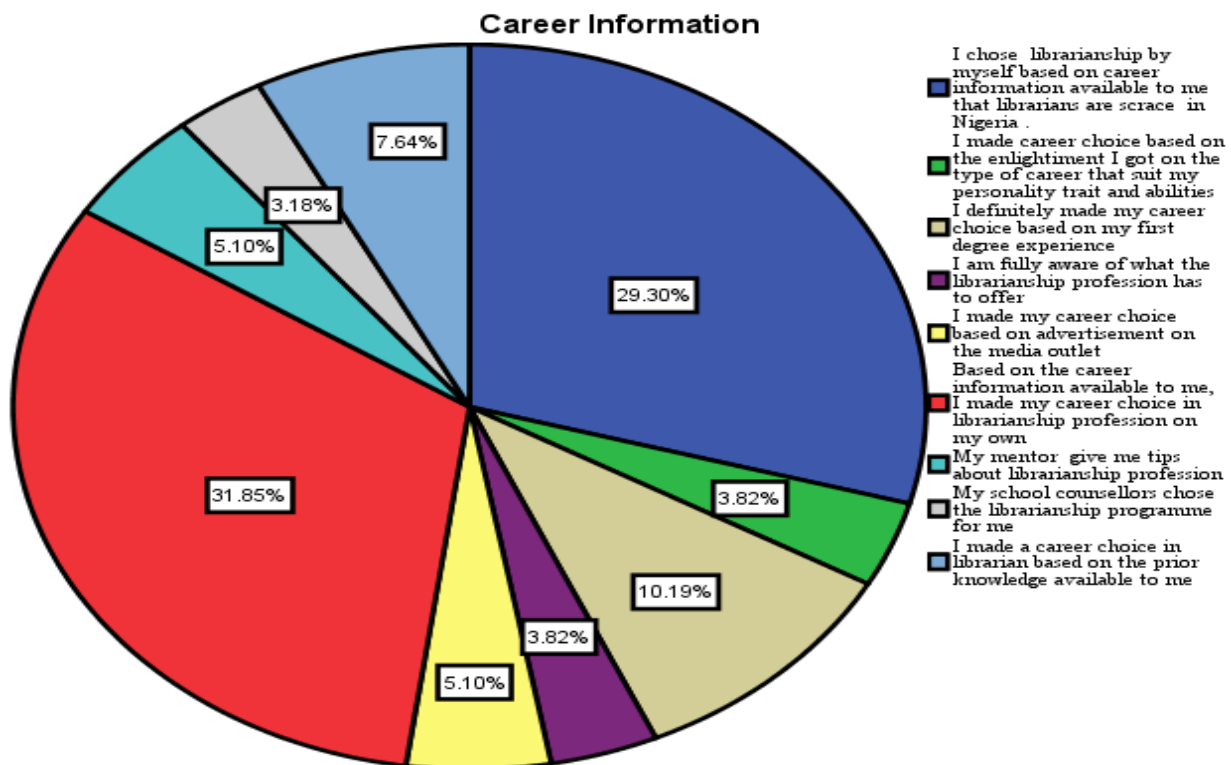


Fig. 2: Availability of career information in librarianship in library and information science schools in Southwestern, Nigeria

Figure 2 shows that the majority of the respondents, 50 (31.8%), chose librarianship by themselves based on career information available to them and the fact that librarians are scarce in Nigeria, 46 (29.3%) of the respondents agreed that they made their career choice based on their first-degree experience; 16 (10.2%) of the

respondents agreed that based on the career information available to them, they conducted their career research on their own; 12 (7.6%) of the respondents agreed that they made a career choice in librarianship based on the prior knowledge available to them; 8 (5.1%) of the respondents agreed that they made their

career choice based on advertisements in the media outlet; another 8 (5.1%) of the respondents agreed that they made their career choice based on career tips from their mentor; also 6 (3.82%) of the respondents agreed that they made their career choice based on the enlightenment they received on the type of profession that suit their personality trait and abilities; likewise, another 6 (3.82%) of the respondents agreed

that they were fully aware of what the librarianship as a profession has to offer; while 5 (3.2%) of the respondents agreed that their school counsellors choose the librarianship programme for them. Based on the findings, it can be inferred that there is availability of adequate career information on the librarianship profession in Southwestern Nigeria.

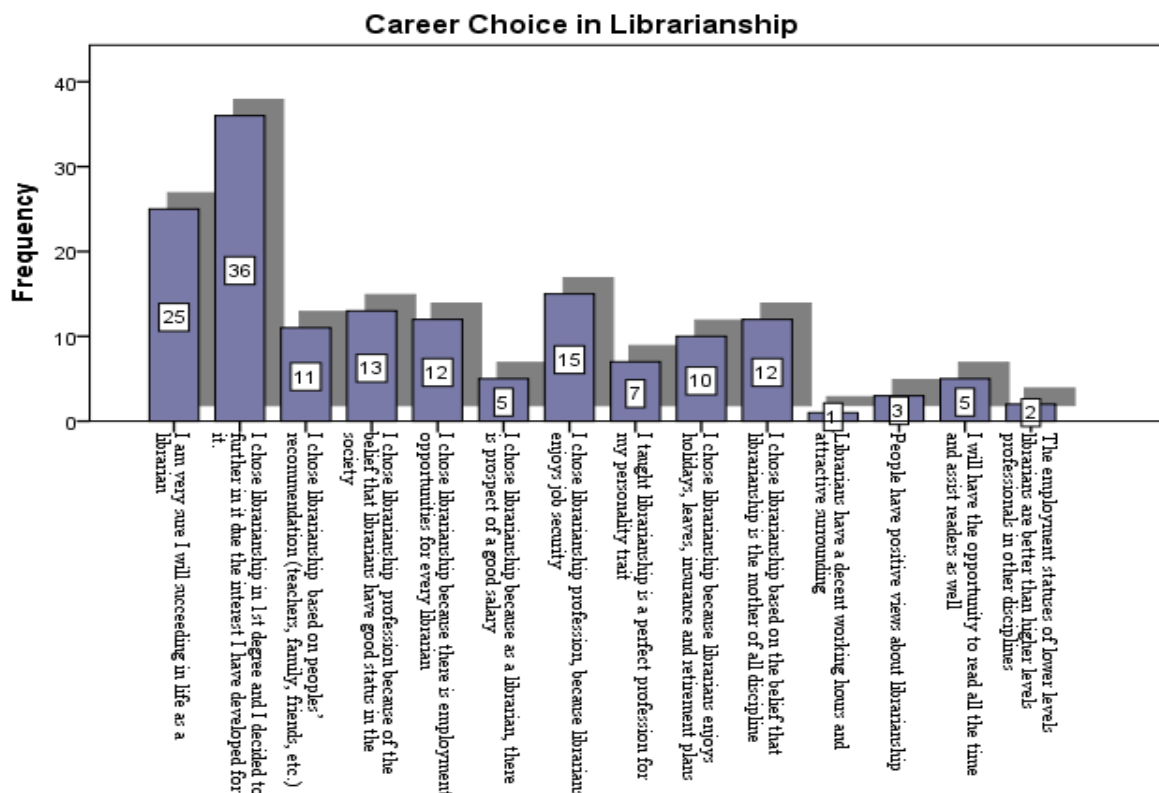


Fig. 3: Career choice in librarianship among postgraduate students in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria

Figure 3 reveals that a majority of the respondents, 36 (22.9%), chose librarianship in first degree as a second choice but decided to pursue it further due to the interest they have developed in the profession; 25 (15.9%) of the respondents agreed that they are very sure of succeeding in life as a librarian; 15 (9.6%) of the respondents agreed that librarians enjoy job security; 13 (8.3%) of the respondents agreed that they chose librarianship profession because of the belief that

librarians have good status in the society, 12 (7.6%) of the respondents agreed that they chose librarianship because there is employment opportunities for every librarian; another 12 (7.6%) of the respondents agreed that their choice of librarianship was based on the belief that librarianship is the mother of all discipline; 11 (7.0%) of the respondents agreed that their choice of librarianship was based on peoples' recommendation (teachers, family, friends, etc.); on the other hand, 10 (6.4%)

of the respondents agreed that they chose librarianship as a profession was because they believed that librarians enjoy holiday, leave, insurance and retirement plans; 7 (4.5%) of the respondents agreed that they taught that librarianship is a perfect profession for their personality trait, 5 (3.2%) of the respondents agreed that they chose profession because they believe that there is prospect of a good salary in the profession.; 5 (3.2%) of the respondents agreed that they chose librarianship because they believed that the profession will afford them the opportunity to read all the time and assist readers as well; 3 (1.9%) of the respondents agreed that they chose librarianship because people have positive views about librarianship; 2 (1.3 %) of the respondents agreed that they chose

librarianship because the employment statuses of lower level librarians are better than higher level professionals in other disciplines; while 1.06% of the respondents agreed that they chose librarianship because librarians have a decent work hours and attractive surrounding. The result from the figure that the majority of the students were not interested in the librarianship profession at the first-degree level, but they developed a passion for the profession later in life.

Hypothesis testing

H0₁: There is no relationship between career counselling and career information on career choice in librarianship among postgraduate students in library and information science schools in South- western, Nigeria.

Table 1: Pearson’s correlation on relationship between career counselling and career information on career choice in librarianship among the postgraduate students

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	r	sig P	Sig.
Career Counselling	157	5.0764	2.80005				
Career Information	157	4.7707	3.10474	156	-.235	.002	S

Table shows the relationship between career counselling and career information on career choice in librarianship among postgraduate students in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria. The table reveals that career counselling ($r = -.235$; $p < 0.05$) has a significant positive relationship with the career information of postgraduate students in library schools. This implies that there is positive linear relationship between career counselling and the career information of postgraduate students in library schools, such that the more informed, the higher the likelihood of increase in career choice in librarianship among postgraduate students in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria. Thus, the null hypothesis stating that there is no relationship between career counselling and

career information on career choice in librarianship among postgraduate students in library and information science schools in Southwestern Nigeria is hereby rejected.

Conclusion

Career counselling and career information are dynamic vehicles that drives students towards career pathways and self-development. The process will not only help the students to discover, appreciate and propel themselves towards the world of works but will expose them to making career, educational and life decisions. Career development is more than just deciding on a choice and which job you wish to get when you leave school. Career information is very relevant for any profession to thrive. It will determine the level of awareness that the general public will have on the profession

and invariably the level of career choices that the student will make in such profession. In a situation where there is uninterrupted career counselling and career information in librarianship; it will result in increase in the number of career choices in the profession especially in first degree level.

Based on the results, the following are recommended:

1. Librarians should use all media outlet (television, radio, newspapers, web page, social media channels among others) to create awareness and promote the benefits of the profession.
2. At secondary school level, particularly in senior secondary school, students should be encouraged to avail themselves of ample information on librarianship as a profession such as the prospect and opportunities that the profession offers.
3. Practicing librarians should do more to project the image of this noble profession through their mode of dressing and their behaviour. They will motivate and stimulate the interest of young people in the profession.
4. The ministry of education should approve the teaching and learning of library and information science subject at secondary school levels.

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