Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) and Skill Acquisition of Library and Information Science (LIS) Students in University of Uyo

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) and Skill Acquisition of Library and Information Science (LIS) Students in University of Uyo. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised all full-time (69) and part-time (48) undergraduate students of library and information science in the 2018/2019 academic session. A total of one hundred and seventeen (117) respondents were used for the study. A researcher-developed instrument tagged "SIWES and Skill Acquisition of LIS Students Questionnaire (SSASQ)was used for data collection with a reliability index of 0.86. The data obtained were analysed using frequencies, simple percentages and bar charts. Finding indicated that all the Library and Information Science (LIS) students in the University of Uyo are attached only to an academic library which is the University of Uyo. Finding also showed that the most available working tool in the libraries/establishment students were attached is "subject headings" with the least as "reference tools". Finally, the results proved that the most available practical skills acquired during the programme is "cataloguing and classification of information resources" with the use of "KOHA software" as the least. Recommendations included that, for more exposure and adequate skill acquisition, Library and Information Science(LIS) students of the University of Uyo should be given an opportunity undertake industrial attachment to other types of libraries, publishing houses, media houses, archives and records centres.

KEYWORDS: SIWES, libraries/establishments, students, practical skills, Library and Information Science, Skill Acquisition, University of Uyo

Introduction

The information needs of library users in this present era of globalization are becoming more sophisticated. Therefore, practical approach is required in meeting the needs of the library users. As a result, there is dire need for value re-orientation of future librarians. One way of achieving this is by blending theoretical knowledge with practical knowledge through SIWES.

The Students' Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) is a skill training programme designed to expose and prepare students of Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Technology, Colleges of Education and Colleges of Agriculture for the industrial work situation that they are likely to meet after graduation. The scheme also affords the students the opportunity of familiarizing and exposing themselves to the needed experience in handling tools and machinery that are usually not available in their institutions. (Students SIWES Handbook: University of Uyo, 2015). Its goals are to improve one's productivity and performance in different academic disciplines. SIWES also prepares students for labour markets and it has become an innovative phenomenon in human resource development and training in Nigeria (Ojokuku, Emeahara, Aboyade & Chris-Israel, 2015).

In the department of Educational Technology and Library Science, University of Uyo, Nigeria, SIWES is undertaken during the long vacation (year three second semester holiday) for regular and part-time degree students for a period of twenty-four weeks (six months) with intensive supervision in the university library under the course LIS 412: Field Experience. The programme avails students of the department the opportunity of laying hands on practical aspects of librarianship and to have a glimpse of what life after school would look like in their choice of library profession as a career. The SIWES is a prerequisite for the award of Bachelor of Library and Information Science (B.LIS) degree in University of Uyo.

The expectation of the scheme is to bridge the gap between theory and practice. As noted by Nse (2012), the quality of service rendered in the library is in proportion to the level of knowledge and skills possessed by the library staff. The author further posited that it is a fact that today's library science students are the librarians of tomorrow and if effective service delivery should be expected from them, it is imperative that they are given adequate opportunities to acquire all round skills. This will give the students a re-orientation of the profession and they will in turn view it in a different perspective. In a similar vein Edonkumoh, Nwachukwu & Emmanuel (2015), maintained that practical skills development in library and information science is related to performing high powered tasks in order to master the arts and craft of the diverse areas of librarianship and information science. SIWES gives the opportunity for LIS students to transform their classroom learning (which is mostly theory) into practice. The importance of SIWES programme to LIS students cannot be overemphasized as most LIS students who have not master the art of using LIS tools like subject headings, classification schemes, thesaurus, KOHA software, and so on are expected to perfect the art during the period of this programme. This is to prevent them from being deficient or half-baked librarians in the future.

Statement of the Problem

The Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) was designed to arm students with the prerequisite practical skills required after their graduation from school. It was structured to bridge the gap between theory and practice. It is presumed that students are acquainted with the theoretical knowledge of how to use the various tools of librarianship in the classroom. An attempt to transform the classroom knowledge into practice is term SIWES. However, the questions that need to be answered based on the stated problems are: what types of libraries/establishments are LIS students attached? What are the available working tools in the libraries/establishment attached? What are the practical skills acquired after the programme?

This study is therefore intended to fill this gap by determining the skills acquired by LIS students during and after their Industrial Work Experience.

Objectives of the Study

The study generally is aimed at SIWES and skill acquisition of LIS students in University of Uyo. Specifically, the objectives are:

1. To assess the type of libraries/establishments LIS students are attached.
2. To examine the available working tools in the library/establishments attached.
3. To determine the practical skills acquired during the programme.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions.

1. What types of libraries/establishment are LIS students attached?
2. What are the available working tools in the libraries/establishment attached?
3. What are the practical skills acquired during the programme?

Literature Review

Training according to Rao (1990) is the organized procedure by which people learn knowledge and skills for a definite purpose. To the authors, it refers to the teaching and learning activities carried out for the primary purpose of helping members of an organization to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, abilities and attitude needed for a particular job and organization. Sambe and Emmanuel (2012) view training as a type of education one receives after basic education. It enables the practitioners to keep abreast with new developments thereby updating their knowledge and skills to be able to cope with new challenges.

However, Mafe (2009), stated that there are two basic forms of learning: education and training, both of which are essential to the productive world of work and the functioning of the society. Therefore, Ugwuanyi and Ezema (2010) emphasized that SIWES plays a significant role in human resource development in Nigeria. Nse (2012) carried out an evaluation of the students' industrial work experience scheme in the library school in Federal Polytechnic Nekede, Nigeria. She concluded that there exists a wide margin in the reality and actualization of the objectives of SIWES. The author also observed that lack of proper coordination and supervision of the exercise is a factor militating against the full actualization of the objectives of SIWES. The author recommended that for students to be fully equipped with the skills as well as knowledge required for efficiency in the place of work, all hands must be on deck. In line with the above recommendation, Aderonke (2011) in her study, examined SIWES and the dynamics of sustainable skills acquisition and utilization in Nigeria with a view to determining the viability or otherwise of government continuing investment in the scheme. The author concluded that SIWES is a good strategy for sustainable skill development and utilization in Nigeria.

Consequently, Olugbenga (2009) carried out a survey on the views of students in the three departments of the school of applied science, Nuhu Bamalli Polytechnic Zaria about the adequacy of the skills acquired during their participation in SIWES. The author noted that many of the students' suggested that the skills acquired were inadequate. According to him, it was as a

result of the short duration and lack of modern facilities in their place of industrial training. The role that training can play in human resource development in libraries and information system is inestimable and unquantifiable (Adjidahum, 2007). Activities in the library like cataloguing, classification, shelving, shelf-reading, circulation, charging, discharging, reference services, among others, requires a high level of practical skills in other to render effective service to library users.

Method

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study (117) comprised all full-time (69) and part-time (48) undergraduate students of Library and Information Science (LIS) in the 2018/2019 academic session. A census sampling technique was adopted in the study where the 117 students of Library and Information Science (LIS) for the said academic session were used as respondents. A structured questionnaire titled: "SIWES and Skill Acquisition of LIS Students Questionnaire (SSASQ) developed in line with the research questions, with reliability index of 0.86 was used to collect data from the respondents. The data collected were analyzed using frequencies, simple percentage and bar charts.
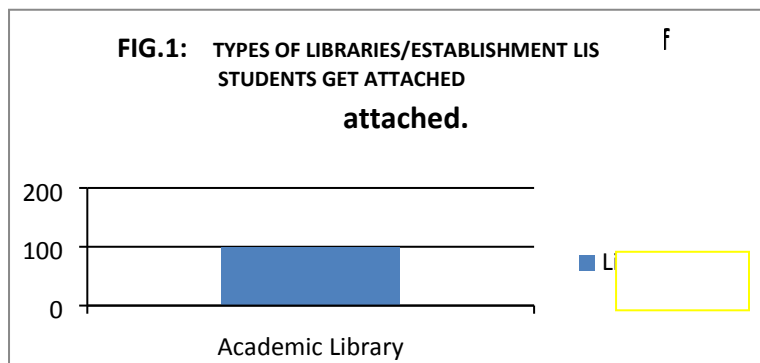
Results and Discussions

Results
Research Question One

The research question sought to find out the types of libraries/establishment LIS students are attached. To answer the research question, percentage analysis was performed as can be seen in table 1 and figure 1.

Table 1: Percentage analysis of the types of libraries/establishments LIS students are attached.

Library Type	Freq	Percentage (%)
Academic library	117	100%
TOTAL	**117**	**100%**

SOURCE: Field survey

FIG.1: TYPES OF LIBRARIES/ESTABLISHMENT LIS STUDENTS GET ATTACHED

attached.

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SOURCE: Field survey

The above table 1 and figure 1 present the percentage analysis of the types of libraries/establishments LIS students are attached. From the result, it was observed that all the respondent affirmed that the LIS students are attached academic library 117(100%).
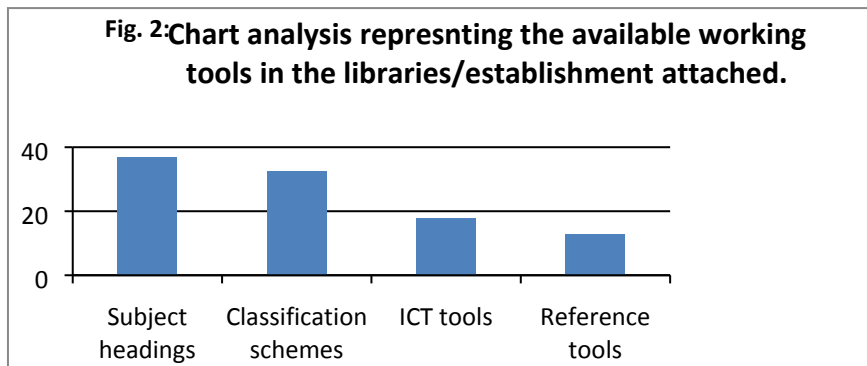
Research Question Two

The research question sought to find out the available working tools in the libraries/establishment attached. To answer the research question, percentage analysis was performed as can be seen in table 2 and figure 2.

Table 2: Percentage analysis of the available working tools in the libraries/establishments students are attached.

Available Working Tools	Freq	Percentage(%)
Subject headings	43	36.75
Classification schemes	38	32.48
ICT tools	21	17.95
Reference tools	15	12.82
TOTAL	**117**	**100%**

SOURCE: Field survey

Fig. 2: Chart analysis represnting the available working tools in the libraries/establishment attached.

SOURCE: Field survey

The above table 2 and figure 2 present the percentage analysis of the available working tools in the libraries/establishment attached. From the result, it was observed that the highest percentage of the respondents were respondents 43(36.75%) who said the available working tools in the libraries/establishment attached is subject headings, seconded by respondents 38(32.48%) who mentioned classification schemes. This was followed by respondent who mentioned ICT Tools 21(17.95%), while the least respondents 15(12.82%) responded that available working tools in the libraries/establishment attached is reference tools.
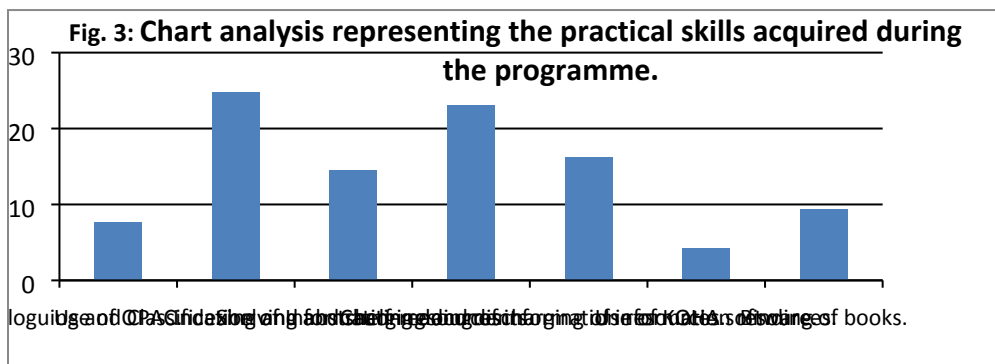
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Research Question Three

The research question sought to find out the practical skills acquired during the programme. To answer the research question, percentage analysis was performed as can be seen in table 3 and figure 3.

Table 3: Percentage analysis of the practical skills acquired by students during the programme.

Practical skills acquired during SIWES	Freq	Percentage(%)
Use of OPAC	9	7.69
Cataloguing and Classification of Information resources	29	24.79
Indexing and abstracting documents	17	14.53
Shelving and shelf-reading of information resources	27	23.08
Charging and discharging of information resources	19	16.24
Use of KOHA software	5	4.27
Binding of books	11	9.40
TOTAL	**117**	**100%**

SOURCE: Field survey

Fig. 3: **Chart analysis representing the practical skills acquired during the programme.**

SOURCE: Field survey

The above table 3 and figure 3 present the percentage analysis of the practical skills acquired during the programme. From the result, it was observed that the highest percentage of the respondent 29(24.79%) said the practical skills acquired during the programme is cataloguing and classification of information resources, seconded by respondents 27(23.08%) who said shelving and self-reading of information resources. This was followed by respondent who

mentioned charging and discharging of information resources 21(17.95%). Also 17(14.53) respondents, as fourth in the list said indexing and abstracting documents were. This was followed by respondents 9(7.69%) who said use of OPAC. The second to the least respondents on the subject matter affirmed that binding of books 11(9.40), while the least number of respondents 5(4.27%) said use of KOHA software.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the percentage analysis in tables 1 and figure 1 showed that all the LIS students in University of Uyo are attached in an academic library 117(100%). Even though the LIS students from the institution under study do not have an opportunity of getting attached to other organizations such as School libraries, Special libraries, Public libraries, National libraries, Publishing houses, Media houses, Archives and records centres, etc., the only academic library to which the students are attached has given exposure that augments the knowledge they gained during their course work in school. This finding agree with the view of Students SIWES Handbook: University of Uyo, (2015) which states that the scheme also affords the students the opportunity of familiarizing and exposing themselves to the needed experience in handling tools and machinery that are usually not available in their institutions. It also supports the opinion of Ojokuku, Emeahara, Aboyade & Chris-Israel, (2015) who stated that its goals are to improve one's productivity and performance in different areas of disciplines. SIWES also prepares students for labour markets and it has become an innovative phenomenon in human resource development and training in Nigeria.

The results of the percentage analysis in tables 2 and figure 2 showed that the highest percentage of the respondents 43(36.75%) affirmed the available working tools in the libraries/establishment attached to be subject headings, seconded by respondents 38(32.48%) who mentioned classification schemes. This was followed by respondents who mentioned ICT Tools 21(17.95%), while the least numbers of respondents 15(12.82%) responded that available working tools in the libraries/establishment attached is reference tools.

The results of the percentage analysis in tables 3 and figure 3 showed that the practical skills acquired most during the programme was cataloguing and classification of information resources 29(24.79%). This was seconded by respondents 27(23.08%) who said shelving and self-reading of information resources. This was followed by respondents who mentioned changing and discharging of information resources 21(17.95%); respondents 19(16.24) who said charging and discharging of information resources; respondents 17(14.53) who said indexing and abstracting documents were the fourth to the highest in the list; followed by respondents 9(7.69%) who said use of OPAC. The sixth in the list said binding of books 11(9.40), while the least group in the list 5(4.27%) affirmed the use of KOHA software.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the research work, it was concluded that: the LIS students of the University of Uyo should be made to go on industrial training to other libraries and establishments. The library/establishment LIS students of the University of Uyo are attached to only an academic library which is the University of Uyo library. The available working tools in the libraries/establishment LIS students are attached to subject headings, classification schemes, ICT tools and Reference tools. Finally, the practical skills acquired during the programme are

use of OPAC, cataloguing and classification of information resources, indexing and abstracting documents, shelving and shelf-reading of information resources, charging and discharging of information resources, use of KOHA software and binding of books.

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Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are deemed necessary:

1. For more exposure and adequate skill acquisition, LIS students of the University of Uyo should be given an opportunity by being sent out on industrial attachment to such establishments as school library, academic library, special library, public library, national library, publishing house, media house, archives and records centre and many others.

2. Apart from subject headings and classification schemes, ICT tools and reference tools, should always be within the reach of students on the scheme. This will further enhance their competencies and skills.

3. Students' should be adequately trained on cataloguing/classification of information resources, shelving and shelf-reading of information resources, charging and discharging of information resources, indexing and abstracting of documents, use of OPAC, use of KOHA software so as to acquire the much needed skills that would make them useful to themselves after graduation and the society at large.

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