



**Participation in funded Continuous Professional Development Programmes
by Library and Information Science (LIS) Educators for Enhanced Teaching
in Nigeria**

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Abstract

Continuous professional development is an essential activity for any professional to be up to date with new skills and knowledge in the field. This study investigated the level of participation of Library and Information Science (LIS) Educators in funded continuous professional development programmes. It also investigated the national and international agencies that support the continuous professional development programmes, the benefits, and the challenges that affect participation in the programmes. This is a survey research design that adopted an online survey for data collection. The population of the study was 70 LIS Educators who responded to the survey. Data were analyzed using simple frequencies, percentages and mean scores. It was discovered that all the LIS educators have participated in funded Continuous Professional Development Programmes organized by various associations and agencies. Result shows that participation was highest (100%) for programmes organized by Nigerian Library Association (NLA) Sections and Chapters. Other hosts were NGOs e.g Wikimedia foundation, JDPC, University / Library / Departments, Research4life.org, IFLA and AfLIA. Results also showed that the free CPD programmes have benefits such as acquisition of knowledge and skills, builds capacities for practical courses and confidence booster. It was recommended that LIS educators should embrace more professional development programmes while the institutions provide the necessary infrastructures to enable practising of what is learned to enhance classroom activities.

Keywords: Continuous Professional Development Programmes (CPD), Staff Development, Library and Information Science (LIS) educators, Sponsored programmes.

Introduction

Library and information science (LIS) professionals presents unique features in every era. From the pre-electronic era to the present-day sophisticated society, library schools with their educators have revolutionized to fit into the global change and move with the new models. These are achieved through continuous professional development programmes designed to upgrade and enrich the LIS Educators. Some of these programmes are free, indicating the magnanimity of the supporting organizations in making library and information science live up to the modern-day learning experience (Jamali & Nabavi, 2021). Although it is still evolving with the new trends in teaching the new processes and the global trends (New World Encyclopedia, 2021), the fact remains that there is a need for constant degrees of professional development. It demonstrates that every LIS educator ought to avail themselves for development for an enriched curriculum in the new era.

Library schools need relevant and current curriculum that speaks of new trends, new narratives, new practices and new learning. Continuous learning and professional development ought to open up knowledge on e-resources, online research tools, information and digital literacy, social media utilization, online user education and tutorial, online learning system, Wikipedia, library cooperation and resource sharing, networking and indigenous services (Adamu, Mohammed, Daudu, Umar & Mu'azu, 2024; Tella, Bamidele, Olaniyi & Yusuf, 2023; Affum & Dwomoh, 2023). So it makes sense that all new skills and related activities, which are sometimes free, are acquired and put in the curriculum to nurture career-ready students. Again, the activities of free e-learning, online workshops and presentations, scholarly writing, and professional development assume a global trend for enhanced teaching. It implies that building the capacities of LIS educators is a good practice for quality classroom exercises and teaching.

In other words, the LIS educators are expected to be ready and willing to participate in the programmes that transform the library schools with adequate capacities built on new standards that suit the new age and people (IFLA, 2020 & Williams, 2020). Some of these programmes are fully funded, while some are not. The funded continuous professional development programmes have their benefits for LIS educators in connecting, networking, engaging and inspiring seamless strategies and confidence (IFLA, 2021). In Nigeria, the LIS educators are in the Universities, Polytechnics and the College where there are library schools. They provide knowledge and continuous education opportunities for all levels of students, which include the undergraduates for the Bachelor's degree in Library and Information Science (BLIS), Post Graduate Diplomas (PGD LIS), Master's degree (MLIS) and a Doctor of Philosophy degree (PhD LIS). Notifications of free and funded activities have been posted on NALISE's online platforms.

However, when the LIS educators are at a disadvantage and technologically backward, there will be poor ICT skills, poor course design and curriculum, little or no effective policy, poor mentoring and guidance as well as a lack of cooperation

for quality education (Ahaiuzu, Nyemezu & Nsirim, 2020). They are therefore expected to redress the challenges affecting them in contributing to quality education. This study examined the free continuous professional development programmes which LIS educators in library schools in Nigeria have benefited from.

Statement of the Problem

Continuous learning is a basis for educators because it ensures delivery of effective curriculum, field studies and career-ready graduates. When the library schools are fully engaging, strategising and innovating with classroom activities, the LIS profession is sure to stand out in all their information services. The LIS educators hold the key to sustainability of LIS education. They have roles of sustaining the profession through their teaching because that is the only way new intakes will be attracted to the profession. There seems to be various free funded continuous professional development programmes by different organizations going on, virtually. Ideally that these programmes will enhance teaching and career development of the LIS educators. However, there seems to be a gap in participating in these continuous development programmes. The fact is that if these programmes are not accessed, the future of the library schools may be in question. Thus, this study investigated the free continuous professional development among the LIS educators in library schools in Nigeria.

Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of participation by LIS educators to continuous development programmes?
2. What are the national and international agencies that support the continuous professional development programme for LIS Educators?
3. What are the benefits of the continuous professional development programmes for LIS educators?
4. What are the challenges that affect the professional development programmes for LIS educators?

Literature review

Continuing Professional Development Programmes

The emphasis on continuous professional development cannot be underestimated. The training boosts the professionals' knowledge by providing resources for learning and service delivery. Essentially, continuous professional development is a must for any professional to be up to date with the new skills and knowledge in his/her field. Madukoma and Garba (2022) described it as the process of making sure that the individual worker has the opportunity to stay current with developments, knowledge,

skills, and constantly learn and advance their potential and professional understanding. The idea is to ensure commitment in the field, remain relevant, while embracing the new skills as a global trend and best practices as, well as translating the same in the field. Mann and Webb (2022) described continuous professional development as the process of trying to be a better teacher, to understand learners just a little bit better, to develop materials that work just a little bit more effectively, never really stops.

It then makes sense why professionals polish themselves to be updated.

Arua (2019) stressed,

The concept of continuing professional development (CPD) recognizes that education is the only way in which individuals continue to learn, grow and develop as professionals throughout their careers and professional lives. CPD is a process of lifelong learning which makes one to expand his/her personal and professional potential to meet the present and future needs of patrons and deliver service outcomes and priorities.

LIS Educators and enhanced teaching

The digital age and global society have brought significant changes in LIS education, not just in Nigeria but all over the world. The library schools continue to adapt and adopt on new new trends. As Abubakar (2021) put it, the LIS education has been experiencing a radical change, especially in the last couple of decades, which results in fundamental changes in all its structures. These changes did not only hinge on the multi-disciplinary issue of library science education but on core information contents like ICT, internet, artificial intelligence (AI), multimedia, databases, information and digital literacy, websites, social media and networking, e-resources, virtual library, big data and small data, metadata, digitization, online publishing, among others. These are built into the curriculum that produce the career-ready students.

Studies have proved the value that LIS educators add in sustaining the profession. Gautam and Kumar (2020) stated that the LIS educators play a significant role in the growth and development of innovative ideas and awareness levels of professionals in the present knowledge society. They strive to deliver with the type of education that must be technologically-based and market driven as well as pedagogical competency (Osuchukwu & Wagwu, 2020, Assefa & Wang, 2018). This is to state that the LIS educator should know it, teach it and practice it effectively. According to Mann (2021) CPD can positively impact how teachers view themselves and their self-worth. In other words, an empowered LIS educator is an asset and proud of his/her potential. Hence, the need to identify and participate in various continuous development programmes that are offered by national and international agencies.

National and international organizations that support LIS

It is therefore not strange to acknowledge that some organizations offer free training for professional development. For instance, the American Library Association (ALA) (2019) set up an annual directory of awards from state library agencies,

national and state library associations, local libraries, academic institutions, and foundations that give some form of financial assistance for undergraduate and/or graduate education programmes in library and information studies. It is also good to know that some library associations, institutions, agencies, non-government organizations and individuals provide opportunities for continuous professional development through online and physical spaces (IFLA, 2025; NLA, 2025 & AfLIA, 2023). The LIS educators under NALISE have also been exposed to free technological training, skills and open knowledge (Ebong & Ogwo, 2022). Besides, ALIA (2019) supports library and information professionals to engage in formal and informal learning experiences through the ALIA PD Scheme, ALIA Mentoring Scheme, ALIA conferences, symposia, events, forums and training.

The different kinds of training are organized for both LIS educators and professionals in different types of libraries to improve their competencies and relevance (Bajpai & Madhusudhan, 2021; Tsekea, 2021). The prospects of information science and LIS Educators look good as they relate with many international and national organizations for best practices. These organizations sometimes offer grants and funds for step-down training of trainees in their different institutions. They also organize conferences, workshops and offer sponsorship for participation in professional development. They provide spaces for networking, employment and internship. They also engage in lobbying and advocacy for professional development. The indication is that the advocacy for the enhancement of professional development initiatives is the right step for building the workforce of library and information professionals (Torres, Gold & Donnelly, 2022). Indeed, information science is poised to be relevant in all fields and contribute to the global facilitation of access to information through the professional development programmes of the LIS Educators who are the key to enhancing the library schools.

Benefits of Continuous Professional Development Programmes

Several studies have reported on the impacts of continuous professional development of LIS Educators. A study by Kanzira (2020) on a continuous development model on ten purposely selected participants revealed that the participants changed their attitudes towards teaching and learning, became confident, and improved their instructional practices. As continuous professional development works on the totality of the human person, it affects on the effective working relationship, builds confidence, increases personal interaction and develops the ability to research, lead and communicate (Chorbadzhiyska, 2024; Hamid & Soroya, 2017). In another scenario, Oladokun and Mooko (2023) in their study of continuous professional development of library professionals in Botswana, believed that lecturers at many institutions of learning in Botswana appear to have promptly risen to the new challenges through the rapid adoption of online teaching. In other words, professional development programmes are good opportunities which lead to the right direction for the librarians' relevance in the competitive ecosystem of information services (Siobhan & Hannaford, 2019), This can be attributed to the benefits of CPD.

Challenges of Continuous Professional Development

However, there are still challenges in the areas of growth in adopting the new learning, even when the training is funded. There are issues of policy on capacity building, provision of relevant resources and facilities, uneven development in some countries and regions, national information policy and uniform curriculum. Ebong and Ogwo (2022) identified the cost of internet connectivity in meeting the demand for continuous professional development among library information science educators. There are also the issues of institutional support, finance and cost of data, efficient infrastructures, erratic power supply, building digital content, (Tella, Bamidele, Olaniyi & Yusuf, 2023). Even when some LIS educators received the training, there are sometimes no provisions of facilities to practise on their learning (Ahaiuzu, Nyemezu & Nsirim 2020). From Marcelino (2023) the challenges of not participating in CPD were no means, no interest, travelling far and educators with a year to retire. The indication is that it is not easy way to develop professionally, but not getting it may be detrimental to the career and profession.

Methods

This was a survey research design. The population comprised seventy LIS educators. The instrument used was a structured online survey that was tailored alongside the research questions. The survey was posted to LIS Educators' WhatsApp platforms and other NLA groups. The survey lasted for three weeks to enable an adequate time frame for responses. Tables 1 and 2 were analyzed using simple percentages and frequencies. Tables 3 and 4 were analyzed using frequencies and mean scores. The response ratings were Strongly Agree (4 scores), Agree (3 scores), Disagree (2 scores) and Strongly disagree (1 score). The benchmark was 2.5. This means that mean scores below 2.5 were rejected, while scores above 2.5 were accepted as the study decision. The results are presented in Tables.

Results

Table 1: Demographic description of the respondents

S/N	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Gender		
	Male	22	31.43
	Female	48	68.57
2.	Age		
	30-40	18	25.75
	41-50	28	40
	51-60	20	28.57
	61 and above	4	5.71
3.	Educational Qualification		
	PhD	42	60
	MLIS	20	28.57
	BLIS (Graduate Assistant)	8	11.43
4.	Years of Experience		
	1-7years	14	20
	8-14years	20	28.57
	15-21years	22	31.43
	22 years and above	14	20

Figures in Table 1 show there were 22 males and 48 females that responded to the survey. Also shown was that the age range of the respondents between 30-40 is 18, while ages 41-51 is 28, 51-60 is 20 and 61years and above is 4. On the educational qualifications, 42 respondents have PhD, 20 have MLIS and 8 have BLIS. On years of experience, 14 respondents have worked for 1-7years, 20 have worked between 8-14 years, 22 have worked between 15 - 21 years while, 14 have worked from 22 years and above. This shows the diversity of the respondents and inclusive participation in the survey.

The level of participation by LIS educators to funded Continuous Professional Development programmes.

Table 2: Participation in funded continuous development programmes

S/N	Item	Yes	No
1.	Participation in Continuous Professional Development Programmes	70	-
	Total	100	

The Table 2 shows that all the LIS Educators who responded to the survey have participated in continuous professional development programmes with a 100% response rate. This indicates that high percentage of LIS Educators have participated in a CPD programme.

The National and International Agencies that Support Continuous Professional Development For LIS Educators

Table 3. The national and international agencies that have hosted funded continuous professional development programmes for LIS Educators

S/N	Items	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Nigerian Library Association (NLA Sections and Chapters)	70	100
2.	NGOs e.g Wikimedia foundation, JDPC	45	64.3
3.	University / Library / Department seminars and webinar	42	60
4.	Research4life.org	35	50
5.	Other Associations/Agencies e.g ALA, ACRL, Elsevier, Sage	32	45.7
6.	IFLA	30	42.9
7.	AfLIA	30	42.9
8.	US Embassy Lagos	12	17.1

Table 3 shows that all the LIS Educators in Nigeria have benefited from free Nigerian Library Association Sections and Chapters organized programmes (100%). Others are NGOs organized training (64.3%), University / Library / Departments

seminars and webinar (60%), Research4life.org trainings (50%) Library Associations/Agencies IFLA and AfLIA (42.9%), and US Embassy Lagos (17.1%) and. This shows that LIS Educators have various learning experiences from different organizations and agencies.

The Benefits of the Continuous Professional Development Programmes for LIS Educators

Table 4: The benefits of the funded continuous professional development programmes for LIS educators.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1.	Acquisition of knowledge and skills	45	25	-	-	3.64
2.	Builds capacities for practical courses	38	32	-	-	3.54
3.	Confidence booster	36	34	-	-	3.51
4.	Promotes network with peers	32	38	-	-	3.5
5.	Enhances international exchange and learning	32	38	-	-	3.5
6.	Promotes initiatives and strategies	45	15	-	-	3.4
7.	Sets the stage for extra curricular activities	30	32	8	-	3.31
8.	Enhances scholarly writing	24	38	8	-	3.23
9.	Opens spaces for Post doctoral studies and fellowship	20	24	26	-	2.91
10.	Enhances collaboration with peers and colleagues	35	35	-	-	2.86
11.	Improves supervision of projects	26	26	18	-	2.77

The responses above (Table 4) show that the LIS Educators agreed that the free CPD programmes have benefits which were all accepted based on the mean scores above the 2.5 benchmark. CPD builds capacities for practical courses, a confidence booster, the acquisition of knowledge and skills, promotes network with peers, enhances collaboration with peers and colleagues, enhances international exchange and learning, opens spaces for Postdoctoral studies and fellowship, improves supervision of projects, enhances scholarly writing, promotes initiatives and strategies and sets the stage for extracurricular activities.

Challenges that Affect Professional Development Programmes for LIS Educators.

Table 5: The challenges that affect the funded professional development programmes for LIS educators

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean
1	Inadequacy of facilities and infrastructure in the Faculty and institution to practise the learning	32	30	6	2	3.31
2	Too many workload	30	22	12	6	3.09
3	Institutional policies on professional development	28	25	10	7	3.06
4	Cost of data and internet connectivity	28	22	14	6	3.02
5	Lack of personal smart technological facilities for the CPD	25	25	12	8	2.96
6	Inability to complete the course because of too many modules and assignments	24	24	12	10	2.89
7	Time differences in joining the programmes	22	22	20	6	2.86
8	Mode of the training (virtual)	22	20	18	10	2.77

The Table 5 shows that the LIS Educators face challenges in undertaking professional development. The remark from the Table shows the acceptance of all the challenges posted. There is too much workload, mode of the training (virtual), cost of data and internet connectivity, time differences in joining the programmes, inability to complete the course because of too many modules and assignments, lack of personal smart technological facilities for the CPD, institutional policies on professional development and inadequacy of facilities and infrastructure in the Faculty and institution.

Discussion of the findings

The result indicates that all the LIS Educators admitted to have participated in Continuous Professional Development Programmes. This shows the determination to improve skills and move with the current trend in by Library and Information Science (LIS) educators. It rhymes with the position statement that LIS educators are ready and willing to participate in the funded programmes that transform the library schools with adequate capacities built on new standards that suit the new age (IFLA, 2020 & Williams, 2020). It shows that they are eager to flow with the tide and give their best to the students in the library schools.

The findings also shows that various organizations support LIS educators in the continuous professional development. They include Nigerian Library Association

(NLA) Sections and Chapters, NGOs, University / Library / Departments Research4life.org, Library Associations/Agencies such as IFLA and AfLIA and US Embassy Lagos. These mentions resonated with the points IFLA (2025), NLA (2025) AfLIA (2023) and ALIA (2019). These organizations ensured that the LIS professionals got free opportunities for continuous professional development through online and physical spaces, as well as in formal and informal spaces. This a great reflection of a good course for enhanced LIS teaching in Nigeria.

The result shows that the free CPD programmes have benefits of boosting confidence, building the capacities for practical courses, acquiring of knowledge and skills. This also in addition to promoting network with peers, enhances collaboration, initiatives and strategies as well as setting the stage for extra curricular activities. These match with the study of Kanzira (2020) who reported that continuous development made the participants became confident, and improved their instructional practices. Again, it corroborates with the result of heightened research ability for LIS educators as (Chorbadzhiyska, 2024; Hamid & Soroya, 2017). This shows that with CPD, the LIS Educator can widen their horizon and the classroom instruction more exciting,

The challenges experienced by the LIS Educators include too much workload, mode of the training (virtual), cost of data and internet connectivity, time differences in joining the programmes, inability to complete the course because of too many modules and assignments, lack of personal smart technological facilities for the CPD, is similar to the findings of the study by Ebong and Ogwo (2022). These can still widen the gap in building the capacities of LIS Educators for more enlightened classroom experiences. There is a need to minimize these challenges for maximum participation of LIS educator in the funded continuous professional development programmes for maximum and enriched pedagogy in the new era.

Conclusion

The study shows good participation in funded Continuous Professional Development Programmes by LIS educators in the study. It can be assumed that the classroom becomes an easy workshop in stepping down the knowledge acquired for a more gratifying library and information discipline. It is concluded that participants in the CPD programmes are in good course which must be encouraged. The organizations that support LIS professionals are acknowledged and encouraged to continue with more opportunities. More benefits are expected as new learning takes place for a coordinated classroom curriculum as well as establishing connections with the organizations, institutions and other agencies for more collaborative knowledge. The challenges should be reduced for more enhanced learning and teaching.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn:

1. As learning never ends, LIS Educators should be encouraged to continue to participate in CPD programmes. This will keep them regularly updated with new skills and knowledge
2. As new organizations and institutions grow, acknowledging the support of those already providing support will be a source of encouragement for the new ones to join in building the social framework. Therefore, there is a need for appreciating all the supporting organizations with imparting of good, enhanced teaching in the LIS fields.
3. More benefits are expected from the professionals. They should get all the good facilitation and skills with dedication and commitment. This will encourage more free programmes and grants to be accessed.
4. LIS Educators can put in more effort in minimizing the challenges of their keying into the free CPD programmes. The fact that these are free programmes is enough encouragement for their continued participation.

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