

# Contents analysis of library professional jobs advertised in Ajira portal by public service recruitment secretariat (PSRS) in Tanzania

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this study was to establish the level at which duties and responsibilities outlined in library jobs advertised in Ajira Portal are aligned with job market and skills requirement in digital library environment in Tanzania.

**Design/methodology/approach** – This study used quantitative content analysis method to systematically analyze library professional jobs advertised online in Ajira Portal by public service recruitment secretariat in Tanzania for over five-years ranging from January 1, 2019 to December 30, 2023.

**Findings** – The findings show that for the period of five-years there were 46 library job advertisements with 147 library job positions that yielded an average of only (9; 20%) job advertisements per year, only (3; 2.24%) of all job positions for each advertisement and only (29; 19.70%) of all job positions for each year. This implies that there is a low rate of employment of Library and Information Studies/Science (LIS) professionals in Tanzania which is inversely proportional to the number of LIS graduates in the said field of the study.

**Research limitations/implications** – This study is limited to the data archive of 2019–2023 LIS professionals job advertisements in the Ajira Portal, and only public institutions were represented in the sample.

**Practical implications** – Results of this study act as an eye opener for the LIS schools'/training institutions to incorporate essential skills and competencies into the curricular for preparing LIS professionals for aligning their professions with duties and responsibilities in digital library environment in Tanzania.

**Originality/value** – The study has contributed to growing body of knowledge on the importance of content analysis of library jobs advertisements for identifying current skills required by various professions by the employers.

**Keywords** Job advertisements, Content analysis, Recruitment, Library profession, Tanzania

**Paper type** Research paper

## Introduction

The labor market is vastly growing and subject to frequent fluctuations due to the environmental factors, technological and scientific advancements, changes in the population and globalization. The prospective employees must, therefore, understand the labor market, its trends and employers' expectations (Lipovac and Marina Bagić Babac, 2021) so as to easily and effectively prepare for the desired employment. Yadav (2022) reported that content analysis of job advertisements for Library and Information Studies/Science (LIS) professionals are important for comparing listings within and across countries, regions, periods and to identify the shifts in the knowledge, skills and qualifications required for such



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information professionals. By examining how the abilities needed in the jobs are evolving is important in facilitating increased cooperation between academic institutions and employment agencies. This may positively impact both employers and job seekers (Harper, 2012). Many employers in this era need graduates who are skillful in the application of emerging technologies and tools to avoid the unnecessary cost and time of conducting training at work (Kumari and Mishra, 2020). Technological skills significantly affect the employability of LIS graduates who are looking for jobs in the labor market. Some other scholars (e.g. Grugulis and Vincent, 2009) have argued that the changing requirements for transferable skills may lead to the polarization of employee requirements. On the other hand, some scholars have shown that the skills required of all employees have changed with an increased emphasis on information work (Green, 2005; Lavikka, 2000).

Various scholars have provided the importance of job advertisements. Kuokkanen *et al.* (2013) and Zhang *et al.* (2021) opined that job advertisements are a segment of marketing and important tool by which organizations can present their positions as interesting and exciting which can further provide important data for further studying employee ideals. They are ones of the important channels to identify and select potential candidates for a variety of posts and positions. Harper (2012) reported that job advertisements are particularly a suggestive method of studying employment opportunities available to entry-level librarians because they provide a snap-shot of the current employment market status. Other authors like Pontika (2019) opined that job advertisements are typically used as a tool for internal recruitment within organizations and they also serve as a valuable source for external analysis since they are publicly accessible. Analyzing the content of job advertisements can provide insights into fluctuations in the job market while also the need for sustaining relevance and gamesmanship is of paramount important.

Ganesan *et al.* (2018) reported that job advertisements are viewed as the initial stage in the process of recruitment because they are communicated as the feedback to the employer's needs for recruiting a new employee. The written communication used in job advertisements means to target the job hunters who are employable for a given position. The purpose of communicating job advertisements is to encourage qualified job seekers to apply for a given job vacancy. In the library context, job advertisements are the key media through which many people first encounter the requirements of work life, they play a central role in shaping the perception of an ideal employee and work life in general by articulating employee requirements for various occupations (Kuokkanen *et al.*, 2013).

Considering the content and structure of job advertisements, many experts have tried to identify the textual units needed in a job advertisement (Altstiel *et al.*, 2019). The textual units are the information normally found in a job advertisement such as job description, job requirement, position, whether permanent or temporary, duties and responsibilities, salary and benefits, working conditions, qualifications, market growth and career path, age limits, application procedures and others (Torresi, 2010).

Job advertisement can be channeled through audio-visual media such as radio and television; and print media like newspapers, newsletters and journals. The presence of online sources of job advertisements like job portals and employment forums, have been in favor of most job seekers compared to the traditional print sources. This is because most of the institutions and organizations now a day's use websites to advertise available jobs and vacancies since it is less costly, easy to access and updated at a convenient time and place (Kaba, 2017).

Online job advertisements act as a mechanism for liaising employment opportunities to job seekers. It is a way of filling job vacancies (Lipovac and Marina Bagić Babac, 2021). Job advertisements also serve many other purposes, apart from being a communicative tool. The usefulness of online job advertisements can be evidenced by spotting the increasing number of researches that evaluate the contents of job advertisements of a certain time range to study

the state of job market for a particular profession. Through content analysis of job advertisements; job market and skills requirements of various professions can be well identified (Messum *et al.*, 2016; Narasappa and Kumar, 2016; Tadasad, 2019).

Despite the fact that online job advertisement is one of the important channels to identify and select potential candidates for a variety of posts and positions in the respective organizations; and which can save the costs and time of both job seekers and employers (Kaba, 2017); nevertheless, there is a dearth of extant literature on the contents analysis of online library professional jobs advertisements in Tanzania. This study, therefore, aims at establishing the level at which key library skills outlined in online job advertisements are aligned with job market and skills requirements in digital library environment in Tanzania over the five-years period from 2019 to 2023.

### Research objectives

Specifically, the study sought to:

- determine the frequencies and distribution of library job positions advertised;
- analyze trends of advertising library jobs;
- identify dominant library job titles advertised;
- ascertain the topmost employers of library job professionals advertised;
- examine the most frequently desirable and essential skills required by the employers of library job professionals; and
- determine whether duties and responsibilities outlined in library jobs advertised are aligned with job market and skills requirements in digital library environment in Tanzania.

### Literature review

Job advertisements suitably represent the skills and qualities that employers appreciate among candidates and demand from their employees, because the skills mentioned in the advertisements are carefully chosen by managers to suit the position (Kuokkanen *et al.*, 2013). Lavikka (2000) reported that increasing technological advancements have created the need in several sectors for a flexible, constantly learning employee because of the rapidly changing organizational environment requiring problem-solving skills. Some studies have shown that the skills required of all employees have changed with the recent increased emphasis on information work (Green, 2005; Lavikka, 2000). Several other studies have been carried out to explore online LIS job advertisement sources to be aware of the market trends of the profession. Sinha *et al.* (2014) reported a significant gap between the number of Library Science graduates and their employability, with only 17.60% of graduates securing jobs. Sproles and Ratledge (2004) cited by Wilkinson (2016) conducted a study which focused on the 192 advertisements for academic reference librarians to identify key roles and responsibilities that might inform both library science education and library management. Entry-level reference librarians represented about half of their total sample.

LIS online job advertisements are based on various titles depending on the needs. The job title is described as a bit of knowledge that provides a glimpse into the nature of the work. The relative frequency of recurring job titles is calculated by dividing it by the total number of advertisements multiplied by 100 (Sheriff and Sevukan, 2023). The study by Triumph and Beile (2015) indicate that there has been increasing specialization in library job titles driven by emerging technologies and digital materials which indicates a shift in the required skill

sets for librarians entering the profession. [Shahbazi and Hedayati \(2016\)](#) identified LIS job titles such as digital librarian(DL), information technology (IT) librarian, metadata librarian and digital archivist as dominant titles, with communication skills being a key requirement. [Mustafa and Ansari \(2012\)](#) noted the emergence of new LIS job titles such as cybrarian, digital library operations officer and knowledge manager, reflecting the impact of technology on the profession. The research by [Robinson \(2021\)](#) found that LIS positions with titles such as librarian, registrar, record and information officer were the most advertised. [Skene \(2018\)](#) reported a significant increase in digital initiatives librarian job postings over the past five years. [Triumph and Beile \(2015\)](#) reported stability in the number of LIS positions advertised in the USA in 2011 compared to 1996 and 1988 caused with an increasing demand for computer skills. Library Assistant was the most advertised post in Irish Library Sector ([Cullen, 2000](#)). The study by [Harvey \(2014\)](#) reported a limited job opportunity for LIS graduates in the library sector. In that study, it was reported that there are the challenges faced LIS graduates which include the absence of a career structure, lack of recognition for qualifications and limited training opportunities.

A content analysis study conducted by [Er-koçoğlu \(2018\)](#) indicated that the graduates are employed with various titles such as librarian, library manager, library teacher, archivist in various institutions such as special universities, special schools, hospitals and banks. In that study, it was also indicated that LIS professionals should have the knowledge about archiving and documentation, having knowledge about cataloging and classification, having the necessary knowledge to carry out circulation services and necessary knowledge about digitalization.

Studies have found that central government and academic libraries are the major employers of LIS professionals, with a high number of temporary or contractual positions ([Jeevan, 2003](#); [Sawant and Sawant, 2017](#)). Scholars such as [Kaba \(2017\)](#) reported that higher education institutions in the United Arabs Emirates demonstrated the highest accuracy level in advertising library jobs. In the same vein, [Ocholla and Shongwe \(2013\)](#) found that academic institutions as the top employers of LIS professionals while the study by [Robinson \(2021\)](#) reported that government entities were the top employers of LIS professionals. The study by [Yadav \(2022\)](#) highlights that public sector, academic and school libraries are the top employers of LIS professionals whereas academic libraries have been the primary employer of LIS professionals.

Many employers in this era of the fast changing technological advancement need the skillful manpower in the application of emerging technologies and tools to avoid the cost and time of conducting unnecessary training at work places ([Kumari and Mishra, 2020](#)). Technological skills significantly affect the employability of LIS graduates who are looking for jobs in the labor market. Some scholars (e.g. [Grugulis and Vincent, 2009](#)) have debated that the changing requirements for transferable skills may lead to the polarization of employee requirements. On the other hand, some scholars have shown that the skills required of all employees have changed with an increased emphasis on information work ([Green, 2005](#)).

The demand for science and technology skills for librarians has led to increased multi-tasking demands compared to previous decades ([Meier, 2010](#)). For example, entry-level reference positions in academic libraries now encompass a diverse and complex range of responsibilities ([Detmering and Sproles, 2012](#)). Cataloging positions in academic libraries have been impacted by outsourcing and diversification of library materials, with job advertisements emphasizing special cataloging skills, managerial abilities and involvement in other library activities ([Hosoi, 2000](#)). Government documents librarianship has migrated

toward public services, with over 80% of job advertisements including reference and information literacy duties (Sproles and Clemons, 2019).

Employers of library professionals often have specific qualifications they often look for from the potential candidates. The desired qualifications include degrees in Library and Information Science, with experience in specific subjects and knowledge of computer applications. Additional desirable qualifications may include foreign language proficiency and research publications (Yadav, 2022). The study by Bjørklund and Audunson (2021) reported that the most desirable qualifications required by the employers of library professionals in Norwegian public libraries have shifted over time. Between 2005 and 2015, there has been a reduced emphasis on library education and an increased focus on personal and interpersonal traits. In the other parts of the world, larger cities tend to prioritize relevant higher education over specific library and information science degrees. This trend reflects a weakening of the power of librarianship over the public library field. In Croatia for example, most job advertisements do not specify educational requirements or salaries (Lipovac and Marina Bagić Babac, 2021).

It has been argued that job advertisements reflect employee expectations and requirements, and they must reinforce the public image of an ideal worker. They must define an ideal employee who is careful, responsible, conscientious, steady and suitable for the job in the changing library environment (Kuokkanen *et al.*, 2013). The ideal employee of the early 2000s was not only required to be efficient, but also “very efficient” or “extremely efficient.” The requirement for communication skills had been replaced by a requirement for “excellent communication skills.” Knowledge of a certain language had become “fluency” in a language or several languages. Moreover, the ideal employee had to have a “deep understanding” of the field, “good stress resilience” and “good proficiency” (Kuokkanen *et al.*, 2013).

The employee requirements of job advertisements should reflect the changes in the organization of work, work culture and more specifically changes in technological advancements (Kuokkanen *et al.*, 2013). Yang *et al.* (2016) reported that many studies regarding employability for LIS job professionals have affirmed that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the most desirable skill for graduates to work in the field of the LIS in the library changing environment.

For ensuring that job advertisements are aligned with the job requirements in a digital library age environment, it is important to ensure that the organizations can get qualified candidates who possess the necessary skills and competencies for them to become employable. When crafting job advertisements for various library positions in the digital library environment, the parent organizations should, therefore, consider attracting candidates with digital literacy and technical skills (Choi and Rasmussen, 2009). The advertisements should, therefore, clearly outline the digital skills and technical competencies required from the employee to perform the role. Such needed digital skills includes knowledge of digital library management systems, metadata standards, digital preservation techniques and familiarity with emerging technologies in the field of librarianship.

### Research methodology

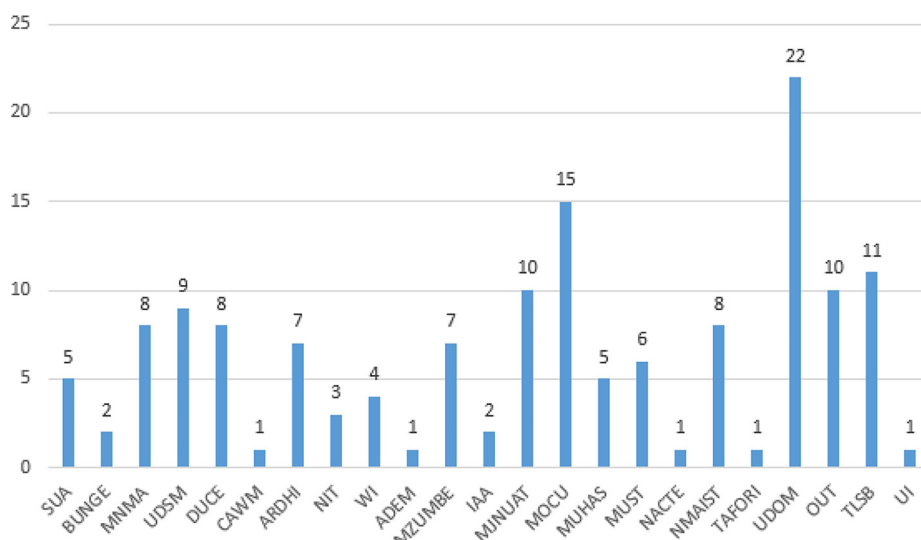
This study used quantitative content analysis method to systematically analyze library professional jobs advertised online in Recruitment Portal by public service recruitment secretariat (PSRS) in Tanzania for five-years. Content analysis is a research method for studying documents and communication artifacts, which might be texts of various formats, figures, audio or video used to examine patterns in communication in a replicable and systematic manner (Ahmed, 2005; Xu, 1996).

PSRS is a government organ with an independent department established specifically to facilitate the recruitment process of employees from all fields and sectors including education, health care and technical services to the Public Service ([United Republic of Tanzania \(URT\), 2025](#)). PSRS was established by the Public Service Act No. 8 of 2002 as amended by Act No. 18 of 2007, section 29(1), thus, only LIS job advertisements ranging from January 1, 2019 to December 30, 2023 were included in this study. Job advertisements in Ajira Portal are circulated in two major languages that is English and Swahili [[United Republic of Tanzania \(URT\), 2025](#)]. In few cases, these job advertisements are also made available on the websites of public organization's responsible for the advertised vacancies. Higher education institutions, research and development organizations and other public-funded organizations advertise their jobs through Ajira Portal. Ajira Portal was picked out as the chief source of data because of the availability of many job advertisements in this platform. The research data was collected for five years from January 1, 2019 to December 30, 2023.

With regards to data processing and analysis, the following aspects such as number of jobs posted by year; employers; job position titles; qualifications; job requirements such as experience, knowledge and skills; and job functions and responsibilities were taken into considerations. All these aspects were entered in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. To collect clean data, the following procedures were followed: All library job advertisements by PSRS in Recruitment Portal in the referenced years were carefully searched and scanned to identify and exhaust all library job posts for five-year period. In this study, analysis did not include advertisements from some government sectors like Judiciary, President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG), Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA), Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) as well as all private sectors, as they do not advertise their employment opportunities in the Ajira portal. These organizations have their own established procedures of recruiting employees. Therefore, PSRS does not cover all the job positions available for LIS professionals in Tanzania. Furthermore, private sectors use their own websites and other media for job advertisements.

### Results and discussion

The results of this study indicate that there were 46 job advertisements containing 147 job positions for LIS professionals from 2019 to 2023. This means that each job advertisement contained an average of 3 job positions and 9 job advertisements containing yearly average of 29 job positions. The PSRS through Ajira Portal publishes employment opportunities available in the central government or public sectors in Tanzania. This includes government ministries, departments, aviation, medical institutions, higher education, schools, research and development organizations, large-and-small scale industries and other public sectors. Several government institutions and public sector advertised various jobs for LIS professionals from January 2019 to December 2023. These institutions vary in the number of positions advertised for LIS professionals depending on the size and need of the respective employer. [Figure 1](#) shows the distribution of job positions advertised in the five referenced years. University of Dodoma (UDOM) employed more LIS professionals in the referenced years followed by Moshi Cooperative University (MoCU) and Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB). This implies that UDOM is the biggest and fast growing full-fledged public university in Tanzania, thus, more LIS professionals are needed to cater for the high demand for such professionals. Likewise, MoCU is the fastest growing full-fledged public university in Tanzania and more specifically in the areas of cooperative disciplines, thus, more demand for LIS professionals is imperative. On the other hand, TLSB which is a none-higher learning



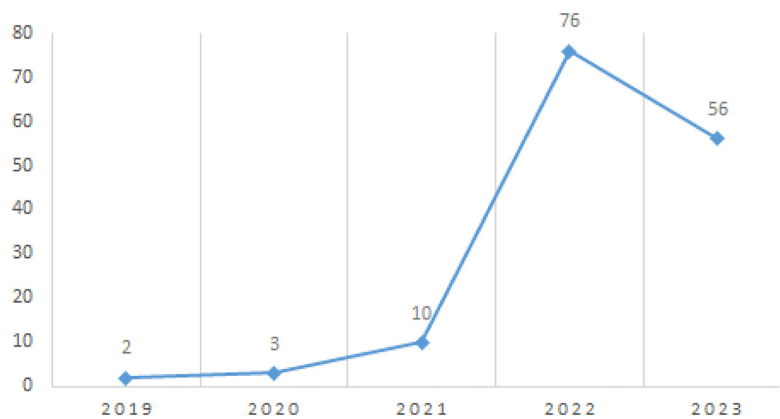
**Figure 1.** Institutions advertised LIS job positions

**Source:** Ajira portal 2019–2023

institution in Tanzania had relatively employed more LIS professionals in the referenced years. This might be associated with the facts that TLSB manages regional public library branches in Tanzania and, therefore, more LIS professionals are needed.

### **Yearly trends in advertising job positions for library and information studies/science professionals**

Although the PSRS was established in 2007, the first archived LIS job advertisement was made available in 2019. This is an outcome of changes in data archiving practices where the PSRS first archived its job advertisements in October 2019. Results indicate that the year 2022 was marked with the highest (76; 51.7%) number of job advertisements followed by the year 2023 which had 56 (38.1%) positions of job advertisements. The lowest number (2; 1.4%) of job positions advertised for LIS professionals were evidenced in the year 2019 followed by 3 (2.0%) in 2020, whereas only 10 (6.8%) positions were advertised in the year 2021. These results imply that the year 2022 and 2023 had more LIS positions employment. Possibly it implies that, more budget was set aside for new employment positions to cover the higher demand for LIS professionals; and some posts were lying vacant and advertised later on administrative clearance in the two referenced years. These results further imply that there is a gradual increase in the number of job positions advertised for LIS professionals from the year 2019–2021 followed with sharp increases from the year 2021–2023 (Figure 2). The overall trend suggests a growth in the demand for LIS professionals in current and next years compared to earlier years which may have resulted from some development in educational sector and government initiatives in structuring various sectoral and departmental libraries such as National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NACTVET) formally known as National Council for Technical Education (NACTE) and Tanzania Forest and Research Institute (TAFORI) to allow employment of LIS professionals.



**Figure 2.** Trends in advertising LIS job positions  
**Source:** Ajira portal 2019–2023

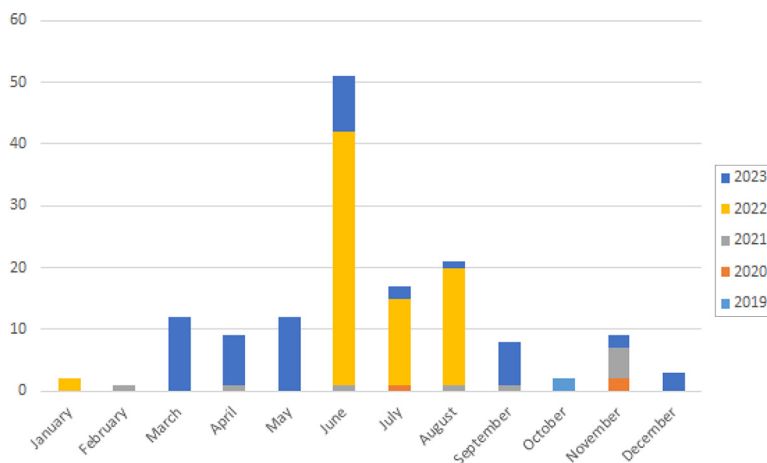
Many studies have reported the increase in LIS professional’s job positions in recent years (Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013; Pradhan, 2015; Robinson, 2021; Wise *et al.*, 2011; Yadav, 2022; Yang *et al.*, 2016). This can be due to changes in environmental factors, technological and scientific advancements, changes in population needs and globalization. Maisha Huru (2025.3.13) reported that government’s efforts to industrialize and improve infrastructure have spurred growth, leading to the creation of new job opportunities in Tanzania especially to service sectors such as academic researchers and education consultants.

**Monthly publication of library and information studies/science job advertisements in the Ajira portal between 2019 and 2023**

With regards to monthly advertisements, results of this study in Figure 3 indicate that the highest number of positions were advertised in June 2022 followed by August, July and January of the same year whereas the distribution of the job advertisements in rest of the years were very low. This may be associated with facts budget implementation in most government departments are inclined in fourth quarter followed by first and second quarters of the financial year (FY) in Tanzania for enabling execution of government activities including engagement of new employees to fill new employment posts. Fourth quarter of the FY becomes much busier for ensuring accomplishments of all tasks including those of the previous quarters as per set budget before the FY comes to an end. It should be noted that in Tanzania, budget implementation follows financial year which is divided into four quarters; each quarter covering three months which starts on 1st of July to 30th of June of each year. Following this cycle, the first quarter covers July, August and September; second quarter covers October, November and December; third quarter covers January, February and March; and the fourth quarter covers April, May and June.

**Dominant library job titles advertised in the referenced years**

LIS professionals are equipped with skills and knowledge that enable them to carry out both academic and administrative activities depending on the job description of the advertised posts. In essence, they can perform various tasks in the library such as circulation,



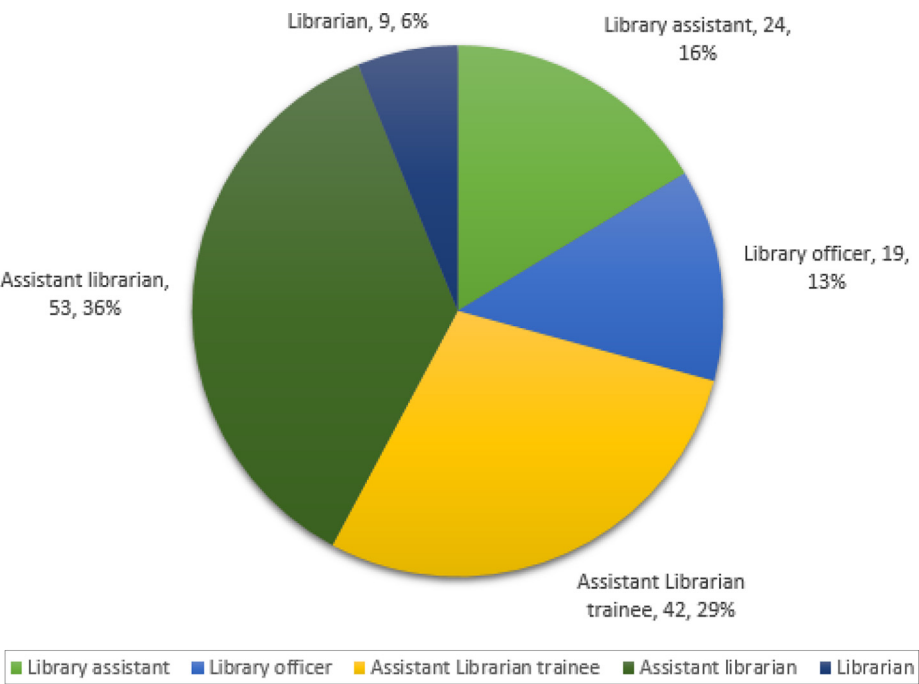
**Figure 3.** Frequency of positions advertised per month-year  
**Source:** Ajira portal 2019–2023

organization of resources such as cataloguing and classification or engage in teaching and research activities. Job titles and descriptions for LIS professionals vary from one library to another depending on the type of institution where the library is found. For example, Librarian II and Library Officer II are used interchangeably to represent LIS personnel with a bachelor's degree performing non-academic activities in the library. Most of the jobs advertised for LIS professionals during 2019–2023 were (53; 36.05%) for the assistant librarian/assistant lecturer, while the other (42; 28.6%) dominant positions were for assistant librarian trainees/tutorial assistants followed by library assistants (24; 16.32%) and library officer positions (19; 13%). The least (9; 4.1%) positions were advertised for librarian/lecturer from 2019 to 2023 (Figure 4).

However, these results contradict the study conducted by Ocholla and Shongwe (2013) in South Africa that revealed that only (7; 2.22%) positions were advertised for academic positions in LIS professionals from 2009 to 2011 whereas the majority (308; 97.77%) of administrative positions dominated in the referenced years. In addition, Robinson (2021) conducted a study on skills and qualifications for the special library environment in Jamaica and reported the highest advertised job for the position of Librarian.

### Terms of employment

All job advertisements were categorized according to terms of employment which were permanent, temporary and transfer depending on the nature of the position advertised. The results in Table 1 indicate that the highest (140; 95.24%) number of job positions were advertised as permanent, followed by (4; 2.72%) as temporary and only (3; 2.04%) as transfer job vacancies. With regards to permanent positions; Assistant Librarian posts were (52; 35.37%); Assistant Librarian Trainee (42; 28.57%); Library Assistant (20; 13.6%); Library Officer had (17; 11.56%); and for the Librarian there were only (9; 6.12%) of all advertised positions. Out of the total temporary positions, (2; 1.4%) positions were for Library Assistant and Library Officer respectively, while (2; 1.4%) positions were advertised as transfer positions for Library Assistants and only (1; 0.7%) position was advertised as transfer for Assistant Librarian (Figure 2).



**Figure 4.** Distribution of positions per designation  
**Source:** Ajira portal 2019–2023

**Table 1.** Vacancy category

| Vacancy category | Frequency | %     |
|------------------|-----------|-------|
| Permanent        | 140       | 95.2  |
| Temporary        | 4         | 2.7   |
| Transfer         | 3         | 2.0   |
| Total            | 147       | 100.0 |

**Source(s):** Ajira Portal 2019–2023

These results are consistent with the findings of [Cullen \(2000\)](#) and [Yadav \(2022\)](#) who reported that permanent job positions are being advertised more frequently compared to temporary and transfer positions. This reflects the more demand for library staff and the presence of the large number of LIS graduates that enable employers to get candidates that apply for all positions advertised in Tanzania. The results are also in line with the efforts of the Tanzanian higher education institutions to keep abreast with education transformation. Such transformations include human resources capacity building through employment of academic staff, increased student enrollment including students that will be registered into LIS Programmes which is also in line with the efforts of all public higher learning institutions in Tanzania to ensure that they have their own sources of funds instead of the current high dependency for funds from the central government. As a result of expansion of

the higher education learning institutions in Tanzania, more human resources are needed to ensure quality library services are provided to library users regardless of their locations.

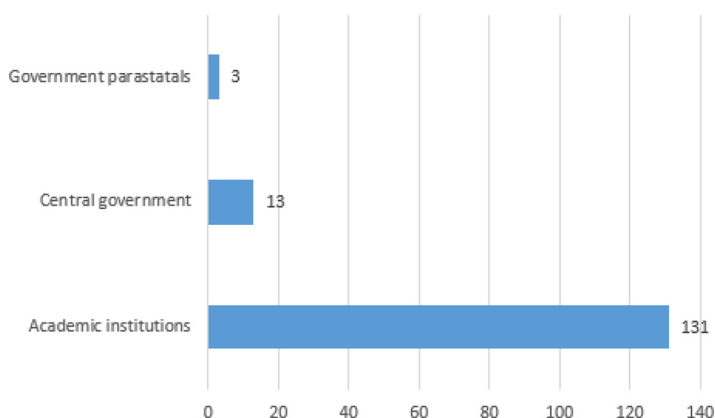
### The top most employers of library and information studies/science professionals

For the five referenced years, LIS positions were advertised in various fields such as higher education institutions, central government and government parastatal organizations in Tanzania. Results in Figure 5 indicate that; of the 147 job advertisements retrieved, the majority (131; 89.1%) of job positions were advertised in academic institutions such as universities, colleges and other academic institutes. Other employers of LIS professionals are the Central Government Departments such as Public Libraries and the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania which advertised 13 (8.8%) job positions, Government parastatals such as NACTVET and Tanzania Forestry Institute (TAFORI) advertised only 3 (2%) job positions.

These results show that academic institutions led by academic libraries are the top most employers of LIS professionals in Tanzania compared to other libraries. Other scholars (such as Cullen, 2000; Ocholla and Shongwe, 2013; Sawant and Sawant, 2017) reported that public sectors dominated by academic libraries are the most employers of the LIS professionals. Yang *et al.* (2016) suggests that job seekers, particularly library science students looking for professional roles, should focus their talents to work in academic libraries as these institutions provide the employment opportunities.

### Desirable qualifications of library and information studies/science professionals

LIS professionals play a crucial role in organizing, managing and disseminating information in various settings like libraries, archives, information centers and digital repositories. Therefore, the qualifications of LIS professionals can vary based on the specific role and type of institution they are applying to. Results of this study indicate that LIS professionals with Bachelor of Library and Information Studies (BLIS) followed by Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS) and Certificate in Library and Information Studies (CLIS) are essential qualifications considered for various positions advertised in Tanzania from 2019 to 2023 (Table 2).



**Figure 5.** Fields where LIS positions were advertised

Source: Ajira portal 2019–2023

**Table 2.** Desirable qualifications for LIS professionals: number of positions advertised per year

| Desirable qualifications for LIS professionals | No. of positions advertised per year |      |      |      |      | Total |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|-------|
|                                                | 2019                                 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |       |
| Certificate in library and information studies | 0                                    | 1    | 3    | 1    | 12   | 17    |
| Diploma in library and information studies     | 0                                    | 0    | 1    | 2    | 4    | 7     |
| Bachelor of library and information studies    | 2                                    | 1    | 3    | 38   | 9    | 53    |
| Master of library and information studies      | 0                                    | 1    | 3    | 27   | 21   | 52    |
| PhD holder                                     | 0                                    | 0    | 0    | 3    | 6    | 9     |
| Bachelor's degree in law                       | 0                                    | 0    | 0    | 1    | 1    | 2     |
| Doctor of medicine or bachelor of pharmacy     | 0                                    | 0    | 0    | 1    | 1    | 2     |
| Bachelor's degree in informatics/ICT           | 0                                    | 0    | 0    | 1    | 1    | 2     |
| Bachelor's degree in special needs education   | 0                                    | 0    | 0    | 1    | 0    | 1     |
| Bachelor's degree in physics or chemistry      | 0                                    | 0    | 0    | 1    | 0    | 1     |
| Degree in environmental engineering            | 0                                    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 1    | 1     |
| <i>Total</i>                                   | 2                                    | 3    | 10   | 76   | 56   | 147   |

**Source(s):** Research data from Ajira Portal 2019–2023

Apart from the above listed qualifications, LIS para – professional job positions were advertised for Assistant Librarian Trainees that require candidates with specific bachelor's degrees such as a Bachelor's Degree in Law, Doctor of Medicine or Bachelor of Pharmacy, Bachelor's Degree in Informatics/ICT, Bachelor's Degree in Special Needs Education, Bachelor's Degree in Physics or Chemistry and Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Engineering. Also, Assistant Librarians with other Master's degrees were sought which are Master of Science in ICT or IT, Master of Science subjects, Master Degree in Project Planning and Management and Master of Arts in Records and Archives Management. These kinds of professionals are expected to work in the library as subject specialists. Results indicate that the most common desirable qualifications attached in the job advertisements for the LIS professionals who are expected to shoulder academic activities such as teaching, research and consultancy is a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.8 out of 5 from any recognized higher learning institution for Assistant Librarian Trainee. Assistant librarians or assistant lecturers are required to have a minimum GPA of 3.8 out of 5 in the first or bachelor's degree and a GPA of 4.0 out of 5 in the Master's degree, whereas a Librarian is supposed to have a GPA of 3.8 out of 5 in the first or bachelor's degree, a GPA of 4.0 out of 5 in the Master's degree together with a PhD from the recognized higher learning institutions.

### **Duties and responsibilities of library and information studies/science professionals**

Duties and responsibilities are the tasks to be performed by an employee at work and always differ depending on the job position advertised. Employers thoroughly describe the duties and responsibilities of the job opening to give applicants an idea of what they will need to perform regularly at the work station. On the other hand, duties and responsibilities help to inform candidates of the skills and competencies required to fit in the advertised post (Table 3).

*Library Assistants:* are mostly required to issue and receive books from readers, perform clerical duties, register readers, handle simple inquiries from readers and assist in bibliographical searching and processing acquired information resources. Furthermore, they are required to assist in shelving books and periodicals.

**Table 3.** Duties and responsibilities of LIS professionals in Tanzania

|                                                                                                             | Freq. | Global<br>Knowledge,<br>Memory and<br>Communication |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Library assistant</i>                                                                                    |       |                                                     |
| Issue and receive books                                                                                     | 11    |                                                     |
| Perform library clerical duties                                                                             | 8     |                                                     |
| Register readers                                                                                            | 7     |                                                     |
| Handle simple enquiries from readers                                                                        | 6     |                                                     |
| Undertake bibliographical searching                                                                         | 6     |                                                     |
| Process acquired information resources                                                                      | 4     |                                                     |
| Assist in proper shelving of books and periodicals                                                          | 4     |                                                     |
| Display new books and other reading materials                                                               | 2     |                                                     |
| Upkeep backsets of newspapers and journals                                                                  | 2     |                                                     |
| Prepare cuttings from newspapers                                                                            | 2     |                                                     |
| Assist in the collection of library statistics                                                              | 2     |                                                     |
| Assist in carrying out classification and cataloguing of books and periodicals                              | 2     |                                                     |
| Assist in copying catalogues with CIP data                                                                  | 2     |                                                     |
| Assist in the acquisition and periodical functions of the library                                           | 1     |                                                     |
| Repair library publications                                                                                 | 1     |                                                     |
| <i>Assistant librarian trainee</i>                                                                          |       |                                                     |
| Assist in research, consultancy and outreach activities                                                     | 17    |                                                     |
| Conduct tutorials, seminars and practical                                                                   | 16    |                                                     |
| Understudy senior members in lectures and seminars tutorials and practical training                         | 15    |                                                     |
| Prepare learning resources for tutorial exercises                                                           | 2     |                                                     |
| Carry out lectures for nondegree programmes                                                                 | 2     |                                                     |
| Supervises field training                                                                                   | 1     |                                                     |
| Supervises and assists junior staff                                                                         | 1     |                                                     |
| <i>Librarian (PhD)</i>                                                                                      |       |                                                     |
| Participate in developing and managing various university/constituent college activities                    | 5     |                                                     |
| Carry out lectures, conduct tutorials, seminars and practical for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes | 4     |                                                     |
| Mentor junior staff in relevant fields                                                                      | 4     |                                                     |
| Undertake research , publish and disseminate results                                                        | 4     |                                                     |
| Carry out consultancy and community services                                                                | 4     |                                                     |
| Write teaching manuals and compendia                                                                        | 4     |                                                     |
| Supervise field practical, undergraduate special projects, master's and PhD dissertations/theses            | 4     |                                                     |
| Attend/organize workshops, conferences and symposia                                                         | 4     |                                                     |
| Participate and contribute in curriculum development                                                        | 2     |                                                     |
| <i>Library officers/librarian II</i>                                                                        |       |                                                     |
| Assist in identifying materials to be ordered                                                               | 13    |                                                     |
| Assist readers in bibliographic searching                                                                   | 11    |                                                     |
| Assist in developing new library systems and procedures                                                     | 8     |                                                     |
| Assist in processing newly acquired information materials                                                   | 8     |                                                     |
| Assist in issuing and receiving books from readers                                                          | 7     |                                                     |
| Compile statistical data and reports                                                                        | 7     |                                                     |
| Handle queries from readers                                                                                 | 5     |                                                     |
| Assist in administering reference and readers services                                                      | 5     |                                                     |
| Assist registration of new library members and conducts regular checks                                      | 5     |                                                     |
| Shelve books and periodicals                                                                                | 4     |                                                     |
| Assist in administering library records                                                                     | 4     |                                                     |
| Assist in maintaining public and staff catalogues                                                           | 4     |                                                     |
| (continued)                                                                                                 |       |                                                     |

**Table 3.** Continued

|                                                                                                                       | Freq. |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Undertake research and consultancy activities in library/information matters                                          | 3     |
| Collect information needs of users                                                                                    | 3     |
| Promote the use of IT in meeting user needs                                                                           | 2     |
| Handle inter alia library loans, gifts and exchange                                                                   | 1     |
| Promote knowledge management principles and practices                                                                 | 1     |
| Ensure smooth dissemination of new publications                                                                       | 1     |
| Assist in the promotion and marketing of library resource                                                             | 1     |
| <i>Assistant librarian</i>                                                                                            |       |
| Carry out lectures, conduct tutorials, seminars and practical for undergraduate programmes                            | 32    |
| Conduct and publish/disseminate research results                                                                      | 31    |
| Carry out consultancy and community services under supervision                                                        | 28    |
| Prepare and present case studies                                                                                      | 26    |
| Attend workshops, conferences and symposia                                                                            | 23    |
| Recognize students having difficulties, intervene and provide help and support                                        | 20    |
| Supervise students project                                                                                            | 10    |
| Guide students in various academic issues                                                                             | 7     |
| Participate/contribute in curriculum development                                                                      | 5     |
| Prepare learning resources for tutorial exercises                                                                     | 4     |
| Assist senior staff in lectures, seminars, tutorials and practical for postgraduate programmes                        | 3     |
| Adopt and/or supplement existing materials                                                                            | 2     |
| Liaise with course writers, editors, reviewers, producers, artists, coordinators and other members of the course team | 2     |
| Revise course materials and audio programmes                                                                          | 2     |
| Give public lectures, tutor and lead academic discussions                                                             | 2     |
| Prepare teaching manuals                                                                                              | 1     |

**Source(s):** Ajira Portal 2019–2023; [United Republic of Tanzania \(URT\) \(2022a,2022b\)](#)

*Library Officers/Librarian II:* They are responsible in identifying materials to be ordered, assisting readers in bibliographic searching, assisting in developing new library systems and procedures, assisting in processing newly acquired information materials, assisting in issuing and receiving books to readers and compiling statistical data and reports are the top duties and responsibilities of library officers/librarian II/librarian grade II. However, depending on the size and type of institution hosting the library, this designation can perform many other duties and responsibilities including all the activities performed by library assistants.

*Assistant Librarian Trainee* or Tutorial Assistant as an academic position LIS professional in the library are mostly required to assist in research, consultancy and outreach activities, conduct tutorials, seminars and practical and understudy senior members in lectures and seminars tutorials and practical training. However, for libraries hosting certificates and diplomas in library science programmes, Assistant librarian trainees are mostly responsible in the preparation of learning resources, carrying out lectures for nondegree programmes and supervising field practical.

*Assistant Librarian* refers to LIS professional with Master's degrees and sometimes is known as assistant lecturers for those institutions offering LIS programs. Assistant librarians in academic libraries are mostly required to carry out lectures, conduct tutorials, seminars and practical for undergraduate programmes, conduct and publish/disseminate research results, carry out consultancy and community services under supervision, prepare and present case studies, attend workshops, conferences and symposia, recognize students

having difficulties, intervene and provide help and support. Furthermore, assistant librarians are also responsible for supervising student projects, guiding students in various academic issues and participating in curriculum development among others.

*Librarian:* Is the highest position advertised for LIS professionals from 2019 to 2023. The position requires a candidate who must be PhD holder in LIS. PhD holders in academic institutions are known as lecturers because their duties and responsibilities reflect all the activities performed by PhD holders in any other professions in the university. They are required to participate in developing and managing various university/constituent college activities, carry out lectures, conduct tutorials, seminars and practical works for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, undertake research and publish/disseminate results and carry out consultancy and community services among others.

### **Alignment of duties and responsibilities in job advertisements with the requirements for digital libraries environment**

Digital library is an electronic library in which large numbers of geographically distributed users can access the contents of large and diverse repositories of electronic objects. A digital library is understood to have the information stored predominantly in an electronic or digital medium, including digital books, digital scanned images, graphics, textual and numerical data and digitized films. Thus, a digital library is expected to provide access to the digital information collections (Sreenivasulu, 2000). Many public libraries in the changing digital environment have embraced the use of e-books and e-readers in their efforts to promote reading, keep up with client demands and address the specific needs of readers. Likewise, academic libraries have embraced digital access to professional and academic articles and full-text e-books for the library users. To read an e-book for example, readers need access to a computer, a cell phone or an e-reader, which is an electronic device, designed primarily for reading e-books, periodicals and newspapers such as Amazon Kindle, Nook, Kobo, iPad for examples.

Furthermore, in response to the rapid changes in the global information world, publishers are now releasing their new titles in traditional and digitized formats, both in response to demands from library users, researchers and public agencies, and in response to the growing phenomenon of e-readers (Doiron, 2011). All these have necessitated the need to have a LIS professional who is capable in assisting users in digital library environment – a DL. DL is a type of specialist librarian who has the abilities to manage and organize the digital library, handle the specialized tasks of massive digitization, storage, access, digital knowledge mining, digital reference services, electronic information services, search co-ordination and manage the archive and its access. Furthermore, the DL acts as an expert in the acquisition of digital information (Sreenivasulu, 2000).

Results indicate that LIS professional job advertisements in Tanzania from 2019 to 2023 did not include the aspect or category of skills required for the candidates to apply for the posts advertised by the PSRS. LIS job advertisements were only accompanied with duties, responsibilities and the level of education or qualifications. Nevertheless, duties and responsibilities listed in job advertisements in Table 3 may depict the skills needed by employers in a specific job position as they inform job seekers that, to perform the highlighted duties and responsibilities one has to possess some skills and expertise related to the advertised jobs. Literature on skills and competencies of LIS professionals in the digital library environment supports these findings as many duties and responsibilities highlighted reflect the library's real operation. In addition, studies have added communication skills, ICT skills, digital information system management and digital library skills including digital archiving, content development, developing metadata, electronic database searches, network consortia

access among others as essential skills in digital libraries environment (Kaur and Gaur, 2017; Kotur, 2020; Narasappa and Kumar, 2016; Raju, 2017; Singh and Pinki, 2009; Verma, 2015).

#### *Contributions of the study*

The findings can help LIS curriculum developers better design and implement coursework and pedagogy as well as aid professional associations in developing workshops and programs to address employer needs and provide a qualified and successful workforce for these new and evolving positions.

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#### *Limitations of the study*

- This study is limited to the data archive of 2019–2023 LIS professionals job advertisements in the Ajira Portal, and only public institutions were represented in the sample. Thus, the inclusion of private sectors coupled with LIS job advertisements from different websites is of significant importance for confirming the findings.
- The analysis based on five years only from 2019–2023 due to unavailability of previous years job advertisements in the PSRS archive. The PSRS does not categorize job advertisements based on fields of specializations, hence, making difficulties in collecting advertisements relating to LIS professional job advertised.
- Furthermore, future studies need to be complemented with other research strategies, such as surveys or interviews from practitioners in the LIS field of the study for understanding larger patterns and trends in LIS job advertisements in the organizations websites.
- The description of the job depends on recruiters' ability to communicate through written language. Therefore, advertisements can possibly be ambiguous and hard to analyze. This also leads to challenges in coding this kind of problem.
- Another limitation is that manual coding of an extensive data set is time-consuming. This may lead to the problem of biased or inconsistent coding, particularly if data are not cross-coded effectively.

#### *Conclusions and recommendations*

In this age of fast changing technological advancement, online LIS job advertisements should not be overemphasized. Through online job advertisements, prospective employees are easily informed about the employers requirements for enabling them to make informed decisions. On the other hand, online job advertisements are important communication channels for enabling the employers to market themselves, identify and select potential prospective employees for variety of positions in the organizations. More importantly, online job advertisements do not only save time and costs of advertisements and applications, but they are also publicly accessible which is one of the fundamentals of good governance. However, not all government department employers in Tanzania use online Ajira Portal for advertising job positions available in their organizations. All employers should, therefore, consider using Ajira Portal and other easily accessible media so that job seekers have easy access to LIS job advertisements at one stop portal even for those who may lack online accessibility or connectivity.

#### **Recommendations**

- The central government should actively expand employment opportunities for LIS professionals within its various ministries and related sections.

- Government should establish a mandatory “one stop portal” or central government job portal for all government organizations to advertise job openings. This portal should be the primary platform, supplementing rather than replacing existing organizational websites.
- Employers in Tanzania should ensure all job advertisements must explicitly include the specific skills required for the advertised positions within a digital library environment.
- Job advertisers should include skills required by employers besides the list of duties and responsibilities to attract the best talent or manpower.
- Employers must provide exhaustive descriptions of all duties and responsibilities associated with LIS positions, accurately reflecting the diverse knowledge and competencies needed for digital library environments.
- Library schools should use detailed skill requirements from job advertisements to align their curricula with the current demands of the job market, specifically focusing on digital library skills, and curriculum developers in collaboration with employers.
- LIS schools should prepare professionals who are employable in the digital library environment for ensuring they are equipped to handle information in other sectors like banking helpdesk, airports and other departments like agricultural extension where information has to be organized and to be disseminated.

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