

Assessment of the Influence of Demographic Factors on job Performance of Librarians in University Libraries in South West, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the influence of demographic factors of librarians on job performance in the university libraries in South West, Nigeria. The study employed *expo- facto* research design survey with the sample size of two hundred and sixty librarians (260) from all the public university libraries in south West, Nigeria. A well self-designed structured questionnaire that focused on the demographic factors of librarians was raised. Four research questions were formulated and answered by the study. Frequency counts and percentages were used to analyze the data. The study established that among the demographic factors age, gender and work experience significantly influenced job performance of librarians in the university libraries in Nigeria. The finding equally showed that educational qualifications could not influence job performance of librarian. Hence, university management as well as the library managers is encouraged to take gender imbalances seriously in the recruitment exercises, this will go a long way to encourage both gender to be adequately represented in any given organizational setting and eventually increase the overall job performance of librarians.

Keywords: Demographic Factors, Librarians, Job Performance, University Libraries, Universities.

INTRODUCTION

The responsibility of supporting teaching, learning and research within the university environment, through the provision of information resources has always been that of university library. However, the extent to which tertiary institution libraries are able to perform these functions depends on a number of factors among which is the job performance of library personnel. Job performance as defined by James (2002) is the act of carrying out a command, duty or purpose; and equally an observable and measurable behaviour of a person in a particular situation.

Drafke and Kossen (1998) on their part defined job performance as the completion of a task or tasks; taking action in accordance with requirement. Coming from a psychological perspective, Aboyade (2013) described job performance as a distinct level variable; this made it different from more encompassing constructs such as managerial performance or national performance which is a higher level variable. According to Aboyade, to achieve the organizations' objectives, employees need to

perform their duties as expected. The performance of statutory duties based on workers field of specialization. Odunewu (2005) described the quality of library services has been depending on the level of personnel job performance and has been the concern of all stake holders. Libraries are saddled with the tasks of making information available to their users; therefore every operation in any of the section is directed towards service delivery (Odunewu, 2005). Therefore the job performance of individual library personnel is very important because one operation lead to another.

Several studies have been carried out both locally and internationally in the area of job performance of employees in an organization, most especially in academic library. In Nigeria for instance, Oyewole and Popoola (2013) studied the effects of independence variables of psycho-social factors on job performance of library workers in federal colleges of education in Nigeria. Job performance questionnaires were used to collect the data and were filled by

the college librarians. Descriptive statistics was used to answer the research questions. The result revealed moderate level of job performance among the library personnel. Akor (2009) in his study affirmed that the job performance of librarians in government owned universities in North-Central Nigeria was at a low level. In addition according to the researchers, a situation where low level of job performance is noticed from employee or employers, it would have been assumed that the management was unable to take cognizant of employee demographic factors such as age, gender, qualifications and work experience into consideration.

Demographic factors have been seen as frequent factors that have been associated with librarians' productivity and job performance. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2001) demographics is the study of human population in terms of size, density, location, age, gender, race, occupation and other statistics. The most obvious of these are personnel factors or demographic characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, educational qualification and so on. In other words it is also used to identify the study of quantifiable sub-set within a given population which characterizes that population over a specific point in time. Therefore it's important to examine these factors as they might be affecting job performance of librarians in the university libraries.

A number of studies have been carried out on age and librarian's job performance. However, the outcome of such studies produced contradictory correlations or conflicting results. For instance, Teoosco (2000) in his study using a random sampling of 228 colleges and universities in the United States that offered agricultural education reported that there was no significant evidence that age determined a drop in academic staff job performance. Ali (2003) in his study shows that age, which is one of the biographical characteristics of an employee, could affect job performance. Although sex refers to the biological differences between male and female, one difficulty encountered by investigators of sex differences and performance among workers in organizational settings is the difficulty of comparing the performance of men and women carrying out exactly the same job owing to gender segregation in the allocation of work tasks.

Ali (2003) stated clearly that males are more physically active than females. The world of "men's work" and "women's work" are as

different as east and west; they are vastly unequal in power, pay and prestige. This has made comparison of performance between the two genders to come late. Olorunjoba and Ajayi (2006) found that most male academic librarians have higher job performance than their female colleagues.

While relating years of experience to job performance, several studies carried out by scholars have revealed that the number of years of experience is a significant predictor of job performance of academics staff. This assertion therefore has confirmed the study of several researchers that professional maturity is accompanied by years of accumulated experience on the job. Edem and Atimo (1995) study revealed that librarians' work experience has a positive influence on their publication output. They also noted that the early years of experience could be used to amass professional or subject expertise which requires keen interest and wide reading to enable one develop research skills or expertise and cultivate the habit of writing for publishing.

Educational qualification is another important demographic factor that could affect job performance of librarians. This foregoing has shown that demographic factors such as age, gender educational background and work experience are interrelated and they are factors that may be affecting the job performance of librarians in Nigerian universities. On this premise, it is imperative to investigate if demographic factors such as age, gender, education qualification and work experience may significantly influence job performance of librarians in the university libraries in Nigeria.

The Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to carry out a survey of work attitude and demographic factors such as age, gender educational qualification and work experience on job performance of librarians in the university libraries in Nigeria

Research Questions

The researcher intends to find answer to the following research questions

- What is the influence of age of librarians on job performance in the university libraries in South West, Nigeria?
- What is the influence of gender of librarians on job performance in the university libraries?

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- What is the influence of educational qualification of librarians on job performance in the university libraries?
- What is the influence of work experience of librarians on job performance in the university libraries?

Related Literature

Job Performance of Librarians in University Libraries

Every organization is established with the primary aim of fulfilling certain objective(s) or goal(s). For this to be accomplished, both human and material resources are required. The managers of any organization or institution want effective and efficient productivity from the staff of their organization; reason being that it is said that the best thing to happen to any organization big or small is the attainment of set goals and objectives. This, in most cases, is revealed in the rise in the level of productivity through job performance. Oduwole (2004) provided a generic definition of job performance as how one carry out the tasks and responsibilities linked with a particular job. It is also considered as an output of a staff on the job, measurable in terms of quality and quantity of job done. This shows that there is a level of job performance that is anticipated by every organization from its employees. This also comprises of academic libraries that are more or less created to run services principally to the academic community where they are situated. Therefore the job performance of individual library personnel is very important because one operation dovetail into another. Going by the above, we can deduce that trained and proficient personnel as well as favorable working environment are vital to the successful achievement of the roles and tasks of academic librarians in universities.

Iyoro (2005) on his part noted that investigations have demonstrated that, when workers are given necessary incentives they require, they display maximum willingness when discharging their duties. On the other hand, an organization must know who its outstanding workers are, those who need additional training and those not contributing to the efficiency and welfare of the company or organization. Olorunisola (2012) investigated job performance and gender factors of administrative staff in government owned universities in South-West Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was used while a sample of 400

administrative staff from federal and two state universities were selected. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to answer research questions and test the null hypothesis respectively. Frequency counts, percentages and t-test analysis were used to analyze data. The findings indicated that 79% of the respondents performed very high on the job, while 20% performed very low. Generally speaking the level of job performance of administrative staff was high. In the book of Leighton and Weber (1999) on academic planning and research library building, they both emphasized that academic library is more than a book storehouse. This is because it offers an environment that is favorable to serious thought and learning. These environmental factors according to them are sensible personal comfort that can be attained through condition that enable the inhabitants to be unaware of such matters as air quality, drafts, lighting, glare, visual and auditory distractions, and furniture configuration. While systemic inefficiency may be largely the reasons for some of these challenges, other may have psychological trace. This may be detrimental to library personnel huge task of selection and acquisition of pertinent information resources (print and electronic), processing, storage, maintenance and dissemination of same for the social and academic growth and development of the user-community they serves. Aboyade, (2013) concluded that job performance of individuals is crucial to the survival of any organization. There are numerous factors that determine the job performance of individuals in certain instances and settings. These may include empowerment, management behaviour, and teamwork, motivation of work environment and demographic factor of workers. However for the purpose of this research the demographic factors of librarians are examined.

Age and Job Performance of Librarians

A number of studies have been carried out on age and librarian's job performance but, the outcome of such studies produced contradictory correlations or conflicting results. Teodorescu (2000) in a study carried out in the United States, revealed that age significantly influenced librarian's job performance. In another study conducted by Lertputtorrak (2008) the respondents agreed that the most important of these demographic factors is the age of the staff members. In his study of academic librarians, age was classified into two main groups; the

very new generation (25-35 years old) and the old or near- retirement group (nearly 60 years old). Furthermore, academic librarians who are part of the new generation typically like to perform any given tasks but the challenge commonly faces is inexperience, they always request for programmes and training to help them improve their skills. By comparison, the groups of old academics librarians who are nearly at retiring age rarely participate in any task but play a supervisory role. On the other hand, the outcome of some studies indicated that the relationship between job performance and age is not linear and implying that the rate of performance generally did not decline with age.

Gender and Job Performance of Librarians

One difficulty encountered by investigators of sex differences and performance among workers in organizational settings is the difficulty of comparing the performance of men and women carrying out exactly the same job owing to gender segregation in the allocation of work tasks (Rydstedt & Evans, 1998). Men and women differ significantly in their characteristics. Although sex refers to the biological differences between male and female, the list of actual differences is potentially long. Obviously, males and females differ automatically. As a rule, males are more physically active than females.

The world of “men’s work” and “women’s work” are as different as east and west; they are vastly unequal in power, pay and prestige. This has made comparison of performance between the two genders to come late (Rydstedt & Evans, 1998).

Work Experience and Job Performance of Librarians

While relating years of experience to job performance, several studies carried out by scholars have revealed that the number of years of experience is a significant predictor of job performance of academics staff. Edem and Atimo (1995) study revealed that librarians’ work experience has a positive influence on their publication output.

They also noted that the early years of experience could be used to amass professional or subject expertise which requires keen interest and wide reading to enable one develop research skills or expertise and cultivate the habit of writing for publishing. Also lengths of job in service also tend to improve job performance because of acquaintance.

Educational Qualifications and Job Performance of Librarians

Educational qualification is another important demographic factor that could affect job performance of librarians as pointed out by (Fennawald, 2011). The findings are at times might be inconsistent in the literature; it appears that there are significant differences between the job performance of employees and their educational level. Nicholson (1998) in his study believed that investment in education is undertaken as a way for young people to acquire knowledge and skills. It is assumed that the higher the qualification, the better the job performance. Thus, educational qualification is linked to job performance of library personnel. Babalola (2014) in his study carried out research on librarian’s job performance in colleges of education in Nigeria. The findings identified educational qualification(s) as a significant influence on job performance. This showed that there is a significant relationship between the educational level and job performance of librarians.

METHODOLOGY

The research employed *ex-post facto* research design survey. The sample size of this study comprises of two hundred and sixty (260) librarians from all the public university libraries in South west, Nigeria. The total enumeration sampling technique was used for the study. The total population has to be used when the population was not enough to achieve a desirable level of precision. A self-structured questionnaire that focused on assessment on the influence of demographic factors on job performance of librarians was raised. The frequency counts and percentages method of data analysis was used for the study. In all a total of 260 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 213 (82%) copies were returned and found usable which made up of (82%) response rate and is considered adequate for the study.

Research Questions

What is the influence of age of librarians on their job performance in the university libraries in Nigeria?

Table 1 revealed that there were 68 (31.9%) librarians aged 31-40 years, 59 (27.7%) of them were aged 41-50 years, 50 (23.5%) of them were within 51-60 years, 21(9.6%) of them were

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above 60 years and 15(7.0%) of them were 20-30 years.

Table1. Age of the Respondents

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
20-30 years	15	7.0
31-40 years	68	31.9
41-50 years	59	27.7
51-60 years	50	23.5
Above 60 years	21	9.6
Total	213	100.0

This implies that majority of the librarians in university libraries in South-West, Nigeria were within the ages of 31-40 years.

What is the influence of gender of librarians on their job performance in university libraries in Nigeria?

Table2. Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	110	51.6
Female	103	48.4
Total	213	100.0

Table 2 showed that there were 110 (51.6%) males while there were 103 (48.4%) females. This implies that there were more male librarians in university libraries in South- West, Nigeria than their female counterpart

What is the influence of educational qualification of librarians on their job performance in the university libraries?

Table3. Educational Qualification of the Respondents

Education Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
BLS/BA/B.Sc/B.Ed	97	45.5
PGDLIS	3	1.4
MLIS	63	29.6
M.Info.Sc	9	4.2
M.Sc	13	6.1
M.Ed	4	1.9
P.Hd	24	11.3
Total	213	100.0

Table 3 indicated that there were 97 (45.5%) of the librarians who holds BLS/BA/Bed/BSc degree. This is closely followed by 63 (29.6%) of them who hold MLIS degree. Only 24 (11.3%) of them hold a Ph.D degree. This implies that majority of the librarians in university libraries in South-West, Nigeria hold BLS/BSc/Bed and MLIS degrees. The data revealed that there were fewer respondents with Ph.D degrees in South-West, Nigeria. This might be due to the fact that it is relatively faster

to obtain a BLS and MLIS than a Ph.D which is more time-consuming.

What is the influence of work experience of librarians on their job performance in the university libraries in Nigeria?

Table4. Work Experience of the Respondents

Work Experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-5 years	19	8.9
6-10 years	19	8.9
11-15 years	23	10.8
16-20 years	45	21.1
21-25 years	35	16.4
26-30 years	42	19.7
30 years and above	30	14.1
Total	213	100.0

Table 7 revealed that there were 19 (8.9%) librarians who have worked for 6-10 years, 23 (10.8%) of them have worked for 11-15 years, 45 (21.1%) of them have worked for 16-20 years, 35 (16.4%) of them have worked for 21-25 years, 42 (19.7%) of them have worked for 26-30years and 30 (14.1%) of them have worked for 30 years and above. This implies that majority of the librarians in university libraries in Nigeria have worked for a reasonably good number years. This has significantly contributed to the job performance of librarians in the university libraries in Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section reports the findings of the study and discusses them in line with the research questions and findings from the studies. The findings established that the majority of the librarians in university libraries in Nigeria are within the ages of 31-40 years which is 31.9%. Closely followed was the age of 41-50 years with 27.7%. Several studies showed that, the most productive year in the life of any worker especially in academic environment is between the age of 31- 50. The finding revealed that the age of librarians have positive influence on their job performance.

This study in conformity with Teodorescu (2000) where he asserted in his study carried out in the United States, that age significantly influenced librarian's job performance. In another study conducted by Lertputtorrak (2008) the respondents agreed that the most important of these demographic factors is the age of the staff members and they had a significant influence on the performance of staff members.

The findings equally established that there are 110 (51.6%) male while there are 103 (48.4%) female. This implies that there are more male librarians in the university libraries in Nigeria than their female's counterpart as such this gender differences has made male to contribute more than their female counterpart. The gender difference has positively influenced on job performance of librarians in the university libraries in Nigeria. Although it's always a difficult challenge for investigator in comparing the performance of men and women carrying out exactly the same job owing to gender segregation in the allocation of work tasks. However, in line with this finding according to Rydstedt and Evans (1998) both established and stated clearly that male are more physically active than female. The world of "men's work" and "women's work" are as different as east and west; they are vastly unequal in power, pay and prestige. This has made comparison of performance between the two genders to come late. Oloruntoba and Ajayi (2006) found that most male academic librarians have higher job performance than their female colleagues.

The study established that educational background has little or no significant relationship on the job performance of librarians. It was revealed in the study that there are 97 (45.5%) of the librarians hold BLS/BA/B.ED/BSc degree. Closely followed by 63 (29.6%) of them who hold MLIS degree. Only 24 (11.3%) of them hold a Ph.D degree. This implies that greater numbers of librarians are with less qualification and a few of the respondents are with MLIS and PhD. The finding showed that educational qualifications may not significantly influence job performance of librarians in the university libraries in Nigeria. The finding is in variance with Babalola (2014) study on librarian's job performance in colleges of education in Nigeria, where he identified educational qualification(s) as a significant influence on job performance. Babalola ascertained that there is a significant relationship between the educational level and job performance of librarians.

The finding established that work experience has positive influenced on job performance of librarians in university libraries in Nigeria. It was revealed that 19 (8.9%) of librarians have worked for 6-10 years, 23 (10.8%) of them have worked for 11-15 years, 45 (21.1%) of them have worked for 16-20 years, 35 (16.4%) of them have worked for 21-25 years, 42 (19.7%)

of them have worked for 26-30 years and 30 (14.1%) of them have worked for 30 years and above. This implies that majority of the librarians in university libraries in Nigeria have worked for a reasonably good number of years. This has significantly contributed to the job performance of librarians in the university libraries in Nigeria. This finding is in conformity with Edem and Atimo (1995) studied where both revealed that librarians' work experience has a positive influence on their publication output. They also noted that the early years of experience could be used to amass professional or subject expertise which requires keen interest and wide reading to enable one develop research skills or expertise and cultivate the habit of writing for publishing. Also lengths of job in service also tend to improve job performance because of acquaintance.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study affirmed that demographic factors of librarians have serious influence on job performance of librarians in university libraries in Nigeria. It is observed that the librarians productivity and overall job performance is a function of functional work environment that devoid of constraints of any form and adequate consideration to their demographic variables especially age, gender and work experience. In other words the role plays by demographic factors of librarians on job performance is highly significant. Equally, the assessment showed that librarians has a significant role to play in ensuring that universities are able to meet up with their primary objectives which are teaching learning and researches activities.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings on the study, the following recommendations are suggested

- University management as well as the library managers is encouraged to take gender imbalances seriously in the recruitment exercises, this will go a long way to encourage both gender to be adequately represented in any given organizational setting and eventually increase the overall job performance.
- Library manager should make both intrinsic and extrinsic incentives available for the librarians. This will definitely encourage and increase the job performance of librarians.

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