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## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTIVATIONAL PRACTICES AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF LIBRARIANS IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH-EAST, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*The study investigated the relationship between motivational practices and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Correlational research design was used in carrying out the study. The population of the study consisted of all the librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. A sample size of 104 librarians was drawn for the study using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Two set of instruments titled “Motivational Practices Questionnaire (MPQ) and “librarians’ Job Performance Questionnaire (LJPQ)” were used for data collection. The instruments were subjected to face validation by three experts, two in the Department of Library, and a specialist in Measurement and Evaluation all from National Open University of Nigeria. The instruments were subjected to test of internal consistency using Cronbach alpha which yielded overall coefficient of 0.86 for MPQ and 0.81 for LJPQ. The researcher together with four research assistants administered copies of the questionnaires directly to the respondents and a 97 percent return rate of the instruments was recorded. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the research questions, and simple regression for the hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed among others that there is a strong relationship between training practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. It was also reported that there is significant relationship between participatory decision-making practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that University Management should organize annual training programmes for librarians to enable them upgrade their skills and knowledge for enhancing their job performance.*

**Keywords:** Motivational practice, job performance. Librarians, Training, Decision-Making

## Introduction

Every university has a library which serves as information house. Okeke and Elem (2022) stressed that the academic libraries play a central role in sourcing, organizing, preserving and disseminating information and scholarly works in tertiary institutions. The library is controlled by a librarian. A librarian is professional who manages and provide access to information in a library. Aghadiuno, Ayele and Itodo (2020) defined a librarian as professionally trained personnel who is in charge of or assisting in a library. Continuing, Aghadiuno et al (2020) stressed that the role of a librarian is to provide and maintain information in many formats, including: books; electronic resources; magazines; newspapers; audio and video recordings; maps; manuscripts; photographs and other graphic material; bibliographic databases; and web-based and digital resources Librarians manage printed and non-printed materials and provide instruction on how to access them in the library. Librarians could effectively perform their roles when they are adequately motivated.

Motivation is any force that propels, energizes and sustains desirable behaviour towards attaining set goals. Chukwunedum (2022) defined motivation as the inner force or urge that drives, directs, or influences an individual to attain organizational goals. It arouses and directs librarians to strive for excellence in rendering services to the university community. Ikonne and Fajonyomi (2019) defined motivation as a form of stimuli that propels an individual to put in their best to an assigned duty. Komolafe and Gbotosho (2019) averred that if librarians are properly motivated they will be able to perform better which will also improve their productivity and help the library to achieve their stated goals and objectives. Motivated librarians are more dedicated and commitment to their job in universities. They work harder and put substantial efforts to improve the coordination of information resources in the university library. Nnebedum, Oshia, Nwanne and Chinagorom (2022) opined that the members of staff could be induced, encouraged and energized to put all their best efforts in performing their duties through motivational practices. Koko and Dike (2022) noted that once workers get motivated to achieve something by doing the tasks, they will eventually exert their full effort, time and energy thus becoming determined and persistent in accomplishing things even if they are not of their interest.

Motivational practices include provision of good condition of service, prompt communication, regular training, timely promotion, mutual interpersonal relationships, recognition, job security and participatory decision making. Similarly, Nnebedum, Oshia, Nwanne and Chinagorom (2022) identified motivational practices to include: recognition, recommendation of staff for promotion, training, disseminating of timely information, issuing of award to outstanding staff, involvement of staff in decision-making, provision of facilities to members of staff and developing of conducive work environment.

Training is a professional programme for upgrading the skills and knowledge of staff in given area. Abazie (2020) defined training as a development programme that enable members of staff acquire skills and attitude to carry out their duties to the required standard in the present job and to assume greater and more demanding roles. It is a planned experience that improves knowledge, attitude and competencies of employees. Osiesi et al (2021) defined training as a lifelong endeavour involving continuous learning on the part of the staff, with regards to updating of their contemporary knowledge, skills and experiences for self and all-round development. The basic rationale behind training of librarians is to expose them to experience that build their confidence, boost their morale, help them acquire more knowledge and develop new skills to cope with changes in the workplace. Training programmes include

seminars, conferences, workshops, coaching; job rotation, mentoring, orientation, refresher courses, distance learning and instructor-led-training in the job among others.

Decision-making is the act of choosing the best course of action from the available alternatives. Participatory decision-making is a process of involving and seeking the inputs subordinates in selecting best of course of action to solve the problem of an organization. Agbese, Daramola and Akidi (2018) noted that participative decision-making provides opportunity for innovation and knowledge sharing between the managers and the employees. The authors added that library managers who carry their subordinates along in decision making are better equipped with information to make the right decisions. It enables management of university libraries listens carefully to members of staff and gather sufficient information that contribute to better decisions. Ugwu, Okoroji and Chukwu (2019) asserted that participatory decision-making offers employees the opportunity to make suggestions and recommendations required to improve their job performance for attainment of set goals. Participatory decision-making encourage the acceptance and commitment towards implementing the decisions reached in an organization.

Job performance is the execution of tasks to accomplish set objectives in the workplace. Koko and Dike (2022) described job performance as the tasks done by workers to achieve set goals in their various organizations. It is work-related behaviours exhibited by personnel to accomplish set goals in an organization. Unobe and Ikonne (2020) defined librarians' job performance as the discharge of statutory duties or functions based on employee's field of specialization geared towards the attainment objectives and goals set in the library. The authors added that librarians perform jobs that are technical in nature such as cataloguing and classification, acquisition and user services such as referencing and response to users query. Similarly, Komolafe and Gbotosho (2019) opined that the jobs performed by the staff include cataloging and classification of materials, provision of reference services, charging and discharging of library materials to users, current awareness services, and bibliographic services among others. Contextually, librarians' job performance is the outcome of the effort and energy put by staff in carrying out their duties to accomplish predetermined objectives.

The job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria seems to be unsatisfactorily. To buttress this, Ikonne and Fajonyomi (2019) noted that the performance of librarians In Nigerian Universities is on the decline as shown by their attitude to work, where librarians go to work late, reduced quantity of work output and increased friction which may be as a result of low motivational factors. Some librarians in Nigerian universities are rarely sponsored to attend any training programme nor encouraged to participate in decision-making. Alegbeleye, Unegbu, Babalolaand Gbemi-Ogunleye (2020) observed that many librarians in Nigerian express their frustrations over the absence or the inadequate recognition of their performance by the management of their libraries. Aghadiuno, Ayele and Itodo (2020) observed that some librarians still exhibit poor attitude towards their work and those they serve which may be due to irregular promotion, lack of incentives and delay of salary payment. The authors added that this apparent attitude exhibited by these librarians might therefore, bring dissatisfaction and this could lead to lack of commitment to work, absenteeism and lateness which make Librarians perform below expectations. Osiesi et al (2021) noted that there is decline in the productivity and efficiency of librarians in their service delivery in Nigerian Universities. The authors added that the reasons for this decline may be rooted in the absence, inadequate or no attendance of these library staff in professional development and training programmes. This unsatisfactory staff of affairs prompted the study.

## **Objective of the study**

The main objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between motivational practices and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to investigate the:

1. Relationship between training practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria.
2. Relationship between participatory decision-making practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between training practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between participatory decision-making practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria?

## **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between training practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant relationship between participatory decision-making practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria.

## **Method**

Correlational research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study consisted of all the librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. The sample size for this study consisted of 104 librarians drawn using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Two set of instruments titled “Motivational Practices Questionnaire (MPQ) and “librarians’ Job Performance Questionnaire (LJPQ)” were used for data collection. MPQ has two clusters namely A and B. Cluster A contains ten items on training practice and Cluster B contained eight items of participatory decision-making practice. On the other hand, LJPQ contains 15 items which measured job performance of librarians. The two sets of instrument (MPQ and LJPQ) were structured on four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D); Strongly Disagree (SD) and weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instruments were subjected to face validation by three experts, two in the Department of Library, and a specialist in Measurement and Evaluation all from National Open University of Nigeria. Their suggestions were used to produce the final edition of the instruments. The reliability of the instruments was ascertained through single administration of copies of MPQ and LJPQ administered to 30 librarians from public universities in South-South, Nigeria which was outside the area of study. Data collected were analyzed using Cronbach alpha which yielded coefficient of 0.86 for MPQ and 0.81 for LJPQ.

The researchers with the help of six research assistants who are secondary school teachers in Delta state used direct approach for data collection. A total of 104 copies of the instruments were distributed and 101 were properly filled and successfully retrieved indicating 97% percent return rate. At the end of the exercise, copies of the questionnaire that

are properly completed and retrieved were used for data analysis. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the research questions, and simple regression for the hypotheses. For the research questions the coefficient  $r$  and the size of the relationship was interpreted using the correlation coefficient by Schober, Boer and Schwarte (2018), as follows:

Coefficient	Relationship
.00- .10	Negligible correlation
.11- .39	Weak correlation
.40- .69	Moderate correlation
.70- .89	Strong correlation
.90- 1.00	Very strong correlation
.80-1.00	High

For decision on the hypotheses, if  $p$ -value is equal to or less than level of significant value of 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected, but if  $p$ -value is greater than level of significant value of 0.05, the null hypotheses was not rejected.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the relationship between training practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria?

**Table 1: Pearson (r) on Training Practices and Job Performance of Librarians**

Variables	N	Training Practice	Librarians' Job Performance	Remarks
Training Practice	101	1.00	.754	Strong
Librarians' Job Performance	101	.754	1.00	

As shown in Table 1, a Pearson's correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) of .754 was obtained. This shows there is strong relationship between training practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. This indicated that the increase in training practice will strongly improve the job performance of librarians.

**Research Question 2:** What is the relationship between decision-making practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria?

**Table 2: Pearson (r) on Decision-Making Practices and Job Performance of Librarians**

Variables	N	Decision-Making Practice	Librarians' Job Performance	Remarks
Decision-Making Practice	101	1.00	.708	Strong
Librarians' Job Performance	101	.708	1.00	

Result presented in Table 2 revealed that a Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) of .708 was obtained. This shows there is strong relationship between decision-making practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. This indicated that the increase in decision-making practice will strongly improve the job performance of librarians.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between training practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria.

**Table 3: The Summary of Simple Regression Analysis of Relationship between Training Practice and Job Performance of Librarians**

Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	P-value	Remark
Training Practice	.754	.601	156.110	.030	*S

\*Significant

As shown in Table 3, the simple regression coefficient (R) is .754, while the R<sup>2</sup> is .601 showing that training practice makes 60.1% contribution to the variance in librarians' job performance public secondary schools. The  $F (1/101) = 156.110$  and the  $p$ -value of .030 is less than .05. Therefore, since the  $p$ -value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there is significant relationship between training practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant relationship between decision-making practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria.

**Table 4: The Summary of Simple Regression Analysis of Relationship between Decision-Making Practice and Job Performance of Librarians**

Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	P-value	Remark
Decision-Making Practice	.708	.587	234.334	.020	*S

\*Significant

The result of data analysis presented in Table 4 indicated that the simple regression coefficient (R) is .708, while the R<sup>2</sup> is .587 showing that decision-making practice makes 58.7% contribution to the variance in librarians' job performance public secondary schools. The  $F (1/101) = 234.334$  and the  $p$ -value of .020 is less than .05. Therefore, since the  $p$ -value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected.



Therefore, there is significant relationship between decision-making practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria.

### **Discussion**

The finding of the study indicated that there is strong relationship between training practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. This supported the finding of Osiesi et al (2021) which indicated that there was a strong positive relationship between the training of library staff and their job performance. This also agreed with the finding of other researchers which revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between training and the job performance of staff (Abazie, 2020; Kumaran & Azam, 2020). Training practice is associated with job performance of librarians due to the fact that it offers them opportunity to acquire up-dated knowledge and skills needed to effectively discharge their duties. The experience and ideas shared by librarians during training will lead to improvement on their job performance. It was also found that there is significant relationship between decision-making practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. This is in line with the finding of Osiesi et al (2021) which indicated that there was a statistically significant relationship between the training of library staff and their job performance. This is also agreed with the finding of Abazie (2020) which showed that there is significant relationship between teachers' professional training and job performance in public secondary schools. Training helps librarians to continuously upgrade their skills and knowledge to cope with educational environment change from time to time which enhances their job performance.

The results of the study showed that there is strong relationship between decision-making practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. This supported the finding of Ceneza and Tagadiad (2022) which indicated that there is a significant relationship between decision making and employee performance. This refuted the finding of Wordah and Ekwesianya (2020) who reported that there is a moderate positive relationship between decision making and teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Decision making is a key ingredient for the successful operations of school affairs in such a way to create conducive environment that will improve the job performance of librarians. Any decision on staff affairs that is rightly taken will strongly improve the job performance of librarians. Further results of the study showed that there is significant relationship between decision-making practice and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. This affirmed the result of Wordah and Ekwesianya (2020) who reported that there is a significant relationship between decision making and teachers' job performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. Decision making significantly correlates with job performance of librarians as it offers them the opportunity to air the views on problems encountered in discharging their duties and possible way of handling the challenges to improve their job performance.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, it is concluded that there is strong positive and significant relationship between motivational practices and job performance of librarians in public universities in south-east, Nigeria. The motivation of librarians through training and their involvement in decision tend to make them feel valued, eager to learn and apply acquired new skills to adapt to the rapidly changing education system and successfully discharge their duties. Effective motivation of librarians is a panacea towards improving their job performance.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made;

1. University Management should organize annual training programmes for librarians to enable them upgrade their skills and knowledge for enhancing their job performance.
2. The management of university libraries should motivate librarians through involving them in decision-making process that will offer them opportunity to make inputs that will improve their job performance.
3. University Management should integrate librarians into various committees to give them opportunity to participate in decision-making process that will facilitate their job performance.



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