

EXPLORING FACTORS OF JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG LIBRARIANS IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN SOUTHEAST NIGERIA: CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES

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Abstract

The study explores factors of job performance among librarians in Federal University Libraries in Southeast Nigeria examining the challenges and strategies. The study was guided by three specific objectives which includes identifying factors that constitute job performance, ascertain challenges to job performance and finding strategies for enhancing job performance of librarians. A survey design was used for the study and a target population of 92 librarians working in federal university libraries in southeast Nigeria. Data was collected using questionnaires and analyzed using mean, percentages and frequency. The findings of the study reveal that high quality and quantity of work performed, timely completion of work, accuracy of work performed, good attitude while performing their job, ability to follow instructions among others are factors that constitute job performance. It equally shows that lack of opportunities for promotion, poor working environment, level of management interest in the librarians' well-being, lack of job description, among others are factors that could affect job performance of librarians. It was recommended that job performance can be enhanced through creating opportunity for librarians to participate in decision making, creating good interpersonal relationship with boss, adequate promotion, salary increase, opportunity for training, cordial relationship with co-workers, a sincere annual appraisal among others. Therefore, the existence of these positive job performance factor will enhance librarians service delivery.

Key Words: Job performance, Librarian, University Library, Job.

Introduction

It is evident that the efficiency of an organization depends immensely on the attitude of workers and their level of commitment towards their job. Job is a purposive human activity. It is an exercise of man's faculties to produce a particular desired goal in the form of goods and services. (Eze, 2002). Job has been and will continue to be part and parcel of man's existence in this physical world. It is a means by which societal and individual needs

are met. Therefore, job is very natural to man, controls and animates him both in everyday existence and in social and intellectual life. Job is not just about employment; rather it goes further to mean an activity that produces something of value to and for society. According to Buchanan (2002), an individual performance is generally determined by factors such as motivation, the desire to do the job, the capability to do the job, the work environment, and the tools, material and information needed to do the job. If the problem is with the environment, the library management can adjust to promote higher performance. If a librarian lacks ability, the person can be trained to perform better.

Ekere (2006) stated that the University library is supposed to serve all the areas of knowledge taught in the university. To achieve this, the librarians must be effective in-service delivery. Most libraries therefore spend huge sums of money on training librarians for better performance, considering the vital roles of the University library and librarians. University libraries vary in shape, size, objectives and goals, but the functions are both academic and administrative and are all designed towards the achievement of the educational objectives of the institution. It is a central service unit of operation established to provide materials and facilities for study, teaching and research carried out in the university. The librarians play a great role in delivering these services in the university system because they are responsible for carrying out all the services of the library as mentioned above. This implies that the university library cannot function on its own without the librarians (Ekere, 2010). An Academic librarian is a trained professional who is responsible for the efficient and effective running of an Academic library through the acquisition, organization and information dissemination, and must keep abreast of trends in development to participate actively in the system. He is someone trained in library and information science to be able to select, acquire, organize, describe, classify, administer, preserve, conserve and utilize information materials to provide information services.

Statement of the problem

The need for librarians and library services to the university community is so enormous that the university cannot function effectively without it. Continuous research in the university might not be possible without effective job performance of librarians. Despite these important roles of librarians, some librarians still perform poorly on their job. This apparent negative attitude exhibited by some librarians might hinder the general progress in research, scholarship and institutional development. However, research has shown that there are some factors that could enhance job performance such as good salary, promotional

opportunities, good working environment and good interpersonal relationships, well defined library goals, opportunity for achievement and recognition. When the above-mentioned factors are not in existence, it might result in lateness to work, laziness, lack of motivation, inability to meet targets, constant sick leave and poor health condition.

Therefore, it is important to investigate these challenges, to gain an understanding of job performance factors among librarians in federal university libraries in Southeast Nigeria and strategies to enhance them.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to explore factors of job performance among librarians in federal university libraries in southeast Nigeria examining the challenges and strategies. This study specifically investigates:

1. Factors that constitute job performance of librarians in federal university libraries Southeast Nigeria
2. Factors affecting job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in Southeast Nigeria.
3. Strategies of enhancing job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in Southeast Nigeria.

Literature Review

Constituents of job performance

According to Meyer and Peng (2006) job performance refers to the output that a person has contributed to the organization concerning his behavior to engage in, and which the organization may perceive as productive or counterproductive. Effective performance can be achieved when the employees meet the expectation of the employer and contributes to organization's success. Job performance is a commonly used concept in industrial and organizational psychology. It refers to how people perform their assigned task. Armstrong (2000) stated that performance means both behaviour and result; while behaviour emanates from the performer and transforms performance from abstraction to action. One of the influential multi-factor models of job performance is the one advanced by Campbell as quoted by Ramawickrama et al. (2017). He conceptualized job performance as a multidimensional construct consisting of more than one kind of behavior and proposed an eight-factor model of performance based on factor analytic research that attempts to capture dimensions of job performance across all jobs. These factors include, task specific behaviors,

non-task specific behaviors, written and oral communication tasks among others. Brandão and Jordão (2011) observed that Job performance comprises two dimensions: task performance, which includes behaviors directly and indirectly supporting the organization's technical core, and contextual performance, which involves behaviors that enhance the organizational, social, and psychological environment necessary for the technical core's functioning. Furthermore, Ramawickrama et al (2017) observed that job performance consists of task-oriented behavior, interpersonal oriented behavior, in-role performance, extra-role performance, and performance regulation. It encompasses individual traits, situational factors, and various dimensions such as quality, quantity, timeliness, and interpersonal impact. Alqarni et al., (2023) categorizes job performance into three levels: individual, team, and organizational. Stating that there is a need for a balanced focus on all dimensions of job performance to enhance organizational effectiveness. It underscores the importance of supportive work environments and resources in optimizing employee performance across these levels

Factors affecting Job Performance

In libraries as in any organizational setting, the issue of job performance faces a lot of challenges. Smith as quoted in Obioha (2003) identified five factors that can affect job performance, and they as follows: people on the present job, supervision on the job, opportunity for promotion, present pay, work on the present job. He stated that people on the present job influences a worker's job performance, and it is also believed that work on the present job influences performance. Whether an employee works hard or not, derives satisfaction from the job or not, is influenced by the way he perceives the work. In the other hand, Nappo (2020) highlighted that interpersonal relationships on the job can enhance or hinder individual well-being and help manage or create stress from unfavorable work environments. If a worker associates with people who are committed and are motivated, he could get motivated and increase his performance and verse-versa. Since interest and enthusiasm seems to be infectious, teamwork and efficiency are emphasized as vital components of job performance, with a focus on achievement orientation and interpersonal relationships. Again, leadership style and employee motivation are critical drivers of job performance. An ineffective leadership style can directly and indirectly influence performance by shaping motivation and job satisfaction. Employees who feel fairly treated and engaged are more likely to perform well. He further observed that an average employee

looks towards to the day when he will earn a promotion. Promotion is a reward for past performance, an encouragement to nudge him to continue to excel. Promotion motivates behaviour. An employee who is denied a promotion for a long time gets frustrated. Katz in Sinclair (2005) further stated that money has the power to attract, retain, and motivate individuals towards higher performance. Money satisfies, even though people have a sentimental attachment to it. Money can be seen as a symbol of achievement, success and status. Above all, people work to maintain their families or to meet their physiological needs.

Strategies for Enhancing Job Performance

Numerous writers have discussed the issues of actions the library administrators and managers can implement to enhance job performance. Owens (2021) opined that library administrators should focus on job design, operational models, and staffing to enhance performance and key strategies include cross-training staff, empowering them to propose improvements, and ensuring adequate staffing levels to support these initiatives. Gong (2011) observed that job performance management in libraries should emphasize the importance of rational job setting and effective assessment systems to enhance performance, aligning with the idea of hiring the best staff to ensure quality service and performance. In the view of Wahyono (2022) strategies for enhancing job performance include conducting work meetings for evaluation and direction, providing training to improve hard and soft skills, offering motivation to boost employee willingness, and giving awards to influence motivation and performance. Furthermore, as observed by Musa et al (2024) effective strategies for enhancing job performance could involve fostering a positive organizational culture through openness, good communication, and recognition of achievements, alongside strong leadership that promotes collaboration and trust, ultimately leading to increased motivation and productivity among employees.

Methodology

The research design for this study is a descriptive survey. The area of the study is Southeast Nigeria with following universities covered; Nnamdi Azikiwe Library University of Nigeria, Enugu State (52), Federal University of Technology Library Owerri, Imo state (26). Nnamdi Azikiwe University Library Awka, Anambra state (15), Michael Okpara University of Agriculture Library Umudike, Abia state (12), Federal University Ndufu-Alike Library, Ebonyi State (5) The population used for this study comprises one hundred and ten (110) Academic librarians in the Federal University libraries in Southeast Nigeria. Questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was designed

in line with the three research questions of the study. Section A is on bio data, while Section B – D intends to elicit answers to the three research questions. Section B of the instrument contains six (6) items and was designed to elicit information on factors that constitute job performance. And section C contains six (6) items to elicit information on factors affecting job performance. Section D equally contains six (6) items and sought answers on strategies of enhancing job performance of librarians. A total of 110 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents and 92 was returned and found usable.

Mean was used as the major descriptive statistics for data analysis. A four-point rating scale was used to determine the mean scores of respondents. Based on the four-point rating scale 4, 3, 2, 1, a mean of 2.5 was obtained. Therefore, any item ranked 2.5 and above was considered positive or accepted. While items below 2.5 (criterion mean) were considered as negative or rejected.

Findings

Research Question One

What are the factors that constitute job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in Southeast Nigeria?

The above research question was answered using the results generated from data analysis and shown in the below table.

Table 1: Constituents of job performance

S/N	Items	VGE	GE	ME	LE	MEAN	REMARK
1	When the job is performed of high quality	54	31	4	1	3.5	Accept
2	The accuracy with which work is performed	45	39	7	-	3.4	Accept
3	When I exhibit good attitude while performing my job	41	41	6	-	3.4	Accept
4	The extent I am able to follow instructions and directions.	35	48	7	-	3.3	Accept
5	When work assigned is	38	41	7	2	3.3	Accept

	completed on time						
6	When the quantity of work performed is high.	37	33	16	-	3.2	Accept

Table 1 shows the mean responses on constituents of job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in Southeast Nigeria. The table reveals what constitutes job performance factors are, high quality job (3.5), and quantity of work performed (3.2), accuracy with which work is performed (3.4), good attitude while performing the job (3.4), timely completion of work (3.3), and ability to follow instructions (3.3).

The findings show that all the items were rated positive, indicating that they are what constitute job performance factors for librarians.

Research Question Two

What are the factors affecting job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in Southeast Nigeria?

Table 2: Factors affecting job performance

S/N	Items	VGE	GE	ME	LE	MEAN	REMARK
1	Inadequate opportunities for further training	38	30	12	7	3.1	Accept
2	Poor working environment	33	33	11	11	3.0	Accept
3	Level of management interest in my well being	33	32	14	12	2.9	Accept
4	When my reward is not commensurate to my input	34	30	11	14	2.9	Accept
5	Lack of opportunity for promotion	39	19	12	16	2.9	Accept
6	When my salary is little when compared with people in other profession	28	31	19	12	2.8	Accept
7	Cooperation among colleagues	18	26	20	10	2.7	Accept

8	Lack of job description	18	29	22	16	2.6	Accept
9	Little opportunity to use personal initiative on my job.	21	27	24	19	2.5	Accept
10	My job does not have high status, and it is negatively affecting my level of performance	6	15	26	36	1.9	Reject

Table 2 shows the mean responses of factors affecting job performance of librarian in federal university libraries in Southeast Nigeria?

The table indicate that; lack of opportunity for further training (3.1), poor working environment (3.0), lack of opportunities for promotion (2.9), level of management interest in the librarians well-being (2.9), reward not being commensurate to input (2.9), lack of job description (2.6), little salary when compared with people in other profession (2.8), poor cooperation among colleagues (2.7), little opportunity to use personal initiative on my job (2.5). While low status of job (1.9) was rejected as factor that affect job performance.

Research question three

How can job performance be enhanced among librarians in federal university libraries in southeast Nigeria?

Table 3: Strategies for enhancing job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in Southeast Nigeria.

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN	REMARKS
1	If I am promoted accordingly	60	31	1	-	3.6	Accept
2	A sincere annual appraisal	56	32	2	-	3.6	Accept
3	A conducive working environment	59	28	1	1	3.6	Accept
4	Increment in salary	58	28	2	-	3.6	Accept
5	The existence of opportunities for training	56	30	2	-	3.6	Accept
6	When there is concrete job description	47	41	1	-	3.6	Accept
7	The existence of well-set library goals	54	30	3	-	3.6	Accept
8	When there is a future for my job	52	31	5	2	3.5	Accept
9	A good interpersonal relationship with my	42	38	6	2	3.4	Accept

	boss						
10	Cordial relationship with co-workers	39	44	3	-	3.4	Accept
11	If I am given opportunity to participate in decision making	45	33	5	5	3.2	Accept
12	By restructuring my work pattern	29	38	17	4	3.0	Accept

The above table shows the mean responses of the librarians on how their job performance can be enhanced. The table reveals that quite a number of factors can enhance job performance of these librarians. The data shows these factors to be opportunity to participate in decision making (3.2), good future for the job (3.5), good interpersonal relationship with the boss (3.4), being promoted accordingly (3.6), and salary increment (3.6). The table equally reveals that job performance can be enhanced by the existence of training opportunities (3.6), cordial relationships with co-workers (3.4), well set library goals (3.6), existence of concrete job description (3.6), restructuring of work pattern (3.0), and a sincere annual appraisal (3.6).

From the table, all the items were rated positive.

Summary of the findings

1. High quality and quantity of work performed, timely completion of work, accuracy of work performed, good attitude while performing their job, ability to follow instructions are factors that constitute job performance.
2. Factors such as lack of opportunities for promotion, poor working environment, level of management interest in the librarians well being, lack of job description, opportunity for further training, cooperation among colleagues, reward not being commensurate to input, little salary when compared with those in other profession, little opportunity to use personal initiative on the job were perceived by librarians are factors affecting job performance.
3. Creating opportunity to participate in decision making, good future for the job, good interpersonal relationship with boss, promotion, salary increase, opportunity for training, conducive working environment, cordial relationship with co-workers, well set library goals, restructured work pattern, and a sincere annual appraisal are strategies for enhancing job performance.

Discussions

Factors that constitute job performance of librarians in federal university libraries.

The study reveals that constituents of job performance include high quantity and high quality of work performed, timely completion of work, accuracy of work performed, good attitude while performing the job and ability to follow instructions. This is in line with Armstrong (2000) who stated that performance does not have to be only a direct observable action, but can constitute mental productions such as answers or decisions. Therefore, it constitutes both behavior and result; result such as quality and quantity of work performed, timely completion and accuracy of work performed. Behavior on the other hand can be good attitude while performing the job and ability to follow instructions. Ramawickrama et al (2017) collaborating this stated that job performance consists of task-oriented behavior, interpersonal oriented behavior, in-role performance, extra-role performance, and performance regulation. It encompasses individual traits, situational factors, and various dimensions such as quality, quantity, timeliness, and interpersonal impact.

From the findings, the constituent of job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in Southeast Nigeria determines the overall performance of these librarians in their libraries.

Factors affecting job performance of librarians.

The study revealed that factors affecting job performance of librarians includes lack of opportunities for promotion, poor working environment, level of management interest in the librarians well-being, lack of job description, and opportunity for further training among other things. This is in line with Obioha (2003), who identified people on the present job, opportunity for promotion, nature of work on the present job, managerial ability, and lack of physiological drive as factors confronting job performance. The findings shows that lack of opportunities for promotion, opportunity for further training, level of management interest in the librarians well being, lack of opportunities for promotion and poor working environment, and opportunity to use personal initiative on the job ranks very high in factors confronting them in their job performance; while job not having high status was not accepted as a factor affecting job performance. Obioha (2003), also agreed that an employee who is denied a promotion for a long time gets frustrated and therefore affects his job performance. Also stating that management must create a favourable environment in which the employee would work and motivate employees to a greater performance. Therefore, for greater job performance of these librarians, the existing positive factors affecting jobs should be encouraged and the less existing factors should be enhanced

Strategies for enhancing performance among librarians.

It was found in this study that the means through which job performance of librarians can be enhanced are having opportunity to participate in decision making, creating good future for the job, having good interpersonal relationship with boss, adequate promotion, salary increment, existence of opportunity for training, conducive working environment, cordial relationship with co-workers, well set library goals, restructured work pattern and a sincere annual appraisal. This is in line with other studies such as Musa et al (2024) who observed that effective strategies for enhancing job performance include fostering a positive organizational culture through openness, good communication, and recognition of achievements, alongside strong leadership that promotes collaboration and trust, ultimately leading to increased motivation and productivity among employees. Wahyono (2022) equally agrees with the findings that strategies for enhancing job performance include providing training to improve hard and soft skills, offering motivation to boost employee willingness, and giving awards to influence motivation and performance.

Implications of the study

The findings of this study have some implications for university administration, university library management and the librarians. This study found that factors that constitute job performance of the librarians in their order of importance are opportunity for promotion, good working environment, salary status, good interpersonal relationship in the workplace, challenging nature of the job and good retirement benefits. Since all these factors are important and constitutes the librarian job performance, the university administrators and the library management must endeavor to ensure the sustenance and enhancement of these factors and the negligence of any of it at any point will reduce the level of job performance and retard the progress of the library and university at large.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made.

1. The existing constituents of job satisfaction can be sustained and improved through constant evaluation of the librarians on these areas to ascertain whether there is a shift in what previously constituted job performance factors for them and when there is, quick effort should be made to adjust to it.
2. In appraising staff performance, effort should be made to ensure that factors that makes for job performance are still in place before deciding on whether a librarian is performing well or bad and take responsibility for management induced inefficiency.

3. It is recommended that librarians be given opportunities to participate in workshops, creating opportunity for librarians to participate in decision making, creating good interpersonal relationships with bosses, adequate promotion, salary increase, among others.

Conclusion

The study was designed to investigate job performance factors, challenges and the strategies for improving job performance among librarians in federal university libraries in Southeast Nigeria. The study was guided by three specific objectives. The findings of the study reveal some factors such as timely completion of work, and accuracy of work performed, among others as factors that constitute job performance. Equally, the findings among other things reveals lack of opportunity for promotion as the greatest factor that can affect their job performance. However, the existence of promotion opportunities will greatly enhance the job performance of the librarians. Recommendations were made such as giving librarians opportunities to participate in workshops, seminars and training outside their environment to learn what others are doing that will enhance their job performance.

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