

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS PREDICTOR OF JOB SATISFACTION OF LIBRARIANS IN SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN NORTH-CENTRAL, NIGERIA

By

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction among librarians in selected universities in North-central Nigeria. Emotional intelligence, which encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, and social skills, is considered a critical factor in workplace and individual performance. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. A simple random technique was used to select three states from the North-central geo-political zone with a total population of 325 librarians. Purposive sampling was employed in the second stage to select one public, one state, and one private University from the selected states making a total of 135 as the target population, total enumeration sample was used. Data were collected using a standardized questionnaire consisting of two sub-scales, namely: the emotional intelligence Scale (SES) and job satisfaction Scale (JSS) were adopted to measure emotional intelligence and job satisfaction levels. Cronbach alpha method 0.05 yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.89, 0.82, 0.87, 0.84 respectively two research questions and hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The data were analyzed using frequency count, mean, standard deviation, multiple regression, and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings reveal a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction was found at (0.96); $p < 0.05$, highlighting that librarians with higher emotional intelligence levels tend to exhibit greater job satisfaction. Among the components of emotional intelligence, empathy, and self-regulation emerged as the strongest predictors. The study concludes that university management should prioritize emotional intelligence training programs to improve job satisfaction and foster a conducive work environment for librarians.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Emotional Intelligence, Librarians, North-central Nigeria

Introduction

The concept of emotional intelligence (EI) has gained considerable attention in the fields of organizational behavior and psychology due to its significant impact on individual and group performance. Emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own emotions and the emotions of others, plays a critical role in shaping workplace dynamics and individual job outcomes. In the context of librarianship, where interactions with diverse stakeholders are pivotal, the application of emotional intelligence becomes particularly relevant. Librarians as custodians

of knowledge and facilitators of information access, navigate complex emotional and professional landscapes, which influence their job satisfaction and overall performance. Emotional Intelligence encompasses competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These competencies are essential for effective interpersonal interactions and have been linked to various workplace outcomes, including job satisfaction (Eniekebi, Adomi and Umukoro, 2024).

Job satisfaction is a key determinant of organizational success and employee well-being. It encompasses the extent to which employees feel content and fulfilled with their roles, responsibilities, and work environment. In academic libraries, where librarians are tasked with meeting the diverse needs of faculty, students, and researchers, job satisfaction is essential for maintaining high levels of service quality and productivity. University libraries may boost the job satisfaction of librarians by providing recognition, promotion, a conducive working environment, and remuneration librarians may be more satisfied with their jobs if there is a high level of mentoring and motivation which will ginger them to be more committed, perform better services and more productive in their duties (Ajala and Unegbu, 2022). Even though the role of effective human resource management, including organizational climate, has been cited as a crucial predictor of diverse employee outcomes such as employee job satisfaction, the mechanism through which the organizational climate and job satisfaction can be enhanced or diminished is underexplored in human resource literature (Fianko, et al., 2024).

The relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction has been widely explored across various professions; however, there is limited empirical evidence focusing on librarians, particularly in the North-Central region of Nigeria which hosts a growing number of universities, each striving to provide top-notch library services to support teaching, learning, and research. Librarians in this region face unique challenges, including resource constraints, technological advancements, and the need to align their services with global best practices. This study aims to investigate the predictive role of emotional intelligence in the job satisfaction of librarians in selected universities in North-Central

Nigeria. Ultimately, this research seeks to underscore the dimensions of emotional intelligence self-awareness, self-regulation, social skills, empathy, and motivation and their relationship with job satisfaction, the research seeks to provide insights into how emotional intelligence can enhance the well-being and effectiveness of librarians.

Statement of the Problem

In the rapidly evolving academic environment, university librarians play a critical role in facilitating knowledge dissemination and supporting research and learning. However, the demanding nature of their work, characterized by the need to keep pace with technological advancements, resource constraints, and increasing user expectations, often leads to job-related stress and dissatisfaction. Job satisfaction is essential for librarians' productivity, commitment, and overall performance, yet many librarians in Nigerian universities report low levels of satisfaction due to unfavorable working conditions and limited professional development opportunities. Emotional intelligence, which enables individuals to manage their emotions effectively and navigate interpersonal relationships, has been identified as a potential factor influencing job satisfaction. Despite the critical role emotional intelligence may play in enhancing job satisfaction, there is limited empirical research exploring this relationship, particularly among university librarians in North-central Nigeria.

The dearth of such studies creates a gap in understanding the level to which emotional intelligence significantly predicts job satisfaction in this unique professional and regional context. This study seeks to address this gap by investigating the predictive role of emotional intelligence on job satisfaction among librarians in selected universities in North-central Nigeria, thereby providing insights into strategies for improving workplace satisfaction and professional performance in academic libraries.

Research Question

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the levels of emotional intelligence that significantly predict job satisfaction among university librarians in North-central Universities in Nigeria?
2. What are the challenges hindering the job satisfaction of librarians in North-Central Universities in Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The study will test the following hypotheses at a significant level of 0.05:

H₀₁ There is no significant relationship between Emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of librarians in North-central Universities in Nigeria.

Review of Related Literature

Emotional intelligence refers to an individual's ability to perceive, understand, manage, and express emotions effectively. It encompasses self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills (Durra, 2023). Emotional intelligence can be referred to as a person's skill in understanding and managing their emotions, which in turn improves their performance in a variety of other cognitive tasks. This includes being able to recognize emotions healthily, using emotions to aid in cognitive processes, understanding emotions and emotional knowledge, and consciously regulating emotions to foster personal development (Gopinath & Chitra, 2020). A study conducted by Oduola and Adewuyi (2024) shows that a worker with a high level of emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and an adequate reward system is likely to outperform a colleague with low compensation and also to be satisfied on the job because as long as they perceive themselves to be well paid, they are bound to have an increased commitment.

The ability to understand the meanings of emotions and how they relate to one another and use those meanings to reason and solve problems is referred to as emotional intelligence. According to Muraina and Popoola (2022), emotional intelligence concerns the ability to sense, assimilate, relate, grasp

the details of these emotions, and control them. It is also the capacity for clearer thinking and emotional reasoning. It involves accurately perceiving emotions, evaluating and producing emotions that foster thought, understanding emotions and understanding emotion, and controlling emotions to promote intellectual and emotional growth.

According to Yusuf and Muraina (2022), workers with high emotional intelligence are happier and function better than those with poor emotional intelligence. Additionally, respondents with high emotional intelligence in their professions male or female perform better and are happier at work than respondents with poor emotional intelligence in their current positions. Additionally, the researchers concluded that emotional intelligence requires collaboration and interpersonal skills, both essential for success. They also noted that the capacity to recognize and manage others' emotions may determine a person's dedication to the organization, which could boost motivation and effectiveness. In a study conducted by Afolashade et al. (2024) on emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, reward system, and organizational commitment among workers in Nigeria. The findings of the result showed there was a positive significant relationship between the Job commitment of workers in Ogun state correlated with emotional intelligence, Job satisfaction, and Reward system.

In another study conducted by Abebe and Singh (2023) on the relationship between emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and job performance: empirical evidence from public higher education institutions. The findings revealed that employees' emotional intelligence was found to be positively and significantly correlated with job satisfaction and performance, but the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance was found to be insignificant. Enhanced emotional intelligence has been linked to better work satisfaction, stress tolerance, and mental well-being in the past. There is evidence that suggests a link between emotional and social intelligence as well. The person's ability to integrate their emotions, ideas, and actions is greatly aided by their level of emotional intelligence (Gopinath & Chitra, 2020).

Empirical studies have consistently shown a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction across different library professional contexts. For example, Humphrey, Ashforth, and Diefendorff (2015) conducted a meta-analysis of 105 studies and found a moderate positive correlation between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. Similarly, in a study conducted by Yaya and Opeke (2015) on the relationship between emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and turnover intention of librarians in public universities in South-west, Nigeria. The study involved 1,254 librarians in public university libraries from which 923 librarians were selected based on simple random sampling. The study revealed a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction, and between emotional intelligence and turnover intention of librarians in public university libraries in Nigeria. The study concluded that contrary to general belief, job satisfaction and turnover intention of librarians in university libraries were high. It is recommended that university library management continue to promote values that would boost emotional intelligence increase job satisfaction and reduce the turnover intention of its workforce.

In conclusion, the literature underscores the significant role of emotional intelligence in enhancing job satisfaction across various professions, including librarianship. However, the specific dynamics of this relationship within the context of North-Central Nigerian universities remain underexplored. This study seeks to address this gap by investigating how emotional intelligence predicts job satisfaction among librarians, contributing to both theoretical knowledge and practical strategies for professional development in the field of librarianship.

Methodology

A descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. Its population is 325 librarians selected from three states from the North-central geo-political zone. Purposive sampling was employed in the second stage to select one public, one state, and one private University from the selected states making a total of 135 as the target population, A total enumeration sample was used. A self-developed questionnaire titled *“Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction of Librarians in Selected Universities in North-Central*

Nigeria” was designed. From the 135 responses expected, only 122 respondents, representing a 90.1% response rate adequately filled and submitted the questionnaire. Data gathered was presented and analyzed in simple percentages, frequency, mean and standard deviation.

Data Presentation and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic information of the respondents

Options	F	%	
Gender	Male	57	46.7
	Female	66	53.3
	Total	122	100
Age	20-30 years	35	27
	31-40 years	46	40
	41-50 years	22	18
	Above 50 years	19	15
	Total	122	100
Academic Qualification	B.Sc/BLS	78	40.7
	MLS	25	22.2
	PhD	19	17
	Total	122	100
Work Experience	1-5yrs	70	55.6
	6-10yrs	33	27.4
	11yrs and above	19	17
	Total	122	100

Table 1 reveals that majority 66 (53.3%) of the respondents are female librarians, while 57 (46.7%) are male. The age of the majority ranges between 31-40 (40%), while those whose age ranges between 20-30 years are (27%). However, those whose age are 41-50 years and above account for about 18% and 15% respectively. With regards to academic qualification, 78 (40.7%) of the respondents are B.Sc./BLS holders, followed by MLIS with 25 (22.2%), while only 19 (17%) are PhD holders. Finally, 70 (55.6%) have 1-5 years’ working experience, followed by 6-10 years, 33 (27.4%), and 11 years and

above 19 (17%). This implies that Librarian with 1-5 years working experience are more than others in the study area.

Table 2: Levels of emotional intelligence for job satisfaction among librarians in North-central Universities in Nigeria.

Item	Statements	Mean	SD	Rank
D1.	Maintenance of control over my emotions by keeping disruptive impulse	2.91	1.03	6
D2.	My understanding of emotions feeling and why?	2.91	0.92	5
D3.	The links between my feelings and what I think, do, and say	2.99	0.94	4
D4.	Understanding the effect of my feelings	2.99	0.98	3
D5.	learning from experience	3.11	1.06	1
D6.	I am in the best honor when I do work right	3.05	1.04	2
D7.	Doing things right	2.86	0.96	8
D8.	Ability to resolve conflicts	2.77	0.99	9
D9.	Ability to adapt and recover from emotionally intense situations	2.65	1.14	10
D10.	Recognition and understanding of the effects of emotions	2.87	0.91	7
Weighted Average		2.91	0.97	

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Table 2 reveals that the Librarians indicated a moderately high level of emotional intelligence following: D5 learning from experience ($\bar{x}=3.11$), was rated highest, D6 I am in the best honor when I do work right ($\bar{x}=3.05$), Understanding the effect of my feelings ($\bar{x}=2.99$), D3 The links between my feeling and what I think, do and say ($\bar{x}=2.99$), D2 My understanding of emotions feeling and why? ($\bar{x}=2.91$), D1 Maintenance of control over my emotions by keeping disruptive impulse level of emotional intelligence moderately high. The means ranged from 2.65 to 3.11. The standard deviation values ranging 0.91 to 1.14 which signifies high variability of responses. In a nutshell, Table 5 shows that librarians' level of emotional intelligence is moderately high at North-central University in Nigeria.

The findings of research question one shows that, emotional intelligence level of librarians in North-central Universities in Nigeria was moderately high. It identifies one another's control over my emotions by keeping disruptive impulses, understanding of emotions, links between my feelings and what I think and understanding the effect of my feelings, doing things right, ability to resolve conflicts, adapt

and recover from emotionally intense situations, recognition and understanding of the effects of emotions, learning from experience, and receive best honor when I do work right. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Oduola and Adewuyi (2024) shows that a worker with a high level of emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and an adequate reward system is likely to outperform a colleague with low compensation and also to satisfied with the job because as long as they perceive themselves to be well paid, they are bound to have an increased commitment.

Table 3: Challenges Associated with job satisfaction of librarians in North-central Universities in Nigeria

Item	Statements	Mean	SD	Rank
E1.	Inadequate training of staff	2.81	1.96	4
E2.	Poor remuneration events	2.87	1.15	1
E3.	Inadequate tools for operational efficiency	2.79	1.18	5
E4.	Inadequate equipment for office	2.74	1.20	8
E5.	Wrong placement of staff	2..81	1.53	3
E6.	Job insecurity	2.71	1.58	7
E7.	Excess workload without compensation	2.82	1.10	2
E8.	The poor interpersonal relationships among staff	2.79	1.10	3
E9.	Inadequate health facilities and emergencies	2.67	1.12	9
E10.	Epileptic internet connectivity	2.66	1..05	10
Weighted Average		2.77	1.29	

Source: Field Survey (2025)

Table 3 reveals that librarians agree on the challenges with average ($\bar{x}=2.77$), for the following: E2 Poor remuneration was rated highest ($\bar{x}=2.87$), E7 Excess workload without compensation ($\bar{x}=2.82$), E5 Wrong placement of staff ($\bar{x}=2.81$), E1 Inadequate staff training ($\bar{x}=2.81$), E3 Inadequate tools for operational efficiency ($\bar{x}=2.79$), E8 The poor interpersonal relationship among staff ($\bar{x}=2.79$), E4 Inadequate equipment for office ($\bar{x}=2.74$), E6 Job insecurity E9 Inadequate health facilities and emergencies ($\bar{x}=2.67$), E10 Epileptic internet connectivity ($\bar{x}=2.66$), was ranked lowest. The standard deviations of the items ranged from 1.05 to 1.96 indicating that their responses are not too widespread. Summarily, librarians agree on the challenges.

The findings of research question two, reveal that librarians in North-Central Universities in Nigeria agree to the challenges hindering “job satisfaction” as follows: Epileptic internet connectivity, excess workload without compensation, wrong placement of staff, inadequate staff training, inadequate tools for operational efficiency, poor interpersonal relationship among staff, inadequate equipment for the office, job insecurity, inadequate health facilities and emergencies, and Poor remuneration.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation of Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction of Librarians

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r	P-Value	Remark
Emotional Intelligence	135	26.20	8.12	0.96	0.000	Sig
Job Satisfaction	135	28.33	8.74			

P<0.05

Correlation of Emotional Intelligence and job satisfaction of Librarians.

The Pearson correlation coefficient r in Table 4 is indicated by the response values of (0.96); $p < 0.05$. Hence, since the P-value for the response is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected, signifying that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. This further meant that emotions had a significant relationship with job satisfaction of librarians in North-Central Universities in Nigeria.

The Pearson correlation coefficient r in Table 4 is indicated by the response values of (0.96); $p < 0.05$. Hence, since the P-value for the response is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected, signifying that there is a statistically significant relationship between emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. This further meant that emotions had a significant relationship with the job satisfaction of librarians in North-Central Universities in Nigeria. This finding is consistent with the research conducted by Abebe and Singh (2023) on the relationship between emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, and job performance: empirical evidence from public higher education institutions. The findings revealed that employees' emotional intelligence was found to be positively and significantly correlated with job satisfaction and performance, but the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance was found to be insignificant.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, this study hereby recommends that:

1. The enhancement of employee emotional intelligence may be achieved by implementing emotional quotient programs. These programs aim to develop the ability of universities to bring

out the best in their personnel and foster strong workplace connections. This advancement will contribute to the enhancement of engagement and integrity, hence fostering the formation of more efficient teams and the retention of employees who consistently demonstrate great performance in service delivery.

2. The provision of sustainable welfare packages for library workers by the University administration, as well as the elimination of any disparities between librarians and their colleagues in the faculties, is crucial in enhancing their job satisfaction.
3. Emotional intelligence should be considered during the recruitment process and incorporated into performance evaluation metrics. This will allow the institution to prioritize candidates and employees with strong emotional intelligence, libraries can build a workforce better equipped to handle job demands and interpersonal challenges.
4. Universities should implement systems to recognize and reward librarians who demonstrate high emotional intelligence and contribute positively to the work environment. Acknowledging such efforts can motivate staff to cultivate and apply emotional intelligence skills, thereby enhancing job satisfaction and organizational commitment.
5. University libraries should provide flexible work hours or hybrid work arrangements that can help librarians balance personal and professional responsibilities. This arrangement will reduce burnout, improve morale, and contribute to overall job satisfaction.

Conclusion

It was concluded that the emotional intelligence of librarians in North-Central Nigeria was moderately high. At this stage, significant achievements may be attained by considering the hierarchy of needs theory proposed by Maslow. According to this theory, when individuals progress in their lives, their requirements transform. If individuals are unable to fulfill their specific wants, they are likely to experience dissatisfaction. The research findings indicate a noteworthy correlation between employee

emotional intelligence and job satisfaction. The study investigated the factors related to librarians' satisfaction and found that there were significant findings. These results indicate that an increase in librarians' emotional intelligence levels has a favorable impact on their work satisfaction.

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