

EFFECT OF JOB KNOWLEDGE ON JOB PERFORMANCE OF LIBRARY PERSONNEL IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the job knowledge of library personnel in public universities in Oyo State, Nigeria. The responsibility of a knowledgeable, competent and well-informed library personnel becomes so important as libraries progresses in response to the growing complications of academic environments and technological innovations. Libraries at universities are set up to aid in studying, teaching, research, and community service in the area where the university is located, to accomplish the goals set for their university, library staff members are expected to carry out their statutory duties. The descriptive survey research design of the expo-facto type was adopted for the study. The study was carried out among 120 library personnel using self-designed instrument/questionnaire. The data collected were analysed using frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, Pearson, Product, Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis. The study revealed that job knowledge significantly improves decision making, service efficiency and users' satisfaction among others. The study recommended that public university libraries in Oyo State improve job design and descriptions, involve staff in decision-making, provide leadership and in-service training, and recognize employee contributions. It also emphasized encouraging commitment and critical thinking among library personnel to enhance problem-solving.

Keywords: Job knowledge, Library personnel, Public Universities

Introduction

Every institution or organisation is established with the principal aim of achieving a high level of productivity, and this can only be realised when the competence and knowledge of staff are applied effectively. Within universities, knowledge creation and dissemination occur through teaching, research, and community service. University libraries are the hub of this knowledge system, serving as repositories and facilitators of information access. To function effectively, libraries depend not only on the availability of resources and adequate funding but, most especially, on the knowledge and competence of their personnel. The performance of library staff, therefore, cannot be separated from the depth of their job

knowledge, which directly influences the quality of services provided to users. The quality of staff in university libraries predicts their overall success or failure. Highly skilled and knowledgeable personnel are vital for effective service delivery, particularly in today's digital era characterised by an overwhelming flow of information.

Beyond recruitment, management must ensure that library personnel possess the appropriate knowledge required to carry out their duties. This includes technical knowledge of library processes, information retrieval systems, ICT skills, and an understanding of the library's mission and user needs. According to Igbinovia and Popoola (2016), job performance is observable and measurable behaviour that aligns with organisational objectives, but it is ultimately anchored on job knowledge. Without adequate knowledge, performance declines and service delivery suffers. Research has shown an alarming decline in the quality of services provided by library personnel in Nigerian universities, often linked to inadequate knowledge and competencies. Poor job knowledge manifests in reduced productivity, low-quality services, and declining library patronage (Amusa, Abdusalam and Ajani, 2014). In contrast, effective job knowledge equips library personnel with the ability to anticipate user needs, manage resources efficiently, and adapt to changing service environments. Thus, while performance may be influenced by factors such as motivation or interpersonal skills, job knowledge remains the foundation upon which successful service delivery in libraries lies.

Job knowledge refers to the understanding and application of the principles, skills, and techniques required to perform a job effectively. In libraries, this includes knowledge of cataloguing, classification, collection management, digital resource handling, information ethics, customer service, and ICT applications. Smithikrai (2017) notes that organisational success depends heavily on employee competence, which underscores the necessity of strengthening the knowledge base of library personnel. Moreover, Sarmiento and Beale (2017) argue that job success is determined by both the abilities employees possess and their capacity to apply these abilities productively. This reflects the dual role of knowledge: it must be both acquired and applied effectively in day-to-day library operations. The digital revolution has further expanded the scope of job knowledge required of library staff. Modern university libraries demand personnel who are not only conversant with traditional practices but also competent in handling ICTs, electronic databases, and digital repositories.

Ahmad, Ameen, and Ullah (2017) emphasise that without up-to-date knowledge and training, library staff cannot effectively meet the expectations of contemporary users. Nickson et al. (2017) similarly highlight that 21st-century competencies like the digital literacy, problem-solving, adaptability, and lifelong learning are indispensable for library personnel to remain relevant in the knowledge society. The importance of job knowledge also extends to user satisfaction. Library personnel with strong job knowledge are better positioned to provide accurate information, guide users effectively, and design services that meet evolving needs. Conversely, insufficient knowledge leads to frustration among patrons and undermines the role of the university library in supporting academic development. Gani et al. (2016) argue that excellent libraries require staff with competencies in information behaviour, information repackaging, and user needs assessment, all of which are grounded in job knowledge. Rao (2014) adds that communication and management skills, combined with technical expertise, are essential for achieving efficiency in library operations.

Furthermore, job knowledge influences the adaptability of library personnel in responding to emerging trends. The rapid adoption of information and communication technology in higher education means that library staff must constantly update their knowledge base to handle new tools and technologies. This continuous learning process ensures that libraries remain relevant in a competitive academic environment. It also underscores the importance of professional development programmes, workshops, and training opportunities that can help staff acquire and sustain relevant knowledge. Ultimately, the effectiveness of any university library is tied to the job knowledge of its personnel. No library can outperform the competence of its staff. Adequate training, motivation, and access to resources are necessary, but without the foundational element of job knowledge, performance cannot reach desired standards. As the management of organisational performance increasingly relies on knowledge and expertise, it becomes clear that public universities must invest in building the job knowledge of their library personnel. This will not only improve individual and organisational performance but also enhance the capacity of university libraries to fulfil their mission of knowledge dissemination and academic support.

Statement of the problem

Libraries at universities are set up to aid in studying, teaching, research, and community service in the area where the university is located. To accomplish the goals set for

their university, library staff members (including professionals and paraprofessionals) are expected to carry out their statutory duties. However, it has been observed on a contrary, through their performance, that library personnel do not achieve the set goals of the library. According to observations made in various university libraries in Oyo state, Nigeria, particularly those where the researcher had previously worked, library personnel generally perform poorly on their job roles. As a result, library personnel in these institutions show a lack of devotion to their work at the expense of their professional responsibilities and services; they also lack specific knowledge and skills expected of them.

The negative job performance of the library personnel may be related to their working conditions, unqualified skills or job knowledge, low job motivation received; and any additional occupational stress they may be going through. The impact of job knowledge as a tool to boost job performance in discharge of their duties is the most challenging issue most university library personnel encounter. Therefore, in order for library staff to have an effective performance and to have a better understanding of what influences their performance, this study examined job knowledge as key factor that influences job performance among library staff in public universities in Oyo state, Nigeria.

Research questions

The research questions are built up from the objectives of the study and they are:

1. What is the assessment of job knowledge of the library personnel?
2. What is the contribution of job knowledge on the performance of library personnel?

Literature review

Job knowledge of library personnel

Job knowledge is considered an essential factor in determining the employment eligibility for a specific job in any organisation. According to Kuvvas et al. (2016) who stated that job knowledge is often used for staff selection, recruitment, placement, and training because it determines whether an employee can meet organisational expectations. In the context of library services, job knowledge forms the backbone of professional effectiveness, enabling personnel to handle tasks such as cataloguing, classification, reference services, and digital resource management. Job knowledge among library personnel is a fundamental component of their competence and effectiveness in providing library services. However,

continuous learning and professional growth are encouraged in library settings. Job knowledge serves as a foundation for ongoing professional development, allowing library personnel to stay current with best practices and emerging trends. Ultimately, the significance of job knowledge lies in its contribution to the overall quality of library services.

Gill (2014) emphasises that a knowledgeable and skilled library workforce enhances the reputation of the library and its ability to meet the diverse needs of users. Rao (2014) highlighted the need for management skills, communication skills, and soft skills in modern librarianship to adapt to changing library trends and user demands driven by new technologies. Similarly, Okoye (2012) stressed the importance of training library staff to be well-aware of new technologies, proficient in collection development, record maintenance, and the enhancement of skills and knowledge to meet the needs of future library professionals. Assessing job knowledge is a crucial aspect of evaluating an employee's competence and effectiveness in their role. In the context of library personnel, assessing job knowledge is essential for ensuring that they can provide high-quality library services. There are several methods and approaches to assess job knowledge among library personnel. Written tests and examinations are a traditional method of assessing job knowledge.

Assessing job knowledge is an important aspect of evaluating the effectiveness of library personnel. Dorner, Taylor, and Hodson-Carlton (2015) describe several assessment methods, including written examinations, self-assessments, and reflective practices. Self-assessment, in particular, encourages continuous professional growth by enabling personnel to identify knowledge gaps and seek improvement. Supervisors also rely on job knowledge assessment in performance appraisals, recognising it as a key predictor of service quality and user satisfaction. In libraries, job knowledge assessment ensures that staff can competently handle both traditional and digital resources. It also determines the extent to which personnel can adapt to new systems, technologies, and user needs. This process is especially important in academic libraries, where the demand for reliable and up-to-date information is high.

Job Knowledge and Job Performance

Although job knowledge is conceptually distinct from job performance, the two are closely related. Employees who possess deep job knowledge are more likely to perform effectively, make fewer errors, and provide higher-quality services. Lee and Wu (2021) describe job performance as the quality and quantity of work done, while Bhat and Beri (2016) break it into task, contextual, and adaptive dimensions. In all these dimensions, job

knowledge serves as the foundation: it equips employees with the ability to complete tasks, support organisational goals, and adapt to changes in the workplace. Igbinovia and Popoola (2016) attribute the decline in the use of academic libraries in Nigeria to poor services linked directly to inadequate job knowledge among library staff. Similarly, Amusa, Iyoro, and Ajani (2013) observe that the overall effectiveness of librarians in Nigerian public universities has been hampered by insufficient knowledge of new technologies and practices. These studies underscore the argument that job knowledge is central to sustaining effective job performance in libraries.

Methodology

In this study, the total enumeration was employed, given the manageable population size. Consequently, all 120 library personnel from the three public universities in Oyo State were included in the research. The choice of the total enumeration method was driven by the feasibility of studying the entire population of library personnel, making it a suitable and practical method for this study. The research encompassed Librarians and Library Officers in public universities in Oyo State. Research questions were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation).

Results

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Institution	Frequency	Percent (%)
First Technical University	5	4.2
Ladoke Akintola University	40	33.3
University of Ibadan	75	62.5
Total	120	100.0
Sex	Frequency	Percent
Male	38	31.7
Female	82	68.3
Total	120	100.0
Age	Frequency	Percent (%)
20 to 29years	49	40.8

30 to 39years	9	7.5
40 to 49years	43	35.8
50 to 59years	19	15.9
Total	120	100.0
Highest Education Qualification	Frequency	Percent (%)
ND/Undergraduate Diploma	33	27.5
Bachelor's Degree	39	32.5
Master's Degree	37	30.8
Ph.D.	11	9.2
Total	120	100.0
Years of working experience	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5 years	40	33.3
5 to 9 years	20	16.7
10 to 14 years	34	28.3
15 to 19 years	22	18.4
20 years and above	4	3.3
Total	120	100.0
Position/ranks	Frequency	Percent
University Librarian	1	0.8
Senior Librarian	9	7.5
Principal Librarian	15	12.5
Librarian I	20	16.7
Librarian II	13	10.8
Librarian III	4	3.3
Assistant Librarian	10	8.3
Chief Library Officer	19	15.8
Library Assistant	29	24.3
Total	120	100.0

Result from Table 1 reveals socio-demographic characteristic of the respondents. It reveals the name of public universities in Oyo state and 62.5% of the respondents are from

University of Ibadan, while 33.3% are from Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomoso and 4.2% are from First Technical University of the respondents. These imply that majority of the respondents are from University of Ibadan and all participants are assessed appropriately for the research.

The findings in Table 2 showed the highest-ranking library personnel are those who know how to separate main issues from side issues at work. (mean = 3.66), while the lowest-ranking library personnel are anxious when they have to take an additional work unexpectedly. (mean = 2.88). This suggests that, on average, library personnel of public university in Oyo state, Nigeria has helped the library to grow and increased the performance of the library.

Research question one: What is the assessment of job knowledge of the library personnel?

Table 2: The assessment of job knowledge of the library personnel

S/ N	STATEMENT	SA(%)	A(%)	D(%)	SD (%)	$\bar{X}$	S. Dev.	Rank
1	EXPERIENCE	61	59	0	0	3.51	.502	4
	My work experience enhances my efficiency at work.	(50.8)	(49.2)	(0.0)	(0.0)			
2	The job requires a depth of knowledge and expertise.	61	59	0	0	3.51	.502	5
		(50.8)	(49.2)	(0.0)	(0.0)			
3	The job often involves dealing with problems that I have met before.	21	88	11	0	3.08	.512	12
		(17.5)	(73.3)	(9.2)	(0.0)			
4	The job requires a specified year of experience.	20	73	27	0	2.94	.626	14
		(16.7)	(60.8)	(22.5)	(0.0)			
5	The job is more challenging than my prior experience(s).	25	49	38	8	2.76	.860	15
		(20.8)	(40.8)	(31.7)	(6.7)			
6	SKILL REQUIREMENTS	45	73	2	0	3.36	.515	10

	The job requires unique ideas and solutions to problems.	(37.5)	(60.8)	(1.7)	(0.0)			
7	The job requires very specialized knowledge and skills.	53 (44.2)	61 (50.8)	6 (5.0)	0 (0.0)	3.39	.584	8
8	The job requires me to be creative.	51 (42.5)	69 (57.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3.43	.496	7
9	My library always sponsors the training needed to develop my skill.	33 (27.6)	67 (55.8)	10 (8.3)	10 (8.3)	3.03	.835	13
10	The job requires skills for current software tools.	51 (42.5)	62 (51.7)	7 (5.8)	0 (0.0)	3.37	.593	9
11	GOOD WORK ETHICS I constantly strive to achieve better results at work.	71 (59.2)	49 (40.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3.59	.494	3
12	Punctuality to work is always necessary.	83 (69.2)	37 (30.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3.69	.464	1
13	I always complete my personal duties within the specified lunch hour.	69 (57.5)	42 (35.0)	9 (7.5)	0 (0.0)	3.50	.635	6
14	I have good communication skill required in the library.	77 (64.2)	43 (35.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3.64	.482	2
15	I rarely work extra hour to complete an assignment.	45 (37.5)	53 (44.2)	18 (8.3)	4 (3.3)	3.16	.799	11
	TOTAL	51 (42.5)	59 (49.2)	9 (7.5)	1 (0.8)	49.96		

N=120, Average mean=3.33, Weighted mean=2.50

3.33 0.593

Key; Strongly Agree (SA=4), Agree (A=3), Disagree (D=2), Strongly Disagree (SD=1)

The finding in Table 3 shows that library personnel agreed that they are always punctual to work (mean=3.69), which depicts their level of good work ethics. In contrast, the data shows that through the library personnel experience, their current job is more challenging than their prior experience(s). (mean= 2.76), which is obviously a challenge to them and increases their level of experience.

Research question two: What is the contribution of job knowledge on job performance of the library personnel?

Table 3: Multiple regression showing the relative contribution of job knowledge towards perceived job performance of the library personnel

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	13.677	3.516		3.890	.000
Job Knowledge	.564	.105	.516	5.387	.000

*Dependent Variable: perceived job performance; *Denotes significant at $P < 0.05$.*

Table 4 reveals the relative contributions of job knowledge towards perceived job performance of the library personnel. The result shows that there is a significant relative contribution of Job knowledge ($\beta = .516$; $t = 5.387$; $P < 0.05$ to perceived job performance of the library personnel. As this result reveals, the most potent predictor is Job Knowledge and this implies that job knowledge has significant relative contributions to perceived job performance of the library personnel.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made for the management of public Universities in Oyo state, Nigeria;

1. Managements should provide regular training opportunities for continuous learning and prioritize staff developments to library personnel to strengthen their job knowledge and professional competence.
2. Work environment of the public university libraries in Oyo State should be made conducive by the provision of adequately equipped and well-ventilated space, ICT gadgets such as computers, internet connectivity, for enhanced job performance.
3. Libraries should establish mentorship programs and encourage staff participation in professional associations and conferences to promote knowledge-sharing, exposure to best practices, and continuous professional growth.
4. Government and University stakeholders should create awareness on the importance of quality and quantity of the work anticipated from university library personnel in order to achieve a high level of job performance.

5. University management should institutionalize periodic assessments and evaluations of library personnel's job knowledge to identify gaps, provide targeted training, and ensure staff remain competent in emerging trends and technologies.
6. Information providers and publishers should advocate for and supply adequate, relevant, and up-to-date resources to support effective job knowledge acquisition and improved job performance among library personnel.

Conclusion

Based on the study findings, it has been concluded that there was a significant relationship between job knowledge and perceived performance of library personnel in public universities. This indicates that library personnel with higher levels of knowledge tend to perform better in their roles. In addition, acquisition of knowledge, information technology, user needs, skills, and competency of task and free flow of library resources are essential for high level of job performance of library personnel.

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