

STAFFING NEEDS AND ADEQUACY OF LIBRARY STAFF AMONG FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

By

TRACY EFE RHIMA (Ph.D)

And

PROF. VICTOR N. NWACHUKWU

Abstract

The study examined the staffing needs and adequacy of library staff for the efficient job performance among libraries in federal universities in South-South, Nigeria. The study adopted explanatory sequential mixed method design, with two research questions that guided the study, alongside two corresponding null hypotheses which were tested. The entire population of 397 library staff were adopted as sample because of the manageable size of the population. The instruments used in collecting data were the questionnaire and the interview schedule. The data collected were analyzed with the use of mean and standard deviation for answering the research questions. The two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant using Analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistical analysis. All null hypotheses tested were rejected. Findings of the study revealed that, recruiting the three categories of staff in university libraries is necessary, but the professional staff is highly needed. Other findings also showed that the three categories of staff are adequate in federal university libraries in South-South Nigeria. There was no significance difference in mean response of respondents of staffing need and adequacy of library staff among libraries in federal universities in South-South, Nigeria. Based on these findings recommendations were made.

Keywords: Staffing needs, staff adequacy, library staffs, University libraries

Introduction

University libraries are service-oriented organisation, meeting the needs of members of their academic community. Universities, according to Ascione (2019), are looking for new ways to develop and stay consistent with shifting student and faculty demands, and university libraries are no exception. University libraries have so much flexibility in order of adjusting to meet the needs of library users with other faculty members who study in different ways and have different aspirations from their libraries. S.R. Ranganathan who is popularly referred to as the father of librarianship affirmed in his fifth (5th) law of librarianship that the

library is a growing organism. In line with Ranganathan's fifth (5th) law of librarianship, with the emergence of information technology systems such as robotics, the maker space movement, librarianship profession has expanded significantly over the last few decades.

The services rendered by university libraries as reported by Kumar (2021) includes; circulation service, reference service, online book reservations, recommendation of library content, current awareness service, interlibrary loan service, photocopying/printing service, audiovisual service, and media services. University libraries provide access to information resources of diverse formats related to the information needs of their users. According to Ugah (2011), the quality of a library material is frequently viewed as the quality of service, which also impacts the effectiveness of the library, is critical for each library's survival. In addition, Harvey (2004) agrees with the above statement, but also mention that it is the extent to which an activity fulfills its specified purpose or function in the library.

Library staff as defined according to Clarks (2022), are people recruited in the library to run the day to day library's operation. Clark further affirmed that a library staff could be hired or a volunteer who are engaged in rendering services in ensuring the optimal running of library operations. Staffing patterns in university libraries are majorly grouped into three classes, professionals, para-professional and Technical staff. However, Engetou (2017) affirm that staff does not need to work a high amount of extra hours when an organisation employs a sufficient number of employees. Since there are more staff to delegate duties to, the workload will be reduced as a result, employees will typically be less anxious, more rested, and alert.

University Libraries are services oriented with a lot of users and routine tasks to perform on a daily basis. Users in this 21st century usually expect swift and instant service that meets their exact information needs whenever they visit their university library and this

can only be achieved when the required numbers of staff are employed to undertake tasks that meet the needs of users. Reduced recruitment levels typically means less capacity to handle increased workloads, particularly if work processes aren't reorganized to account for the less people available. This has a range of effects on only the organisation, but also the worker's health and safety. This may involve a lack of competency, insufficient supervision, and an increase in the practice of employees working alone, more overtime, which can affect fatigue management, increased sick leave and absenteeism, reduced job satisfaction and morale, and ignoring organizational health and safety concerns. Nestor-Harper (2020) posits that strategic preparation includes forecasting staffing needs. Ascertaining the staff needs in university libraries is one of the highlights of this research study because it gives university and library management the information required to either increase staff strength or retains the current staff level in the libraries. University Libraries that are understaffed can advertise positions to attract suitable candidates.

Research Questions

The following research questions will examine this research work:

- What are the staffing needs for efficient job performance in libraries in Federal Universities in South- South, Nigeria?
- What is level of adequacy of staff distribution for efficient job performance in Federal University Libraries in South- South, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested in the study at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondent on the staffing needs for efficient job performance in Libraries in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondent on the level of Adequacy of employees in libraries in Federal Universities in South- South, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Staffing needs for Efficient Job Performance in University Libraries

Jeevan (2003) studied “Job prospects in library and information science: A study of staffing needs notified in the employment news from 1998-2001”. The purpose of this study is to ascertain the type of employers available, staffing need required, the state the job was advertise, professional qualifications, desirable qualification, experience and employers. Nine research objectives guided this research work. Data collected from Employment News from 1998-2001 were used for this research work. Only job advertisement for library professional and non-professional staffing needs from the issues of employment news was collected. Over 200 advertisements were collected from the issues of the newspaper within the period under review. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the data of this research work.

The findings revealed that the staffing needs advertised were mainly for digital resource manager, digital rights managers, content managers for website creation, internet enabled reference services, and resources discovery managers to identify new products, processes or competitors. The researcher concluded that more training and recruiting library professionals to fill new vacancies brought about by the advent of information communication technologies and emerging areas in the librarianship profession. This study is related to the present study because it has shown the staffing needs in library profession over a given time

duration. The difference is that this study assesses staffing needs by content analysis; the present study will elicit data from staff of the library that are on ground and familiar with the current situation regarding staffing needs in libraries.

Adequacy of staff distribution in libraries in federal universities

At Cameroon's Regional Treasury, Engetou (2017) investigated the effect of insufficient employees on firms' performance. The study assessed influence of staff shortages on performance and to show how sufficient employees in a firm will influence the organization positively or negatively using the Bamenda Treasury as a study. Six research questions guided the study. 15 staff of the Bamenda Treasury were used as the population. The instrument deployed to elicit data from the respondents was a well structured questionnaire. The data was analyzed using charts, tables, figures, and, percentages to guarantee that the data obtained or gained from the analyses is easily understood and clearly presented.

The findings showed that there was insufficient staffing at the Bamenda Treasury which has slowed down the firms' efficacy and efficiency increasing the stress level of employees undertaking so many tasks. The respondents also indicated from the findings that to improve their efficiency level the number of workers should be increased. The study concluded that for any organization to function well, there should be sufficient and some skilled personnel, these personnel should embrace human resource management functions and work in line with them to improve the performance in all corners of the organization thus personnel takes responsibility in every organization. The research work is related to present study because both studies looks at the adequacy of employees and how it affects efficiency and organizational performance.

Issa, Idowu, Amusan, Ojokuku, Adedeji and Oguntayo (2016) studied academic library staffing and implications for librarianship practice in Kwara State, Nigeria. The aim of the study was to determine the academic library staffing implications for the librarianship practice in Nigeria, studies the situation in Kwara State. Seven research objectives were adopted for the study. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The study assessed the situation at the University of Ilorin, Al-Hikmah university library, Kwara State University Library and Landmark University Library. Structured interviews were used to elicit data from the respondents. The data retrieved from the structured interviews were analysed using descriptive statistics method.

The findings revealed that the respondents from the entire university libraries understudy indicated they have staff shortages when compared to the size of their user population and collections. This staff shortage has resulted to overworking the few available professional staff of the library which would negatively reflect in their service delivery. This finding implies that for service delivery to be optimal, adequate employees could be engaged to undertake library routines. This research work different from other work because this study uses a structured interview to elicit data while the present study employed the administering of questionnaires for data retrieval though they both have similar aim.

Research Methods

The study adopted the Explanatory sequential mixed method design. The area of this research work is South- South, Nigeria. The South- South Zone is one of the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. The population of the study comprises of Three Hundred and Ninety- seven (397) staff in the federal universities in the South- South of Nigeria which made up the professional staff, para-professional staff, and technical staff. The population of the study

comprises of all the three (3) categories of staff in the six federal universities libraries in South-South Nigeria.. The instruments that were used for data collection were the questionnaires and structured interview questions. Three hundred and ninety-seven (397) questionnaires were distributed and three hundred and sixty six (366) were returned which yielded a return rate of 92%.

Research Question 1: What are the staffing needs for efficient job performance in Federal University libraries in South- South, Nigeria?

Response to research question 1

Table 1: Mean Responses of Respondent on the Staffing Needs in Federal Universities libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

S n		Name of Institution						Overall		R	D
		FUPR	UNIBEN	UNIPORT	FUOT	UNICAL	UNIUYO				
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	SD		
1	Professional Staff (Librarians)	3.37	3.57	3.33	3.75	3.73	3.67	3.55	0.61	1 st	HN
2	Para-professionals (Library Officers)	2.59	2.32	2.84	3.83	3.63	3.70	3.04	0.95	3 rd	N
3	Technical staff	3.41	3.36	3.19	3.33	2.87	3.08	3.18	0.87	2 nd	N
	Cluster Mean	3.12	3.08	3.12	3.64	3.41	3.49	3.26	0.81		N

Key: HN: Highly Needed, N: Needed, LN: Less Needed, NN: Not Needed; R=Rank; D=Decision

FUPR = Federal University Of Petroleum Resources, Effurun;

UNIBEN= University of Benin,

UNIPORT=University of Port Harcourt;

NMU= Nigeria Maritime University Library;

UNICAL=University of Calabar Library; UNIUYO = University of Uyo ;

The respondents were asked to indicate staffing needs in libraries in federal universities. Using the principle of real limit of numbers, responses as presented on Table 1 shows that Professional Staff ($\bar{X}=3.55$, $SD=.61$) is highly needed. Also technical staff ($\bar{X}=3.18$, $SD=.87$) and para-professionals ($\bar{X}=3.04$, $SD=.95$) are needed. Also, the overall mean showed that Professional Staff ($\bar{X}=3.55$, $SD=.61$) is ranked highest, while Para-

professionals ($\bar{X}=3.04$, $SD=.95$) is ranked lowest as regards to staffing needs in libraries federal universities. From the interview held, heads of libraries, deputy librarians reveals that they are highly in need of professional staff (librarian) more than the other categories of staff, which are the para-professional and the technical staff. This implies that the staffing need for professional staff is very high.

HO1: There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the staffing needs for efficient job performance in Libraries in Federal University in South- South, Nigeria.

Table 2:ANOVA distribution of staffing needs for efficient job performanceby respondent in Federal University libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	93.161	5	18.632	9.328	.000
Within Groups	581.270	360	1.997		
Total	674.431	365			

This is the table that shows the output of the ANOVA analysis and whether there is a statistically significant difference between our group means. We can see that the significance value is 0.00 which is less than 0.05, thus the results is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean response of respondent on the staffing needs for efficient job performance in libraries in Federal Universities in South- South, Nigeria is rejected.

Research Question 2: What is level of adequacy of staff distribution for efficient job performance in Federal University Libraries in South- South, Nigeria?
Response to research question 2

Table 3: Mean Responses of Respondents on the Level of Adequacy of library Staff in federal Universities libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Sn		Name of Institution						Overall		R	D
		FUPRE	UNIBEN	UNIPORT	FUOT	UNICAL	UNIUYO				
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	SD		
1	Professional Staff (Librarians)	2.07	2.34	2.88	3.67	2.87	2.07	2.53	1.01	3 rd	A
2	Para-professionals (Library	2.22	2.50	3.16	3.50	3.48	3.43	3.03	0.90	2 nd	A

	Officers)										
3	Technical staff	2.93	2.71	3.13	3.50	3.33	3.38	3.10	0.81	1 st	A
	Cluster Mean	2.41	2.52	3.06	3.56	3.22	2.96	2.89	0.91		A

KEY: VA: VERY ADEQUATE, A: ADEQUATE, LA: LESS ADEQUATE, NA: NOT ADEQUATE; FUPR = FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF PETROLEUM RESOURCES, EFFURUN/ DELTA STATE ;UNIBEN= UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,UNIORT=UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT; FUOT= FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OTUOKE LIBRARY, BAYELSA STATE; UNICAL=UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR LIBRARY; UNIUYO= UNIVERSITY OF UYO ;R=RANK; D=DECISION

The respondents were asked to indicate level of adequacy of staff in university libraries, using the principle of real limit of numbers, responses as presented on Table 3 shows that Technical staff (\bar{X} =3.10, SD=.72); Para-professionals (\bar{X} =3.03, SD=.72) and Professional Staff (\bar{X} =2.53, SD=.72) are adequate. Also, the overall mean showed that Technical staff (\bar{X} =3.10, SD=.72) is ranked highest, while Professional Staff (\bar{X} =2.53, SD=.72) is ranked lowest as regards to level of adequacy of staff in university libraries.

The results from the interview also correspond with the findings of the present study. Some libraries visited by the researcher and the research assistants, the librarians complained about not having enough staff in their libraries, and the implication is that, in general, the libraries are to some extent short of staff, mostly the professional staff.

HO₂: There is no significant difference in the mean response of respondents on the Level of Adequacy of Staff in libraries in Federal Universities in South- South, Nigeria

Table 4:ANOVA Distribution of Level of Adequacy of Staff In libraries in Universities

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	271.571	5	54.314	15.673	.000
Within Groups	1008.429	360	3.465		
Total	1280.000	365			

The table that shows the output of the ANOVA analysis and whether there is a statistical significant difference between group means. We can see that the significance value

is 0.000 which is less than 0.05, thus the results is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean response of respondent on the Level of Adequacy of Staff in Libraries in Federal University in South- South, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this research were discussed on the bases of the research questions. It does this under the following subheadings

Staffing Needs for Efficient Job Performance in libraries in Libraries in Federal University in South- South, Nigeria

Findings of the study revealed that libraries in federal universities are highly in need of Professional Staff more than Technical and Para-professionals staff. To buttress the findings, Jeevan (2003) maintained that the need for training and employing of library professionals is to fill new vacancies brought by the advent of information communication technologies and emerging areas in the librarianship profession. Staffing needs in libraries in Federal Universities in the South-South region of Nigeria are crucial for ensuring efficient job achievements and delivering high-quality library services. The beginning of information technologies in library operations requires employing librarian with ICT competent that will help to drive the library objectives. Staff members should be highly skilled in technology because libraries are depending more and more on it. Proficiency with internet databases, library management systems, and other pertinent software is required for appropriate addressing staffing needs in library. The library ought to fund training initiatives so that employees will have new skills to be efficient in their jobs performance.

Adequacy of Staff Distribution for Efficient Job Performance in Federal University Libraries in South- South, Nigeria

Findings of the study revealed that the level of adequacy of staff in university libraries shows that Technical staff, Para-professionals and Professional Staff are adequate in

the university libraries. To buttress our findings, Warraich and Ameen (2011) opined that adequacy of staff in the library distribution can translate to effectiveness in service delivery. It was concluded from the study that libraries in universities need more professional and non-professional staff to provide effective services to clients. Evaluating the staffing levels in libraries in Federal Universities in the South-South region of Nigeria in relation to the size and requirements of the student and faculty population, evaluating the qualifications and experience of the staff, determining whether the staff is appropriately distributed across duties and responsibilities, and determining whether the staffs have the skills and knowledge to manage and support technological advancements in library services are just a few of the complex factors that must be taken into account. Having enough employees with the relevant abilities to meet the needs of the academic community is essential for efficient job performance in a university library context.

Recommendation

With these findings of the study, these recommendations were therefore made:

- In order to balance the staff strength more professional librarian should be employed.
- Library personnel should be consulted to gather insights into their workload, challenges, and suggestions for improvement. This can help identify practical solutions boost morales and job performance.
- Conducting a thorough needs assessment to identify the specific requirements of the library. Consider factors such as the adequacy of distribution of the categories of staff in the library, size of the university, the volume of users, the diversity of programs, and the range of services offered.

Conclusion

The achievements of these libraries in fulfilling their educational and research missions are intricately tied to the standards of the individuals who constitute their workforce. Through a thorough examination of recruitment practices, it becomes evident that strategic and well-implemented hiring processes significantly contribute to the overall efficiency of employees in the library. Findings of the study revealed that libraries in federal universities are highly in need of professional staff than of para-professional and technical staff, the implication is that the services rendered by professional staff will be shortchanged. It is obvious that the technical staff and paraprofessional cannot perform the duties of professional staff.

References

- Ascione, L. (2019). *What role will university libraries play in the future?* Retrieved from <https://www.ecampusnews.com/2019/01/22/what-role-will-university-libraries-play-in-the-future/>
- Engetou, M.E (2017). *Impact of insufficient personnel on organizational performance*. Published Thesis, Business Department, Central University of Applied Sciences. Retrieved from <https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/141344/Marok%20Engetou%20Thesis.pdf?sequence=1>
- Harvey, L. (2004). *Analytic quality glossary, quality research international*. Retrieved from <http://www.qualityresearchinternational.com/glossary/>
- Issa, A. O., Idowu, A. O., Amusan, B. B., Ojokuku, B. Y., Adediji, F. A., & Oguntayo, S. (2016). Academic library staffing and implications for librarianship practice in Kwara State, Nigeria. *Ilorin Journal of Sociology*, 8(1), 28-45
- Jeevan, V.K.J. (2003). Job prospects in library and information science: A Study of vacancies notified in the employment news from 1998-2001. *Annals of Library and Information Studies*, 50(2), 62-84.
- Kumar .S (2021). What is library services. Retrieved from <http://igi-global.com?Dictionary?Information-literacy-support-online-students/17103>
- Ugah, A. D. 2011. Staff and quality of information sources and the use of library services in a university library. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Retrieved from www.webpages.uidaho.edu/~mbolin/ugah8.htm
- Warraich, N. F., & Ameen, K. (2011). LIS professionals' staffing patterns: Pakistani Public Sector Universities" (2011). *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. Paper 643. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/643>