

## Information freedom and job experience of Librarians' on service delivery in university libraries, Cross River State, Nigeria.

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigated the influence of information freedom and job experience of librarians on service delivery in university libraries Cross River State, Nigeria. A sample of 257 (two hundred and fifty-seven) library staff' was used for the study. The sample technique used for the study was purposive technique. Each hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance. The result of the analysis revealed that, librarians' job experience and librarians' information freedom significantly influenced service delivery in university libraries. Based on the findings, it was recommended that librarians should encourage inclusion and not show preference towards any library user based on sex, ethnicity, nationality, social status, religion, or political beliefs when administering library services.*

**Keywords:** Service delivery, Librarians', information freedom, years of experience, university and libraries.

### **Introduction**

Libraries are center for knowledge that enhances world economic development. Intellectual properties stored in the library are for free access and posterity uses to all the parent institutions, even the illiterate, poorest, and most vulnerable, get fair access to free information services. The information resource, been control by the experience expert, the perception of intellectual freedom involves protecting the rights of all individuals to pursue the types of information that interests them. Attempt by any librarian to remove materials from the library collection or restrict access maybe the most common challenges to intellectual freedom that some university library may face. The utmost value of libraries is service delivery; therefore, the librarian working in the library is to showcase positively and ethically in the discharge of duties for effective delivery.

Service delivery is at the heart of every library's operation around the world. It is essential that clientele have access to services that will help them satisfy their diverse information requirements. As a result, a library that fiddles with service delivery risks a negative user's perception and possible user disinterest. This emphasizes the need for libraries

to ensure that the information services they provide meet the needs of their patrons. Librarians, on the other hand, must be led by the profession's ethics in order to achieve their professional responsibilities of providing effective and efficient library services. Libraries, according to Molina (2012), have a specific social mission and behave in accordance with a set of ideals. As a result, the process of attaining their objectives is heavily influenced by social conduct, which sees information workers as moral agents with societal responsibilities.

According to Madu (2010) library service delivery is the sum total of all library activities aimed at facilitating the use of library and its resources. It is the activity carried out by a librarian in a university library within and outside the available resources to provide answers to users' queries and meet their information needs. Also, Olanlokun (2013) defined Service delivery as the capability of a librarian to struggle within and outside accessible resources to offer responses to patron's request and also to meet the total information needs of the patron at a particular time.

Reyes (2019) said that, Satisfaction of clientele in the library is of paramount and librarians' core values. Library services involve first and foremost collections of intellectual properties stored both in print and e-print formats that supports the curricular offerings of the academic environment. To ensure that these materials are utilize by the users, librarian and paraprofessional are needed, also comfortable infrastructure sure as furniture, ventilated equipment and other basic facilitates. The above process and librarian evaluation aid user's satisfaction. A Librarian needs to evaluate services rendered to the user in order to understand users need. Basse and Odu (2015) deposited that Evaluation of library services is an essential tool or feedback mechanism for understanding users' perception and opinion concerning library services in general.

Adebayo, Akole, and Salau (2016) postulated that, Librarianship is a service-oriented profession that focuses on the management of appropriate information resources to suit the demands of a wide range of users. The goals of librarianship, notably its role in knowledge transmission, cannot be realized without users playing a significant role in the information service processes. Librarians are classified into different areas of specializations: Reference Librarians, Public service or Readers service Librarians, Academic Librarians, Research Librarians, Collections development Librarians, Technical service Librarians, Archivists, Serial management Librarians, Acquisition Librarians, Cataloguers, Outreach or Mobile Librarians and System development Librarians. In all, their core-values are to provide acceptable information resource that suite their parent institute timely.

Apparently, the above explanations of service delivery, point to the fact that librarians are the crucial-point for effective services in university libraries. A librarian has been the professional trained personnel who work as a custodian of intellectual contents in information power-house. Also, he is the caretaker of the bank of information and a professional trained person who has obtained his Bachelor's degree in Library and Information Science or a related certificate on Library Science (BLIS), and thereafter; practices and registered with the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria Established by Act No. 12 of 1995. This symbolize

that the librarian must be well experience in librarianship, the professional experience obtained in the field cultivate the principle of information freedom and job experience in service delivery.

Information freedom is one of the vital, social variables an information banker should cogitate vividly. This can only happen when the librarian engulfed social and acceptable character towards his responsibility at his duty post. Information freedom takes place when the user is allowed to utilized, any intellectual property of his choice at any given time, without any form of restriction or censored by the libraries official or librarian. Intellectual freedom is a major area of conflict within libraries. Intellectual freedom is a goal that most library workers can agree on its theory, but situations in everyday library work can complicate this seemingly rule.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether:

1. Librarians' job experience significantly influences information service delivery in University libraries.
2. Librarians' Freedom of information significantly influence information service delivery in University libraries.

### **Research Questions**

1. To what extent do librarians' job experience influence service delivery in university libraries?
2. To what extent does librarians' freedom of information influence service delivery in University Libraries?

### **Methodology**

The study adopted ex-post facto research design. The study was conducted in University of Calabar library and Cross River University of Technology all in Calabar, Cross River State. The population of the study comprises all Library Staff in University of Calabar (UNICAL) and Cross River University of Technology (CRUTCH). There is a total number of two hundred and sixty-three (263) staff. The entire population of two hundred and sixty-three (263) Library Staff from two University libraries in Calabar Education Zone (University of Calabar and Cross River University of Technology) was used as sample. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. The instrument was arranged into two sections: section A and B, section A consisted of background for personal information from the respondents' item, section B of the instrument are organized in five sub-scale A –E. Each sub-scale is made up of five (5) items. The scale responses were scaled from Strongly Agree, Agree, Strongly Disagree and Disagree. This instrument was validated by experts and the reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha. The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypotheses.

**Results**

**Null Hypothesis 1:** Librarians’ job experience has no significant influence on service delivery in University libraries.

The independent variable in this hypothesis is Librarians’ years of experience (Below 10 years, 11-20 years and 21 and above); while the dependent variable is service delivery in university libraries. The statistical analysis technique deployed to test this hypothesis was one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The results of the analysis are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Summary data and one-way ANOVA of the influence of Librarians’ job experience on service delivery in University libraries (N=257)

Librarians’ job experience	N	$\bar{x}$	SD		
Below 10years – 1	86	34.9535	3.43308		
11-20 years – 2	136	36.1250	3.30754		
21 and above– 3	35	38.4571	1.52128		
Total	257	36.0506	3.34497		
Source of variance	SS	Df	Ms	F	Sig of F
Between group	306.968	2	153.484	15.244*	.000
Within group	2557.375	254	10.068		
Total	2864.342	256			

\*Significant at  $P < .05$  level, critical  $F = 3.00$ ,  $df = 2, 254$ .

The result on Table 1 revealed that the calculated F-value of 15.244 is higher than the P-value at .05 level of significance with 2 and 254 degree of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore implied that, Librarians’ job experience significantly influenced service delivery in University libraries. Since Librarians’ years of experience had a significant influence on service delivery in University libraries, a post hoc analysis was employed using Fishers’ Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Fishers’ Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis of the influence of Librarians’ years of experience on service delivery in University libraries LSD

(I) Librarians’ years of experience	(J) Librarians’ years of experience	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Below 10	11-20 years	-1.17151(*)	.43716	.008
	21 and above	-3.50365(*)	.63619	.000
11-20 years	below 10	1.17151(*)	.43716	.008
	21 and above	-2.33214(*)	.60142	.000
21 and above	below 10	3.50365(*)	.63619	.000
	11-20 years	2.33214(*)	.60142	.000

*The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.*

The result of the analysis in Table 2 showed that library staff whose Librarians' years of experience was below 10 years were significantly different in their job performance from those whose Librarians' years of experience was either 11-20 years or 21 and above years. Also library staff whose Librarians' years of experience were 11-20 years were significantly different from those who were 21 and above years in service delivery in University libraries.

**Null Hypothesis 2:** Librarians' freedom of information has no significant influence on service delivery in University libraries.

The independent variable in this hypothesis is librarians' freedom of information; while the dependent variable is service delivery in University libraries. The responses were divided into three categories based on librarians' freedom of information scores. The greatest possible score for a respondent was 20, with the lowest possible score being 5, and the average score being 12.5. Any respondent who received a score of 9 or less was considered low, those who received a score of 12.5 to 15 were deemed moderate, and those who received a score of 16 or more were labeled high. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was the statistical analysis technique used to evaluate this hypothesis. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Summary data and one-way ANOVA of the influence of Librarians' freedom of information on service delivery in University libraries (N=257)

Librarians' freedom of information	N	$\bar{x}$	SD		
Low – 1	77	35.0130	3.46218		
Moderate – 2	149	36.0872	3.31037		
High– 3	31	38.4516	1.52400		
Total	257	36.0506	3.34497		
Source of variance	SS	Df	Ms	F	Sig of F
Between group	261.812	2	130.906	12.776*	.000
Within group	2602.530	254	10.246		
Total	2864.342	256			

\*Significant at  $P < .05$  level, critical  $F=3.00$ ,  $df= 2, 254$ .

The result on Table 3 revealed that the calculated F-value of 12.776 is higher than the P-value at .05 level of significance with 2 and 254 degree of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore implied that, librarians' freedom of information has a significant influence on service delivery in University libraries. Since librarians' freedom of information had a significant Influence on service delivery in University libraries, a post hoc analysis was employed using Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis of the influence of Librarians' freedom of information on service delivery in University libraries LSD

(I) Librarians' freedom of information	(J) Librarians' freedom of information	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Low	Moderate	-1.07426(*)	.44926	.018
	High	-3.43863(*)	.68087	.000
Moderate	Low	1.07426(*)	.44926	.018
	High	-2.36436(*)	.63189	.000
High	Low	3.43863(*)	.68087	.000
	Moderate	2.36436(*)	.63189	.000

\* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The result of the analysis in Table 4 revealed that library workers whose librarians' freedom of information was low performed considerably worse than those whose librarians' freedom of information was either moderate or high. Also, library employees whose librarians' freedom of information was modest differed significantly from those whose service delivery in university libraries was excellent.

## Discussion of Findings

### Librarians' job experience and service delivery in University libraries

The result of the first hypothesis indicated that, librarians' job experience significantly influenced service delivery in University libraries. The findings are in line with the view of Upeu and Beetseh (2017), who revealed that the level of librarians' experience significantly influenced students' academic performance. Yet, compared with persons 5–10 years of experience, those over the age of 45 had a 17-percentage point increase in experience 73(18.37%), 11-21 years of experience of librarian age of 50-55 had a 20-percentage point increase in experience. 102 (73.83%). Using ANOVA (One-Way Analysis of Variance) test, the results showed that there is significant different between librarian's experience on student performance.

A study by Kont and Jantson (2015) are of same opinion that the Librarians' experience influence librarians' service delivery in University Libraries. The result stated that a librarian which spend more years in the library profession likely discharge his duties more effectively than the newly employed librarian. Temitope (2015) confirm with the present study that experience teachers' librarians has significantly influenced students' academic performance measured by their performance in the SSC examinations and as perceived by the respondents. Schools having good library and well experience teachers' librarians with above 10 years teaching experience achieved better results than schools having more teacher's librarian with 3 years and below experience.

### **Librarians' freedom of information and service delivery in University libraries**

The result of the second hypothesis indicated that, librarians' freedom of information significantly influenced service delivery in University libraries. The findings are in line with the view Igwela and Onyema (2019), who carried on study on the influence of library and information services support intellectual freedom. They revealed that It also revealed that patron's utilized intellectual materials to aid inculcate ideas to promote their academic performance, the information gathers through using library materials help users to add positive meaning to themselves and the society at large. The research also revealed that allowing users to get access to any information of their choice promote self-made education towards achieving their goals and intellectual freedom. It was recommended that; clientele should understand library and information services as an instrument for promoting knowledge and the intellectual properties in the library should be free access with no form of restriction.

In the same avenue Lawal (2018), University of Calabar, Calabar, explained that the value of Information Ethics in Information Society includes: upholding the fundamental values of freedom, equality, tolerance, and respect for human rights. These submissions align with the results of other authors. Onoyeyan, *et al.* (2014) in their studied of ethical in intellectual property, found that intellectual property rights issues are the highest ethical concern confronting librarians. Librarians regard the misuse of confidential information and the use of official positions for personal gain as very unethical. They also discovered that most librarians do not have a copy of the code of ethics by the librarian's Registration Council of Nigeria, and that conceptual studies on ethical practices in Nigerian universities are underdeveloped.

David, and Debora (2016) asserted that intellectual property rights are the difficult issue to treat by the information professionals. While most of ALA's Code of Ethics talks about how libraries should provide unrestricted access to information, copyright and other intellectual property rights can sometimes provide restrictions on the flow of information. Libraries has taken an active interest in open licensing, free software, and new publication and distribution models that respect the rights of information creators while allowing more widespread access to ideas. In real sense, all information ought to be free: Linking directly with the principle of access, information needs to be accessible to fix, improve and invent current events. Therefore, free exchange of information allows for greater overall creativity in the society.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the study it was concluded that librarians' job experience and librarians' freedom of information significantly influenced service delivery in University libraries of Cross River State, Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

1. Library personnel should implement strong security approaches to guarantee that user delinquent activities in the libraries are kept to the lowest possible point, if not entirely eradicated.

- 2 Management should collaborate and partner with libraries in the zone to build staff development programs; acquire training through workshops and conferences, regardless of institutional funding; and group academic Information professionals to boost their publishing output as well as their visibility.
- 3 University management should employ well trained professionals in the library, and the Librarian must be ready to implement social variables effectively. Specifically, Librarians should perform their jobs in an ethical and morally justifiable manner, while also ensuring that library users get proper freedom to access any information of their choice.
- 4 The librarian should encourage inclusion and not show preference towards any library user based on sex, ethnicity, nationality, social status, religion, or political beliefs when administering library services.

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