

Work Environment and Effective Library Service Delivery among Library
Personnel in Universities in Southwest, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated work environment and effective library service delivery among library personnel in university libraries Southwest, Nigeria. library personnel were the major population of the study. The study covered 12 selected Nigerian university libraries and questionnaire was used for the data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Findings from the study revealed that work environment was found to play a vital role in the effective library service delivery of library personnel, secondly, some of the challenges to effective library service delivery includes, inadequate budget for ICT gadgets, unavoidable software and hardware that could facilitate prompt and timely information service delivery, shortage of fund to attend training, capacity buildings, and others. The following recommended were provided that University management should provide conducive and serene working environment in which library personnel will be able to deliver effective library services and University management should increase their budgetary allocation to the libraries for library personnel to be able to provide effective library service delivery to users.

Keywords: *Work environment, Library service delivery, library personnel, Universities, Southwest Nigeria*

Introduction

Work environment should be made conducive for workers to work effectively, good and serene working environment will enable a worker to put in his or her best at workplace. The university libraries should be conducive and serene for library personnel to deliver effective service to library users. Work environment factors should be given top priority, for example conducive, good, serene and inviting working environment should be provided for meaningful and job commitment to take place. When conducive work environment is provided there is enough room for library personnel to provide effective library services to the users. Awan and Tahir (2005) asserted environment in its literal sense, refers to one's surrounds, and it encompasses everything that affects a person during their lifetime but in the context of this work, environment consists of everything that affects an employee at her place of work or in line of duty. Since the environment is made up of everything, the word environment is used to talk about many things. People in different fields of knowledge use the word work environment and or environmental factors. However,

for the purpose of this research, environment and work environment will be observed more from the perspectives of library personnel in Southwest Nigerian university libraries.

Work environment could be said to be anything that exists in around the employee place of work which can have effects on how she performs her duties (Al-Omari and Okasheh, 2017). Environment can be regarded as everything around employees. It could include both tangible and intangible objects. This includes physical, technological, human and organisational policies. Work environment could be living creature living in their environment that is continually interacting with and adapting to its surroundings. In the environment there are different interactions between employees, employers, work conditions, movable and immovable materials, resources, as well as tangible/living and intangible/living things.

From the view of work environments represent the immediate job environment that contains skills required to perform a job, authority, autonomy, relationship with supervisors and co-workers and other working conditions. Findings from Anele, Jasmine and Don-Solomon (2017) stated that the work environment, in addition to remunerations, such as salaries, allowances, excess workload benefits, incentives and bonuses significantly encourage employees, thereafter lead to the success of the institution.

Generally, work environments are distinguishable components of the regulatory, social, political, cultural, demographic, or technical environment that affects the survival, operations, and growth of an institution. A work environment's many characteristics can affect an employee's physical, social, and mental health. A quality work spot is paramount not only to keeping workers on their various task but also to work effectively. A good workplace is checked by such characteristics as competitive wages, trusting relationship between the employees and management, equity and fairness for everyone, and a sensible work load with challenging yet achievable goals. A composite of all these conditions makes the work station the best possible working conditions for employees to work with high level of performance (Agbozo, Owusu, Hoedoafia, and Atakorah, 2017). Hence, it is clearer that without a serene and conducive working environment, employees are likely to perform below expectations. This was buttressed by the findings of Lankeshwara (2016) which revealed that performance is a function of the environment in which the individual works. Some of the factors of the environment are internal and could be controlled from within while others are external and are beyond the control of management. Manu (2015) in his dissertation classified work environment as physical, social and administrative environments. The physical environment consists of the amount of work being done, the technology and equipment used, the availability of supplies of materials, the timing of the shifts, the working hours, etc. The social environment is made up of people's interactions with one another, various team group, managerial support and style, position at work, autonomy, decision- making, culture, and climate

while the administrative environment is made up of organisational structure, goals, policies for promotion, leave, transfer and performance evaluation.

Literature Review

Agbozo, et al. (2017) maintained that environments could be classified into three different but interconnected forms; they are the physical, psychological and social work environments. However, work environment from the view of Opperman (2002) as cited in Amusa, Iyoro and Olabisi (2013) comprises three sub-classes of environments, which are human, organizational and technical environments. Technical environment according to him are the tools, infrastructure and other technical tools. Peers, workgroup and colleagues that employees work with, team up with and interact with as well as leadership, and management form the human environment, on the other hand, organisational policy includes systems, procedures, practices, condition of service, ethics, etc. Work environment of an institution can also be categorized into internal and external work environment and the totality of these environments has influence on the job performance and service delivery by librarians (Amusa, Iyoro and Olabisi, 2013).

One of the key environments that determine the service delivery by librarians is the human environment. This environment evolves round the relationship, rapport, and interaction in the workstation. Major among them is the style(s) of leadership adopted by the head librarians or the University librarian in the case of this study, the method of communication, work-group and so on. There is always a workflow at achieving institutional goals and objectives whenever and wherever there is cordial relationship among the employees and between the lead and the led. The dynamic process of persuading employees to work voluntarily, energetically, and confidently toward the achievement of the library's goals is known as leadership, this is done to achieve the goals of the host university. It denotes the capability and competence to effectively combine all available resources and variable factors in order to find the optimal balance between them. Basit, Sebastian, and Hassan (2017) observed that leadership entails effective communication, relationship, motivation, and different ways through which the leader trains the led and provides direction to his or her team to accomplish a definite task.

Library service is a step above collection, processing, and organization of knowledge, it is an output of academic librarian's job performances which comprise activities of libraries and their personnel at making job which has been done to be readily available, usable, and deployed to the doorstep of the clientele to caching their curiosity at making an appropriate decision. This is done by delivering packaged information to the doorstep of the users either within the four walls of the library or from the comfort of their offices, classrooms, or homes. Such services like reference services, information marketing, information sourcing, current awareness services, selective dissemination of information, readers services, electronic services, database management services, etc. Services, as used here, are not limited to the operations, activities, and programmes of libraries that are geared towards ensuring patrons

needs are met, but also include what the library personnel did and methods being adopted at ensuring that targeted clientele have required and needed information at their disposal as and when needed.

Libraries are long-standing establishments that were created to offer information services to the general public or a specific group of clientele and the provision of library services is a crucial addition to the teaching, learning, and research processes in any academic setting (Bitagi and Garba, 2014). Hence, the library and education are similar to identical twins who have nearly everything in common. Aina (2004) noted that the services delivered to patrons of individual libraries depend on the objectives of its parent institution. However, though services provided by libraries may differ nevertheless, there are certain services which are common to all libraries especially, academic ones. These services according to him are classified as; readers services, digital/virtual/electronic or internet services, reference services, CAS, user education, information literacy programmes, SDI (Aina, 2004; Ifidon and Ifidon, 2007). Library services are the information services rendered to potential clientele to meet their information needs. In the same vein, Adeniran (2011) corroborated many of the above scholars to asserts that academic libraries are service-oriented organisations established for the purpose of supporting the user community with relevant information resources and quality service delivery to meet their patrons' information needs.

Service delivery means the required needs of the library clientele that had been satisfied or met. Generally, service can be defined as the product, efforts, and activity being made and delivered by service providers through which the needs of clientele are satisfactorily met. It could also mean to be components of business in which interactions between clients and information provider are positively defined, where the providers offer services whether in form of certain task or information and the clientele find values as a result of the rendered services. Effective information service delivery provides patrons with value addition and fulfillment of both information search and needs. As observed by Manu (2015), service delivery is a ratio to measure how well an institution or organisation (individual, institution, or country) converts input resources (labour, materials, machines, etc.) into goods and services (output). Ola and Adeyemi (2012) positioned that when services are given a deserving high value, the perspectives and concentration of working with our hands are changes to working from the bottom of our heart to achieve institutional goals. It would lead employees to strategize and re-strategize at means to offer the best services possible, usually often beyond the clientele's expectations.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objective of the study are to:

1. examine the nature of work environment available for delivery effective library service in Southwest, Nigerian university libraries,
2. identify the challenges that library personnel faced in effective library service delivery in Southwest, Nigeria university libraries.

Research questions

The following research questions of the study are:

1. What is the nature of work environment available in rendering effective library service delivery in Southwest, Nigeria university libraries?
2. What are the challenges that library personnel faced in effective library service delivery in Southwest, Nigeria university libraries?

Research Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The target population for this study comprised library personnel in public university libraries in Southwest, Nigeria. This comprised one hundred and ninety-nine (192) library personnel from public university libraries. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections; nature of work environment and effective library service delivery among library personnel in universities Southwest, Nigeria, as well as challenges that library personnel faced in the course of effective service delivery in Southwest, Nigeria university libraries?

Data Presentation and Interpretation

Table 1: What is the nature of work environment in Southwest Nigeria university libraries?

Work Environment in University Libraries in Southwest, Nigeria

S/N	Work Environment	Loading
	Physical work environment CR=0.67; AVE= .59	
1	My office is serene enough to promote effective service delivery	0.74
2	Insufficient space hinders my service delivery to the patrons	0.69
3	Hindrances emanated from sharing of office affect my service delivery	0.58
4	I am sometimes faced with excess work overload	0.57
5	Overall physical work environment in my library enhances information service delivery	0.54
6	I am provided with adequate work tools to perform my duties	0.48
7	There is inadequate furniture in the library	0.38
8	Temperature sometimes hinders my services to the clientele	0.34
	Technology work environment CR=0.70; AVE=.52	
9	There are adequate computer systems for effective services in the library	0.69
10	The use of OPAC promotes service delivery to the clientele	0.65

11	Technology tools such as scanners, printers, photocopier etc. are made available for effective information service delivery	0.59
12	The internet connectivity is being made available for enhancement of library service delivery	0.56
13	Internet bandwidth in the library is strong enough for my job	0.55
14	My ICT compliance brings about timely service delivery	0.53
15	Lib. 2.0 makes me more efficient at work	0.48
16	Overall technological work environment at my place of work promotes service delivery Human work environment CR=0.61; AVE= .55	0.46
17	My rapports with colleagues influence my services to the clientele	0.67
18	I performed my duties without being disturbed by my co-workers	0.50
19	Office fumes sometimes hindered my duties	0.46
20	New knowledge and discoveries are shared for better services	0.38
21	Knowledge sharing promotes job effectiveness and service delivery	0.62
22	Good relationship with clientele brings about better services to them	0.56
23	The overall human work environment at my place of work promotes my service delivery	0.49
24	I gain more knowledge from colleagues to serve my users better Organisational policy CR=0.79; AVE=.52	0.43
25	Condition of service in my school is not workers friendly	0.73
26	The overall procedure of my institution promotes my level of service delivery	0.70
27	Certain procedures of the institution hinder my promotion	0.68
28	I can get to the peak of my profession without PhD	0.68
29	Doctoral degree brings about improved service delivery	0.66
30	The university procedures have positive impacts on my duties	0.66
31	I am promoted as and when due	0.61
32	I am motivated to deliver expected services because I am well paid	0.43

Table 1, above revealed that physical work environment has a composite reliability (CR) of 0.67 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of .59, technological work environment has composite reliability (CR) of 0.70 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of .52, human work environment has composite reliability (CR) of 0.61 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of .55 while organisational policy has composite

reliability (CR) of 0.79 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of .52. It can be deduced that organisational policy and technology work environment are the major work environments that affects effective service delivery in university libraries in Nigeria. Other work environments that affect effective service delivery in university libraries in Nigeria are physical work environment and human work environment

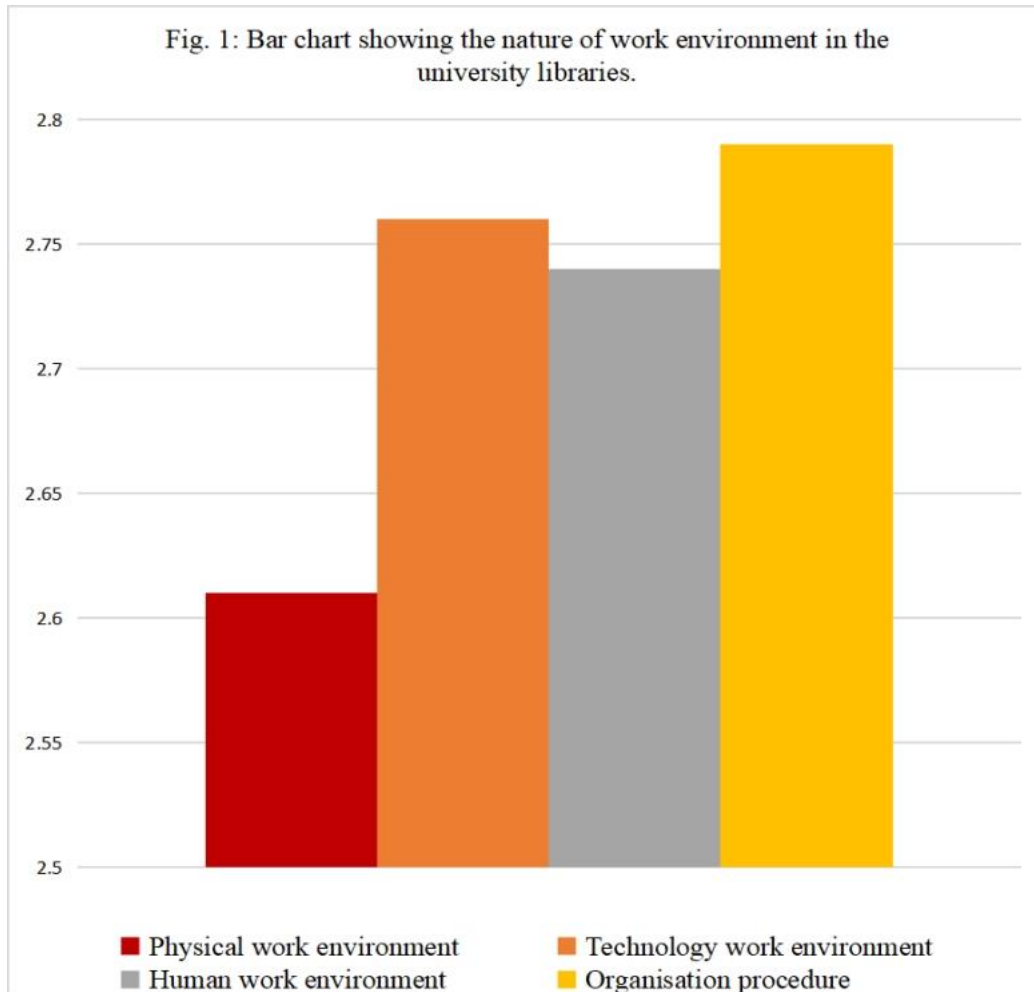


Table 2: Challenges Faced in the Course of Service Delivery by library personnel

S/N	Statement	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}	S.D
Paucity of fund (Weighted Mean =2.85)							
1	Inadequate budget for ICT in the library	71 39.2%	62 34.3%	27 14.9%	21 11.6%	3.01	1.005
2	Non-affordable software and hardware that could facilitate prompt information service delivery	60 33.1%	78 43.1%	20 11.0%	23 12.7%	2.97	0.977
3	Shortage of fund to attend training, capacity buildings, seminars and conferences	69 38.1%	62 34.3%	10 5.5%	40 22.1%	2.88	1.146
4	Non implementation of library budget	63 34.8%	55 30.4%	26 14.4%	37 20.4%	2.80	1.129
5	Outdated printed materials	60 33.1%	62 34.3%	20 11.0%	39 21.5%	2.79	1.126
6	Inadequate library budget to procure needed material resources	40 22.1%	80 44.2%	14 7.7%	47 26.0%	2.62	1.097
Lack of technological literacy skills (Weighted Mean =2.78)							
7	Negative attitude of librarians towards acquisition of ICT skills	61 33.7%	66 36.5%	20 11.0%	34 18.8%	2.85	1.088
8	Erratic power supply for ICT use	57 31.5%	64 35.4%	28 15.5%	32 17.7%	2.81	1.070
9	Poor internet connectivity/low bandwidth	58 32.0%	57 31.5%	34 18.8%	32 17.7%	2.78	1.083
10	Lack of ICT compliance skills	50 27.6%	71 39.2%	28 15.5%	32 17.7%	2.77	1.044
11	Insufficient ICT skills training	63 34.8%	53 29.3%	25 13.8%	40 22.1%	2.77	1.150
12	Technophobia	61 33.7%	51 28.2%	36 19.9%	33 18.2%	2.77	1.105

13	Insufficient tools such as printer, scanners, barcode scanners, copier etc.	61 33.7%	54 29.8%	25 13.8%	41 22.7%	2.75	1.151
14	Gross inadequate ICT facilities	61 33.7%	54 29.8%	26 14.4%	40 22.1%	2.75	1.145
15	Poor policy on information and communication technology	52 28.7%	65 35.9%	27 14.9%	37 20.4%	2.73	1.090
16	Unreliable telecommunication network	53 29.3%	59 32.6%	31 17.1%	38 21.0%	2.70	1.105
	Other factors						
17	Lack of passion for the profession	58 32.0%	73 40.3%	25 13.8%	25 13.8%	2.91	1.004
18	Lack of job satisfaction	64 35.4%	65 35.9%	17 9.4%	35 19.3%	2.87	1.101
19	Unfavourable policies	53 29.3%	71 39.2%	36 19.9%	21 11.6%	2.86	0.971
20	Lack of motivation	60 33.1%	71 39.2%	12 6.6%	38 21.0%	2.85	1.105
21	Poor work environment	46 25.4%	75 41.4%	32 17.7%	28 15.5%	2.77	1.001
22	Non-attendance of workshops, seminars and conferences	53 29.3%	63 34.8%	21 11.6%	44 24.3%	2.69	1.137
23	Lack of job commitment	41 22.7%	68 37.6%	30 16.6%	42 23.2%	2.60	1.079

Table 2 above showed the responses of library personnel to the challenges they faced in the delivering effective library service in universities in Southwest, Nigeria. Paucity of funds with weighted mean of 2.85, as evident in inadequate budget for ICT gadgets in the library (3.01), unavoidable software and hardware that could facilitate prompt and timely information service delivery (2.97) and shortage of fund to attend training, capacity buildings, seminars and conferences (2.88), among others and lack of technological literacy skills with weighted Mean of 2.78, including

negative attitude of librarians towards acquisition of ICT skills (2.85), Erratic power supply for ICT use (2.81)and poor internet connectivity/low bandwidth (2.78) were considered as the major challenge. Other factors such as lack of passion for the profession and lack of job satisfaction (2.87) were also found to negatively affect effective library service delivery ny the library personnel in universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

Discussion of the findings

The findings from the study revealed the importance of work environment was to library personnel in universities in Nigeria.. This result correlates with the findings of Theuri, Macharia and Kamau (2020) which established that there was a strong significant effect of work environment on service delivery. The study reported that work environment was found to play a vital role in the service delivery in the public health sector in the country. The study was also in line with Okoe, Boateng and Mensahwho (2016) who used Cronbach's alpha and multiple linear regression analysis to predict employee's service recovery performance on employee job performance, job commitment, and team culture. This study also revealed that all the dimensions of work environment were significant to library personnel. The study also revealed that many university libraries were not using information and communication technology. This outcome corroborates the findings of Badmus and Ogunlana (2020) that most of the services delivery in federal university libraries in Southwest,Nigeria were rendered manually in spite of the global drive towards information and communication technology.

The findings from the study also supported those of Amaechi, Enweani and Eke (2018) which revealed that some of the challenges to effective transformation of academic libraries in terms of service delivery in the 21st century included poor funding, absence of well-defined and uniform library policies and poor compliance with ICT demands. In addition, the findings is in tandem with Okafor (2020) that reported inadequate funding, insufficient ICT infrastructure and staff with ICT skills, poor condition of service were some of the challenges militating against library service delivery in Nigeria. Therefore, if libraries especially, university libraries which are to deliver as the heart and centre for teaching, learning, research, and scholarly communication and remain as the powerhouses of information and knowledge depository the challenges stated above must be addressed.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is established that the contributions of good working environment can leads to job commitment and have immense significance on effective library service delivery of library personnel in university libraries. The study further concluded that there is significance evidence on the relationship between library personnels' level of service

delivery and provision of adequate furniture, adequate work tools to perform duties, internet connectivity, adequate computer systems and conducive work environment

The following recommendations were provided:

1. University management should provide conducive and serene work environment in which library personnel would thrive in their quest to deliver effective library services.
2. University Management should increase their budgetary allocation to the libraries for library personnel to be able to provide effective library service delivery to users.
3. library personnel should be provided with scholarship and grants to develop and support their career progression in order to provide effective library service delivery.

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