

COMPLIANCE WITH LIBRARIANS' REGISTRATION COUNCIL OF NIGERIA (LRCN) CODE OF ETHICS FOR LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES PROVISION BY LIBERIANS IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN KADUNA STATE

By

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Abstract

The study investigates compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics for library and Information service provisions by librarians in University Libraries in Kaduna state, Nigeria. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated to examine the level of the librarians' compliance with the LRCN code of ethics and the extent to study complying with the LRCN code of ethics influence library and information service provision in university libraries in Kaduna state. The population of the study was 23 Librarians. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. Twenty three copies of questionnaire were administered, completed and returned. Descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and bar charts were used to answer the research questions. ANOVA statistics was used to test hypothesis 1 while linear regression was used to test hypothesis 2 at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that most librarians do not comply with the LRCN code of ethics. The rejection of the null hypothesis 1 indicated that the differences that exist were statistically significant. Hence, the hypothesis was retained. Hypothesis 2 was on the influence of complying with the LRCN code of ethics on library and information services provision indicated. Statistical significant and therefore the hypothesis was rejected. The study recommends that LRCN should intensify the promotion, monitoring, enforcement and punishment for those who do not comply with the LRCN code of ethics.

Introduction

Codes of Ethics are values, principles, attributes, rules, regulations, and laws governing profession and workplace. Generally, Code of Ethics in a profession creates a set of benchmarks within which to practice and evaluate performance, which are good for enhancement and strengthening of professional images. According to Onoyeyan (2018), Code of Ethics is a list of guiding principles for ethical behavior. In the same assertion Sultana (2014) posits that a code of ethics is very important because it gives professionals boundaries that professionals have to stay within in their professional practice. Code of Ethics is the norm or principle received by a particular group as the basis of everyday behavior in their community and in the workplace. Code of Ethics is a system of norms, values and professional rules written explicitly stating what is true and good and what is not true and is not good for the professionals. Codes of Ethics are designed to anticipate and prevent certain specific types of behavior; e.g. conflict of interest, self-dealing, bribery, and inappropriate actions.

The library and Information Science profession has a Code of Ethics which all Librarians have to comply with in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities. Such Ethics are normally developed and adopted by the management of the professional body at International, Regional, National and Sectional levels. Examples of such are the International Federation of Library Association and Institutions (IFLA), American Library Association (ALA) and the Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN). Complying with Code of Ethics will Foster a high commitment to the profession of Librarians. Commitment is an attitude of self-adjustment firmly

at the target that will be achieved by a person or a particular community. Complying with a code of Ethics enables librarian to find something that should be done and what should not be done. With this, the librarian can demonstrate their commitment to keep working even though probably not according to personal preferences.

The general purpose of Code of Ethics for librarians is to serve as guidelines for the Ethical conduct expected of all library and other Information professionals in Nigeria. Thus, for library professionals in Nigeria to conduct themselves in the most ethical, moral and professional manner, as well as adhere to the best standards of practice that are universally acceptable and meet the demands of the LRCN regarding the quality of professional practice, all librarians are guided and bound by the rules contained in the Librarians Code of Ethics. The Librarians Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) is a corporate body established by Act No. 12 of 1995. It is charged with the responsibility of regulating the practice of the library and Information Science profession in Nigeria. As a regulatory body that provides a platform for the delivery of quality library and Information Services in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Every profession has its ethical values which not only guide the members in the manner they ought to conduct themselves so as to preserve the image of the profession, but also to provide the desired services. The objectives of the Code of Ethics for librarians in Nigeria as provided by the LRCN is to guide the librarians and other information professionals in maintaining ethical standards of behavior in their relationships with the state and society, client, profession and colleagues, guide librarians in the discharge of their duties, provide objective benchmark for assessing librarians conduct and discharge of their professional duties, boost public confidence in the ability of the librarian in order to enhance the professional image of library and information professional as well as to build a strong and moral ethical foundation for the actualization of an information society.

However, despite the availability of the LRCN Code of Ethics for librarians, Igbeka and Okoroma (2013) asserted that many librarians carry out their professional duties as though there are no ethical guides. This suggested that there seems to be a gap between the existence of the code of ethics and compliance with its. It is to this end that this study investigates librarians with the code of ethics compliance for library and information services provision in university libraries in Kaduna state, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the level of the Librarians Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics in the provision of library and information Services in the University Libraries in Kaduna State?
2. To what extent has the librarians' compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics influence the provision of Library and Information Services in the University Libraries in Kaduna State?

Research Hypothesis

The following are the hypothesis of the study

- HO1. There is no significant difference among the Librarians in the University Libraries in Kaduna State on the level of compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics.
- HO2. Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics by the Librarians in the University Libraries in Kaduna State has no significant relationship on the Library and Information Services provided.

Literature Review

Code of Ethics for Librarians in Nigeria

Every professional body requires a code of Ethics because it articulates and promotes acceptable standard of behaviors and practice that ought to be met by the practitioners. According to Mabawonku (2010), ethics in a profession often refers to principles and rules that guide the conduct of members to ensure that the accepted standards are maintained. It is towards this end that the Library profession has adopted codes of professional ethics. Adejumo and Oye (2015), emphasized that it is evident that there is a common ground for the values and principles stated in the codes of ethics document in the LIS profession worldwide. More than 60 countries Library Associations, including the LRCN, have developed and approved a National Code of Ethics for librarians. The IFLA has adopted these codes at an international level. Nigeria is unarguably the first country in Africa to come up with a Code of Ethics for librarian and other information professionals. This feat was accomplished by the LRCN (LRCN, 2012).

Information Services and LRCN Code of Ethics in Libraries

Information service is at the core of the establishment of libraries all over the world. It is very important for patrons to have access to information services that will assist them in meeting their various information needs. As such, a library that toys with service delivery could run the risk of negative perception by users and possible user apathy. This underscores the need for libraries to ensure that the information services they provide satisfy their users. However, in as much as librarians have the professional responsibilities of providing effective and efficient library services, they must be guided by the ethics of the profession (Phillips, Oyewole & Akinbo, 2018). Therefore, the objectives of the LRCN Code of Conduct for librarians and other information professionals include:

- a. To guide the librarian in maintaining standards of ethical behaviour in his relationship with state and society, clients, profession and colleagues and oneself.
- b. To guide registered librarians in their daily discharge of duties as it will help to regulate professional behaviour in terms of safeguarding the interests of the community served, especially as they are engaged in the process of providing access to information.
- c. To provide objective benchmarks for assessing librarians conduct and discharge of professional duties.
- d. To clarify the librarians rights, privileges, obligations and their legal bases.
- e. To re-awaken the sense of self-esteem, dignity, honour, service and moral rectitude of the librarian and re-affirm the librarians age-long position of leadership as gatekeepers and disseminators of information.
- f. To boost public confidence in the ability of the library and information science profession to regulate itself and contribute meaningfully to national development in order to enhance the professional image of librarian and information professional.

g. To build a strong moral and ethical foundation for the actualization of an information society.

h.

Generally, the LRCN Code of ethics can be said to prescribe ideals and behavior which should be inculcated and exhibited to model the character of librarians in the discharge of their duties at all times.

Compliance with Code of Ethics

Compliance means conforming to relevant laws, regulations, policies, standards, procedures, or contractual obligations. Codes of Ethics and conduct can succeed only if it is complied with (Diamond 2001). Ethical compliance within an organization is done for the benefit of the organization and the employees. The use of ethical standards can both reduce the chances of a workplace lawsuit and help to create a positive work environment. According to Bede (2013), part of being a professional is complying with a Code of Ethics. This applies to librarians and information science professionals just as it applies to medical doctors, lawyers and accountants. Complying with in a code of Ethics demonstrates to the public that members of the profession are seriously concerned with more than self-interest, and they will act responsibly and within the law. Complying with code of Ethics is not only the right thing to do, it is vital to the ongoing success of an organisation. In order to ensure effectiveness in this area, Somers (2000) suggested that compliance monitoring and assessments should be built. Establishing an effective Compliance and Ethics Program has become a necessity to protect any highly regulated organisation. At its core, an effective Program protects an Organisation by detecting and preventing improper conduct and promoting adherence to the Organisation's rules and values. Of course, the implication of compliance with the codes of ethics increases the chances of success to the day to day activities of the employees in every organization.

Influence of Compliance with Code of Ethics on Library and Information Service

Hamel (2015) emphasized that organization's code of ethics provides guidance and support to individuals for making decisions and carrying out their work in ways that are compatible with the organization's values. Librarians should be able to guarantee that the services they provide are according to their code of ethics. According to Resranti (2015), there are three benefits of the complying with the code of ethics of librarians: 1) Fostering a commitment to the profession of librarian, 2). Enabling librarian to provide quality assurance services for library users, 3). Enabling librarians to play a role in shaping a positive image for the library.

According to Cohn (2005), obligations of librarians are: the first is to provide the best services to the users; the second is to create a conducive atmosphere for library; the third is to give the example and keep the goodwill of the institution and the duties and responsibilities. Complying with a Code of Ethics by librarians can provide the best possible services to the patrons, guarantee quality of service for the patrons and protect the unprofessional actions so as to achieve set objectives. The code of ethics of librarian mentions that the librarian is a person conducting the library by providing services to the public in accordance with the duties of parent institutions based on science, documentation and information in its possession through education.

Library service delivery involves individuals who have expectations of the librarian in such ways as how they relate and behave towards the users, colleagues, their organisations and entire

society. Froehlich (2007) focused on the expectation of librarians to themselves, to the organization, and to the larger environment within which information professionals' work: (a) social responsibility; (b) obligations between professionals and clients and third parties; (c) obligations between professionals and systems; (d) obligations to the profession; (e) obligations to community or cultural standards. Froehlich also claimed that within these obligations are sets of values that support and articulate them which is the code of Ethics. Therefore, librarians must comply with the ethics code and follow the principles in practice to have an impact on the library customers.

Complying with code of ethics with a commitment to upholding individual and collective responsibilities towards knowledge access and provision; doing right and upholding professionalism form the foundation to quality service delivery by librarians. Another principle of service delivery is that accurate information must be supplied to the user regardless of the information professionals' stance to the content or finality of its use (Smith, 2010), at the right time, in the right quantity and in the right format . These responsibilities involve a wide range of elements such as accepting those tasks that are within one's reach, providing the customer with a realistic forecast of what can be obtained and searching the best resources. For the library customer, maintaining the confidentiality of the material obtained and privacy to personal information are implicit. Again, librarians should carry out duties in accordance with the expectations of society in general and the need of information seekers in particular; maintaining the highest possible excellence, competence , distinguishing between the views or attitudes of personal and professional tasks; ensuring that actions and decisions are based on professional judgment; not abusing position by taking advantage except on professional services; being polite and thoughtful in serving the community, both in words and deeds. Librarians have the moral responsibility to comply with code of ethics as guidelines and standards for the benefit of the patrons, profession, libraries, professional organizations, and communities.

Methodology

Descriptive Survey research design was adopted for the study because the research questions used tried to find out what and to what extent librarians comply with LRCN code of ethics. The study formulated two research questions and two hypotheses. The total population is twenty-three respondents comprised of librarians from Reference Division, Customers Service Division, Serial Management Division, and Research and Bibliographic Service Divisions in the three (3) University libraries studied in Kaduna State. These were: Ahmadu Bello University Library Complex, Kaduna State University Library, and the Nigerian Defence Academy Library, Kaduna. The use of these Divisions was because they are the main front-end service areas in the library. The instruments used for data collection were close ended questionnaires. Descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and bar charts were used to answer all research questions. ANOVA statistics was used to test hypothesis 1 while linear was used to test hypothesis 2 at 0.05 level of significance.

Data Presentation

Descriptive statistics was used to answer the research questions and these were presented in Tables 1 and 2. A broad descriptive analysis was done across all the available data using the SPSS version 20. The choice of this version was because of the fact that it is easier and faster in tabulation. In order to find mean (\bar{x}) the total score was divided by the number of respondents. The standard deviation (S.D) was computed as the square roots of the variances while the total scores

(T.S) was obtained from the summation of all the responses. The weighting of the responses was likert scale of four point rating as very much complied, complied, rarely complied, not complied, and ,very much influence, influence, rarely influence and not influence.

Question 1: The Level of librarians Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics in the provision of library and Information Services in the University libraries studied in Kaduna State.

One of the essence of the LRCN Code of Ethics is for librarians to adhere to the standard of practice of the profession. Therefore, this research question tried to find out the level of Compliance with the LRCN code of ethics in the provision of Information Services.

Table 1: Librarians Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics

Code of Ethics	Universities Studied														
	ABU				KASU				NDA				Total	X	SD
	SC 4	C 3	RC 2	NC 1	VM C 4	C 3	RC 2	NC 1	SC 4	C 3	RC 2	NC 1			
Access to information	9 (36)	1 (3)	5 (6)	-	-	-	4 (8)	-	-	-	4 (8)	-	61	2.6	.52
Responsibility towards individuals and society	-	-	3 (6)	12 (12)	-	-	4 (8)	-	-	-	2 (4)	2 (2)	32	1.3	.16
Support for open Access and intellectual property	-	-	4 (8)	11 (11)	-	-	4 (8)	-	-	-	2 (4)	2 (2)	33	1.8	.56
Neutrality, personal integrity and professional skills	3 (12)	-	5 (10)	7 (7)	-	-	3 (6)	1 (1)	-	-	-	4 (4)	40	1.7	.60
Privacy, Secrecy and transparency	-	-	3 (6)	12 (12)	-	-	4 (8)	-	-	-	2 (4)	2 (2)	32	1.4	.08
Colleague employer employee relationship	-	-	5 (10)	10 (10)	-	-	4 (8)	-	-	-	3 (6)	1 (1)	35	1.5	.06
														1.6	

KEY: SC= Strictly Comply, C=Comply, RC= Rarely Comply, NC=Not Comply, X= Mean, SD=Std. Dev

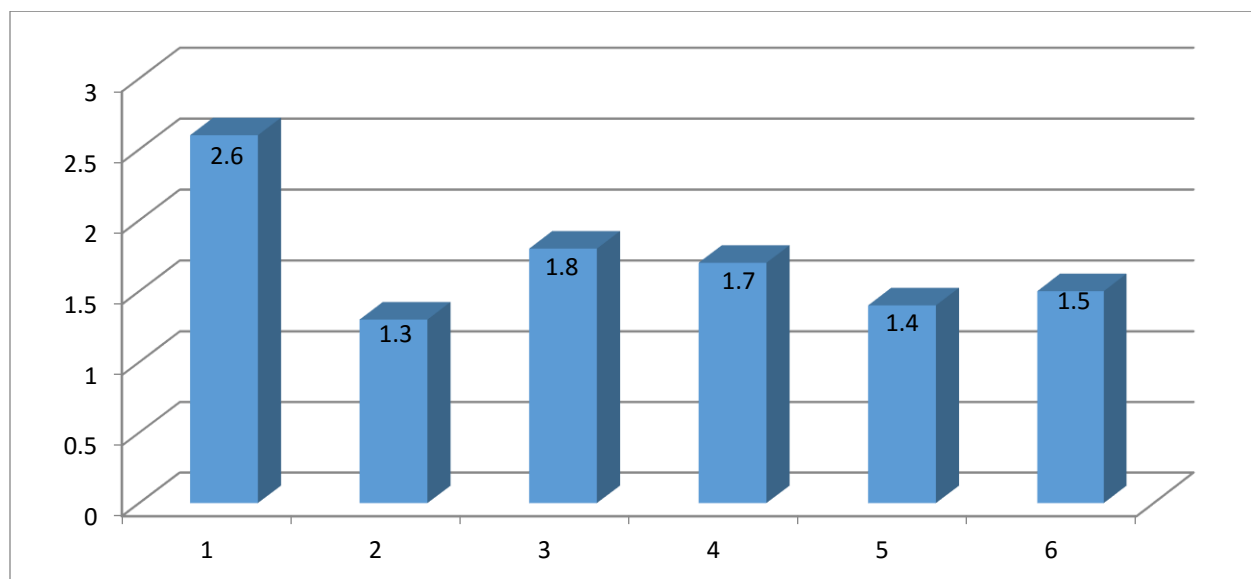


Table 1 and figure 1 presented the level of Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics in the Provision of Library and Information Services in the University Libraries studies in Kaduna State. The analysis revealed that the LRCN Code of Ethics were not complied in the areas of neutrality, personal integrity, responsibility towards individuals and society, support for open access and intellectual property privacy, secrecy and transparency and colleague employer employee relationship are not being complied with because their weighted means are less than 2.5 benchmark for decision rule. The overall mean score was also found to be 1.6 which is also less than the benchmark of 2.5. This implies that library staffs do not comply with the LRCN code of ethics in the provision of library and Information Services in University libraries studied in Kaduna State. This finding agreed with the assertion of Magembe, (2011) who asserted that part of being a professional is complying with a code of ethics. Complying with a code of ethics demonstrates to the public that members of the profession are seriously concerned with more than self-interest, and they will act responsibly and within the law. Complying with code of Ethics is not only the right thing to do, it is vital to the ongoing success of an organization. In order to ensure effectiveness in this area, Atkins, (2011) suggested that compliance monitoring and assessments should be built. Establishing an effective Compliance and Ethics Program has become a necessity to protect any highly regulated organization.

Question 2: The Extent the Librarian Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics influence provision of Library and Information Services in the University Libraries studied in Kaduna state.

In order to find out the extent library staff compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics influence provision of library and Information Services, the items were numbered to indicate the extent librarians compliance with the LRCN Code of ethics influence library and Information Services provision.

TABLE 2: Influence of Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics on Service Provision

Code of Ethics	Universities Studied														
	ABU				KASU				NDA				Total	X	SD
	HI 4	I 3	RI 2	NI 1	HI 4	I 3	RI 2	NI 1	HI 4	I 3	RI 2	NI 1			
1	11 (44)	3 (6)	1 (2)	-			4 (8)	-	-	2 (6)	-	2 (2)	68	2.9	.85
2	11 (44)	2 (6)	2 (4)	-			1 (2)	3 (3)	-	-	2 (4)	2 (2)	67	2.8	.85
3	10 (40)	-	5 (6)	-	-	-	4 (8)	-	-		4 (8)	-	62	2.7	.85
4	9 (36)	1 (3)	5 (6)	-	-	-	4 (8)	-	-	2 (6)	-	2 (2)	62	2.7	.60
5	11 (44)	3 (9)	2 (4)	-			2 (4)	2 (2)	-	-		4 (4)	67	2.8	.85
6	11 (44)	3 (6)	1 (2)	-			4 (8)	-	-	-	4 (8)	-	68	2.9	.70
MEAN														2.8	0.93

KEY: HI=Highly Influence, I=Influence, RI= Rarely Influence, NI=Not Comply, X= Mean, SD=Std. Dev

1. Compliance with LRCN code of ethics enable library to make available information resources to library users
2. Compliance with LRCN code of ethics enables the librarian to secure information resources not available in the library through inter-library loan and other agreed corporative schemes
3. Compliance with LRCN code of ethics ensure that the librarian instruct and the user on how to exploit and use the library resources and services
4. Compliance with LRCN code of ethics ensure that the librarian publicise collection and services so that existing and prospective users are aware of their existence and availability.
3. Compliance with LRCN code of ethics ensure that selective dissemination of information service is provided by the librarian to the customers.
4. Compliance with LRCN code of ethics enables the library to provide current information library customers.

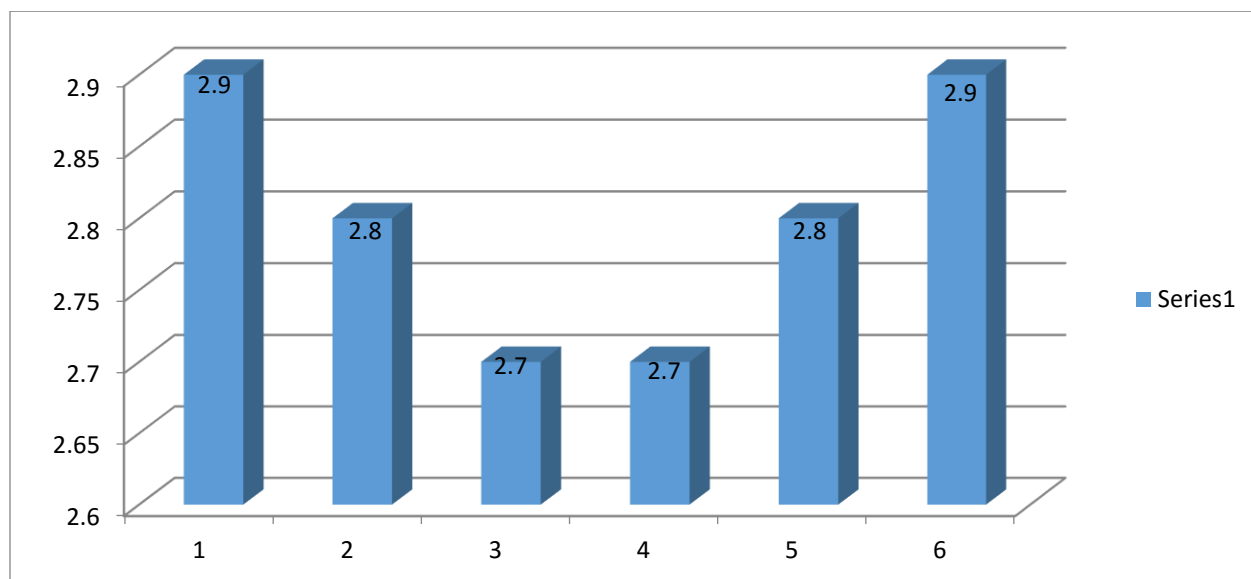


Figure 5: Influence of LRCN Code of Ethics on Information Service Provision

Table 2 and figure 2 presented the extent Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics influences provision of Library and Information Services in the university Libraries in Kaduna state. The analysis revealed the weighted means of all the items to be equal to or more than 2.5 benchmark for agreement. The overall mean score was also found to be 2.8 which is also more than the benchmark of 2.5. This suggests that Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics influences provision of Library and Information Services in the University Libraries studied in Kaduna state. This finding agreed with the assertion of Garcia, (2010) who emphasized that organization's code of ethics provides guidance and support to individuals for making decisions and carrying out their work in ways that are compatible with the organization's values. Librarians should be able to guarantee that the services they provide are according to their code of ethics. According to Resranti (2015), there are three benefits of complying with the code of Ethics of librarians: 1) fostering a commitment to the profession of librarian, 2). enabling librarian to provide quality assurance services for library users, 3). enabling librarians to play a role in shaping a positive image for the library.

Inferential Analysis

This section presents the inferential analysis of the study.

The Results of the data used to test the null hypotheses were presented in Table 3 and 4

HO₁: *There is no significant difference among the Librarians in the University Libraries studied on the level of Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics.*

Table 3: ANOVA statistics on the difference among the librarians in the University libraries studied on the level of Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics

Librarians	X	SD	Sum of Mean Square	F	Sig.
ABU-L	1.5714	.51355			
KASU-L	1.0000	.00000			
NDA-L	1.6667	.57735			
Between Groups			.455	.227	.409
Within Groups			4.095	.241	

ABU-L=Ahmadu Bello University Library,

KASU-L=Kaduna State University Library, NDA-L=Nigerian Defence Academic Library

Table 3 shows the differences among the Librarians in the University Libraries studied on the level of Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics. The result revealed a mean score of 1.571 for ABU library, 1.000 for KASU library and 1.667 NDA for library. The F-cal. value of .227 at significant p-value of .409 was obtained. The mean scores showed some variations among library staff in the University libraries studied on the level of compliance with the LRCN code of Ethics. However the differences that exists were not statistically significant since calculated p-value of .409 is more than the alpha value of 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis that says “there is no significant difference among the librarians in University libraries studied on the level of compliance with the LRCN code of Ethics” is retained. This means that university libraries do not differ in their opinions regarding their level of compliance with the LRCN code of Ethics.

HO₂: Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics by the Librarians in University Libraries studied has no significant between on the library and Information Services provided

Table 4: Regression statistics on the influence of Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics by the Librarians in the University Libraries Studied on the library and Information Services provided

Variables	Mean	SD	N	Df.	r-cal.	r ²	Adj. r	Bêta	Sig.	(2-tailed)	Decision
CLRCNCE	2.50	.512	20	18	0.302	.901	.040	.302	0.000		Rejected
LISP	2.15	.510									

CLRCNCE=Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics,

LISP=Library and Information Services Provided

Table 4 presents the regression analysis of the influence of compliance with the LRCN code of ethics by the Librarians in University libraries studied on the library and Information Services provided. The table revealed the mean and standard deviation of 2.50 and .512 for CLRCNCE and 2.15 and .510 for LISP. The r-cal. was found to be 0.302 at significant confidence levels of 0.000. Since the alpha value of 0.05 is more than the significant confidence levels of 0.000, the null hypothesis three that said, “compliance with the LRCN code of ethics by the Librarians in the University libraries studied has no significant influence on the library and

Information Services provided” is rejected. The analysis also revealed that the Compliance with the LRCN code of Ethics by the Librarians in the University libraries studied influences the library and Information Services provided by 90% ($r^2=901$). Also, every one unit increase in compliance with the LRCN code of ethics by the Librarians in University libraries will lead to 30% increase in the library and Information Services provided (Beta=.302). This means that compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics by the Librarians in University libraries influences the library and Information Services provided.

Summary of the Major Findings

The study revealed that;

1. Librarians in the University Libraries studied have low level compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics in the provision of library and Information Services.
2. Librarians’ Compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics influences provision of library and Information Services in the university libraries in Kaduna state.
3. There is no significant difference among the Librarians in the University Libraries studied on their level of Compliance with the LRCN code of ethics.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and summary of the findings, it is concluded that many librarians have low level compliance with LRCN code of ethics. However, from observation compliance with the LRCN Code of Ethics influences provision of library and information services in university libraries studied in Kaduna State. Therefore, the LRCN has to be firm in the monitoring and enforcement of the ethical codes.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made,

1. More Awareness should be created on the existence of the LRCN Code of Ethics to all librarians through publicity.
2. There should be standing order to penalize the librarians who do not comply with the LRCN Code of Ethics to maintain discipline within the profession.
3. The LRCN Code of Ethics should be intensify in promoting, monitoring and enforcement of the Ethical Codes in library and information service provision.

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