

Conference attendance and job satisfactions of librarians in some selected university libraries in South - South, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated conference attendance and job satisfaction of librarians in some selected university libraries in South –South, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive study. Two research questions were formulated to guide the study. The population of the study consists of 113 recruited librarians in all the federal universities libraries in South- South Nigeria. A total of 113 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 95 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved using descriptive statistics mean and percentage mean score of 2.5 and above and percentage score of 50% were considered as acceptable. The study revealed that the effects of conference attendance among librarians in the university libraries under study are as follow: professional experience, learns about current events, learn about current technology, learn about current trend and improves job satisfaction. Also, the study further affirmed that the extent of conference attendance among librarians are: It improves relations among librarians, it opens new horizon in the profession, it helps to recognize the interdependence of knowledge and information and to improve on their basic education. The study recommends that parent institutions should try as much as possible to sponsor librarians to conferences to broaden their horizon. Tertiary Education Trust Fund, (TETFUND) should make funds available and disbursed accordingly for the sponsorship of conferences in librarianship.

Keywords: Conference attendance, job satisfaction, librarians, university libraries

Introduction

A professional librarian is someone who works in a library to provide information access and occasionally social or technical activities. Librarians primarily work in libraries and frequently work alone, however they may also regularly engage with other staff members or partners in the community in order to further the institution's goals and objectives. Academic librarianship is the practice of librarianship at higher education institutions such as universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education, among others. As a result, specialists (librarians) who work at these universities' libraries are referred to as academic librarians. According to the

Librarian's Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) (2014), in order to become an academic librarian, a candidate must possess the following qualifications: a first degree in library and information science, or a first degree in another subject with a master's degree in library and information science; certification with the LRCN; proof of the publication of scholarly works; ICT proficiency; and literacy. A librarian has to be funded to attend conferences to further his or her academic growth if they are to improve intellectually and succeed.

A conference is a gathering that frequently lasts a few days and is arranged around a certain topic or to bring people together who share interest. Also, attending a conference involves participating in a face-to-face conversation or a virtual conversation. One of the goals of the Nigerian Library Association (NLA), according to Eke (2011), is to protect and advance the professional interests of librarians, a goal that the group has kept by hosting an annual general conference for all Nigerian librarians. According to Ifidon (2007), conferences are a means of professional development whether local, national, or international, and they support library and librarian professional development, enhance relationships among librarians, open up new horizons in the profession, and help to recognize the interdependence of knowledge and information. Professionals in the fields of libraries and information attend conferences to further their education, learn novel ideas, and acquire specialties that are pertinent to the demands of the workplace. It improves academic librarians' job satisfactions in the libraries when their bosses and parent institutions approve of conferences. Librarians who want to advance in their careers over time and library management that want to boost employee satisfaction go past the formality of yearly reviews and create real growth opportunities for everyone of their staff. Librarians believe that their employer is giving them opportunity to advance in their professions, which makes them satisfy in their work.

The term job satisfactions refer to the attitude and feelings people have about their work. Positive and favorable attitudes towards the job indicate job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is shown by positive and favorable views about the job. Simatwa (2011) defined job satisfaction as a function that is positively correlated with how well one's personal needs are met at work. According to Kuria (2011), employees are the happiest and most productive when they have jobs that provide them the opportunities to attend conferences, seminars, workshops and so on. It is as a result of these benefits that this topic conference attendance and job satisfactions of librarians in some selected university libraries in South, South, Nigeria is imperative.

Statement of the Problem

A conference is a formal meeting or gathering where librarians of like mind converge to share ideas and make policies that will be beneficial to their field of study. A conference may also be a meeting of people who share a same interest and get together to exchange ideas, discuss issues in their industry, and give solutions. Attending library conferences allows librarians to network, participate in continuing education activities, and learn about current issues, trends, and technology. The information learned during conferences is essential for professional advancement. Conferences bring professionals of like minds together to share and discuss ideas which in turn enhance their job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction has been outlined as an agreeable emotional state ensuing from the appraisal of one's task, an affection reaction to at least one's job, and a perspective towards one's job. It describes however satisfied a person is together with his or her job. Job satisfaction is a complex and multifaceted concept which can mean different things to different people. Job satisfaction means doing the work one likes, doing it well and being rewarded for own efforts.

When organizations like the library sponsor librarians to conferences more frequently, there is every tendency that the librarians will be very happy and satisfied with their jobs.

It has been observed that there are existing literatures on conference attendance and job satisfactions of librarians, but there is no work presently on conference attendance and job satisfactions of librarians with a particular reference to some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. This therefore prompted the researcher to embark on this study to fill the gap in knowledge.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of the study is to examine conference attendance and job satisfactions of librarians in some selected university libraries in South, South, and Nigeria. The specific objectives are follows:

1. To find out the effects of conference attendance among librarians in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.
2. To determine the extent of job satisfaction among librarians in attending conferences in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What are the effects of conference attendance among librarians in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria?
2. What is the extent of job satisfaction among librarians in attending conference in some selected university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Literature review

A librarian is someone who is professionally qualified to work in a library by maintaining books and information and lending them to patrons Alop (2009). For librarians to be satisfied with their job and updating ideas, new development in their area of specialization, conference attendance is critical.

A conference may also be a gathering of people with similar interests who get together to share ideas, talk about problems in their field, and provide solutions. Librarians may network, take part in continuing education opportunities, and learn about current concerns, trends, and technology by attending library conferences. The knowledge gained at conferences is crucial for career success. Conferences, according to Severt et al. (2007), are occasions that feature instructional programming, socializing opportunities, and displays of recent discoveries in a particular field of research. Another justification for their annual conference is provided by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), which similarly emphasizes the significance of the conference as a vehicle for facilitating communication between the association, libraries, and vendors: All delegates get the chance to network and further their careers at the IFLA International Library and Information Conference, which also sets the professional agenda on a global scale. It is an opportunity for the host country to showcase the status of libraries and information science in their country and region as well as to have their professionals experience international librarianship and international relations in a unique way.

Henczel (2016) also looks into how National Library Associations affect their members, and the field of librarianship. She explains how conferences are routinely organized by all significant national associations in the English-speaking world, specifically by the American

Library Association (ALA), the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in the United Kingdom (CILIP), the Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa, (LIANZA), and ALIA. Her research led to the conclusion that supporting librarians' attendance at conferences results in new trends and developments for the library industry. Attending conferences also helps staff become more professional by giving them invaluable opportunities to stay up to date on the various tools required to carry out their daily tasks, to learn about ideal industries, to pick up new tricks and techniques, and to develop an informed network of coworkers. According to Eke (2011), attending conferences gives librarians the chance to learn about industry concerns and collaborate with elites to stay on top of the newest trends. Doyle (2015) emphasized that attending conferences has a high networking value, strengthens team building, and increases awareness of current and upcoming difficulties in the field. Attending conferences can increase a librarian's job satisfaction, especially if they work in university libraries.

Job satisfaction is characterized as a sense of personal accomplishment and success. Most people agree that it has a direct impact on both personal and professional well-being as well as productivity and performance at work. To be happy at work, one must enjoy what they are doing, perform it effectively, and receive recognition for their efforts (Aziri, 2011). One of the key components of a corporate organization's performance and efficiency is job satisfaction. In fact, a very excellent indicator of the significance of job satisfaction in contemporary businesses is the new management paradigm, which stresses that employees should be regarded first and foremost as individuals with their own wants and personal aspirations. A satisfied employee is a successful employee, according to analysis of work satisfaction, and a successful employee is a happy employee (Aziri, 2011). In firms, supervisors can contribute to greater employee

happiness (Sofijanova & Zabijakin-Chatleska, 2013). According to Babalola (2016), the performance of the organization typically increases as a result of the organizational supervisor receiving more advice from his or her employees. In his study published in Mikkelsen et al. (2015), it was shown that a supervisor's upbeat attitude toward his employees increases staff productivity. According to Naveed, Nadeem, Maryam, and Naqui (2014), attending conferences significantly contributes to an employee's improvement of job satisfaction. According to Oshagbemi (2000), lecturers are happy with their jobs when they are happy with their research and teaching, as well as when they get along well with their coworkers. The fundamental issue is that the training technique, sponsorship, comfort, and convenience employed throughout the training process are the problem, not the workers' acquisition of skill and knowledge via training (attending conferences) and development (Singh, 2015). This is due to the lack of usage of the most effective training methodology and trainer sponsorship. This may be the cause of why workers are still unable to make a significant contribution despite receiving training. Librarians job satisfaction may suffer if the employee's production falls short of expectations. (2011) Stephen and Bowley investigate how training and conference participation affect work satisfaction. The study found a strong correlation between training (attending conferences), development, and work satisfaction. Gazioglu and Tansel (2012) conducted a related study that looks at the connection between training (attending conferences) and work satisfaction. Using ordered probity estimation, the study's findings revealed a strong, positive association between training (attending conferences) and work satisfaction in Britain. Schmidt (2013) discovered a strong correlation between training (attending conferences) and work happiness. Bakare (2012) looked at the relationship between hotel staff job satisfaction and the requirement for training

(conferences). The study discovered a beneficial relationship between conference attendance and work satisfaction.

Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of the study consists of 113 recruited librarians in all the federal universities libraries in South- South Nigeria. A total of 113 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 95 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved using descriptive statistics mean and percentage mean score of 2.5 and above and percentage score of 50% were considered as acceptable.

Table 1

Effects of conference attendance among librarians

Keys: Strongly agreed, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	-x	Decision
1	Professionals experience	42	45	7	1	3.3	Accepted
2	Learn about current events	34	49	10	2	3.1	Accepted
3	Learn about current technology	48	39	7	1	3.4	Accepted
4	Learn about current trend	42	44	6	3	3.3	Accepted
5	Improve job satisfaction	40	41	5	9	3.1	Accepted

The data presented in table 1 revealed that five (5) effects of conference attendance among librarians in the university libraries under study are as follow: professional experience (3.3) learn about current events (3.1), learn about current technology (3.4), learn about current trend (3.3) and improves job satisfaction (3.1) respectively. This is supported with Eke (2011) when she opined that conference attendance affords librarians the opportunity of learning about professional issues and brainstorm with colleagues and elites to keep abreast of the latest trend.

Table 2

The extent of job satisfaction among librarians in attending conference

Key: Highly satisfied, Satisfied, Dissatisfied, Undecided

S/N	Items	HS	S	D	U	-x	Decision
1	It improve relations among librarians	34	47	6	8	3.1	Accepted
2	It open new horizons in the profession	33	49	9	4	3.1	Accepted
3	It helps to recognize the interdependence of knowledge and information	43	38	7	7	3.2	Accepted
4	To improve on their basic education	42	38	9	6	3.2	Accepted
5	To get specializations that is relevant to the needs of the work place.	47	42	6	0	3.4	Accepted

The data presented in table 2 shows that five (5) extent of job satisfaction among librarians in attending conference as follows:. It improves relations among librarians (3.1), it opens new horizon in the profession (3.1), it helps to recognize the interdependence of knowledge and information (3.2), to improve on their basic education (3.4) respectively. This is in line with Ifidon (2007) who asserted that conference attendance brings professional development encourage library and librarian professional development, improve relations among librarians, open new horizons in the profession, and helps to recognize the interdependence of knowledge and information.

Conclusion

This study has established conference attendance as a motivational force for job satisfaction for professional librarians in tertiary institutions. Evidence has shown that conference attendance aids librarians in performing their job and as well be satisfied with it. Findings have been demonstrated that the effects of conference attendance among librarians in the university libraries under study help them to achieve the following: professional experience, learns about current events, and so on and so forth. Also, the study further affirmed that the extend of conference attendance among librarians are: It improves relations among librarians, it opens new horizon in the profession, recognize the interdependence of knowledge and information and to improve on their basic education.

In addition, it gives them the ability to utilize more wealth of professional expertise and experience in performing duties. It makes them diversify by knowledge. It acquaints them with what obtains in sister organization and makes them to achieve tasks goals. The result of the finding agrees with the report of Khanna (2001) who posits that attending conferences whether face-to-face or e-conferencing fulfills part of the library responsibility for staff training and development, broadening their attitudes and permits their exposure to new ideas and events through both formal and informal discussions with other professional colleagues.

Recommendation

The study recommends thus:

1. Parent institutions should try as much as possible to sponsor librarians to conferences to broaden their horizon.
2. Tertiary Education Trust Funds should be disbursed accordingly for the sponsorship of conferences on librarianship.

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