

## ***Librarians' Social Variables and Service Delivery in University Libraries in Cross River State, Nigeria***

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigated the influence of librarians' social variables on service delivery in university libraries in Cross River State, Nigeria. Research design employed for this study is the ex-post facto research design. The population of this study was 263. A sample of 257 library staff was used for the study. The sample technique used for the study was purposive technique. Three null hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance. The instrument used in data collection was questionnaire. Face validity was established by three experts in Test and Measurement. The reliability coefficient of 0.79 was established through Cronbach alpha reliability method. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and independent t-test analysis were the statistical tools used to test the hypotheses. The result of the analysis revealed that librarians' attitude, librarians' perception and librarians' self-concept significantly influenced service delivery in university libraries in Cross River State, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was recommended that university management should employ well trained professionals in the library and also, ensure that proper and regular library orientation programmes are carried out for library users; as this will remind them of the rules governing the use of the library.*

**Keywords:** Librarian, service, delivery, attitude, perception, self-concept

### **Introduction**

All Libraries are dynamic collections where Librarians are expected to exhibit their social variables positively and ethically in the discharge of their duties; in order to

achieve effective service delivery. Professionally, a library is an organized collection where library professionals and para-professionals are engaged and expected to practice relevant social variables conducive for effective service delivery. In the library, the development of effective information delivery system is a key component of university teaching and learning (Odu & Afebende, 2015).

Librarians' social variables are instrumental models pertaining to the influence of mutual factors of librarian's mindset, behaviour and perception towards job specifications in the library. Based on this process, each profession implants their basic moral principles which define the professional mission and vision of the viewed profession. Gorman (2000) highlighted that the library professionals are embedded with the following variables of librarianship: stewardship, protection of intellectual properties, rationalism, literacy, learning, information freedom, equity access, regards to information source, information privacy. The above mentioned variables are in compliance with the principles of ideology in information service delivery.

Ottong and Edem (2017) explained that Library is an institution, an establishment, a storehouse of knowledge, or a building housing collections of information resources. Here, library must have trained and qualified librarians to preserve this information resource and the librarian should have acceptable attitude that is in accordance to information needs of the user. The context of attitude to librarianship implies that librarians ought to be persons worthy of public trust. They should be experts who mediate between collections contents and patrons, studying user needs in order to promote innumerable tasks to the attainment of library goals. The foundation of the librarian's pursuit of duty is determined generally by the expectations of the parent body guided by community needs. Therefore, the responsibilities of the librarians are to understand the behavioural pattern of the users so as to adopt appropriate approach and ensure functionality of service delivery in the library.

The service concept defines "what" "how" and "when" service is delivered, and helps facilitate between customers' needs and an organization's strategy. User feedback is one of the most effective ways used in the assessment of library services delivery, as this is one of the ways in which a library can remain relevant to the communities served. 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 perception and possibly 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

Odu and Afukidang (2019) conducted a research work on Academic Staff Perception and Attitude towards Utilization of Library Resources and Services in the Cross River State College of Education, Akamkpa. The population consists of academic staff in the college. There was a total of 222 academic staff in the 2017/2018 academic session out of which 216 were accessible for the study. Questionnaire and direct observation methods was the instrument used for data collection. Direct observation was used to study the record of registered library users for 2017/2018 academic session who were academic staff. The researchers administered the questionnaire directly in the respective staff offices within a five-week period. Simple percentages were used to analyse the data collected. Academic staff had a negative opinion of library resources and services, thus apathy toward library use, and only 10% of academics were registered library users, according to the survey. It was suggested that the library's resources should be examined with the aim of finding and correcting any deficiencies.

Okonedo and Popoola (2012) conducted a study on the effects of self-concept, information sharing, and utilization on librarians' research output in a public institution in South-West Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was utilized; 174 people were chosen for the study, and 134 copies of the questionnaires were returned. The findings revealed that librarians had a somewhat positive self-concept. There were relative impacts of self-concept ( $\beta=0.253$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) and knowledge usage ( $\beta= 0.216$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) on research productivity of librarians at a public university in the Southwest, while knowledge sharing ( $\beta= -0.144$ ,  $P >0.05$ ) was not relatively significant on research productivity. It was found that librarians with a good self-concept and who successfully use knowledge received through information sharing produce high research productivity. It was recommended that internal seminars and workshops should be held on a quarterly basis, with each librarian expected to present a high-quality paper. This will encourage knowledge sharing and will increase librarians' zeal to utilize knowledge and also have more research publications.

### **Statement of the problems**

Libraries utmost value is service delivery. Librarians, being the custodian of intellectual contents in the library, are to showcase positive social variables towards the attainment of library goals. Intellectual properties of libraries were to be analysed in the proper environment for users' accessibility without any form of restrictions. Observations from interaction with librarians seem to point to the fact that service delivery in libraries has dropped seriously. Perhaps this may be occasionally caused by the inability of librarians to adequately exhibit their job social variables properly.

Despite management's efforts to implement effective library service delivery, poor trends such as lack of conducive working variables are indicators of poor service delivery. What propelled this research is to x-ray how librarians' social factors affect library users, and how their variables promote service delivery. These factors form the basic problems that the researcher is poised to investigate and address, by carrying out this study, title: Librarians' social variables and Service delivery in University Libraries.

### **Purpose of the study**

1. To ascertain how librarians' attitude influence service delivery in the university libraries.
2. To examine how librarians' perception influence service delivery in University libraries.
3. To find out how librarians' self-concept influence service delivery in University libraries.

### **Research questions**

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent does librarians' attitude influence service delivery in University libraries?
2. How do these exert any influence of librarians' perceptions on service delivery in University Libraries?
3. To what extent does librarians' self-concept influence service delivery in University Libraries?

### **Hypotheses**

**Ho1:** There is no significant influence of librarians' attitude on service delivery in University libraries.

**Ho2:** There is no significant influence of Librarians' perception on service delivery in University libraries

**Ho3:** There is no significant influence of Librarian's self-concept on service delivery in University libraries.

### **Methodology**

This study was carried out in the University of Calabar (UNICAL) library and Cross River University of Technology (CRUTECH) library. Census technique was used. A research instrument titled: Librarians' Social Variables and Service Delivery Questionnaire (LSVSDQ), was used to gather data for the study. The face validity of the instrument was determined by three experts in Test and Measurement. Data

obtained from a pilot test of the instrument were analyzed using Cronbach’s Alpha Co-efficient to determine its internal consistency. The reliability figures for the different sub-scales range from .79 to .80 showing that the instrument was high enough for it to be used for the study. The data gathered was analysed using t-test and ANOVA.

**Presentation of results**

**Ho1:** There is no significant influence of librarians’ attitude on service delivery in University libraries.

The independent variable in this hypothesis is librarians’ attitude while the dependent variable is service delivery. Independent t-test analysis was adopted to test this hypothesis. The result is presented in table 1.

**Table 1:** Independent t-test analysis of the influence of librarians’ attitude on service delivery in University libraries (N=257)

<b>Librarians’ attitude</b>	<b>N</b>	$\bar{x}$	<b>SD</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Negative	146	34.75	3.22	-7.949*	.000
Positive	111	37.76	2.69		

\* Significant at P< .05 level, df = 255.

The result on Table 1 revealed that the calculated t-value of -7.949 was higher than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance with 255 degree of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of librarians’ attitude on service delivery in University libraries was rejected. This result therefore implied that Librarians’ attitude significantly influences service delivery in University libraries.

**Ho2:** There is no significant influence of Librarians’ perception on service delivery in University libraries.

The independent variable in this hypothesis is Librarians’ perception (high and low); while service delivery in university libraries is the dependent variable. Independent t-test analysis was adopted to test this hypothesis. The result is presented in table 2.

**Table 2:** Independent t-test analysis of the influence of Librarians' perception on service delivery in University libraries (N=257)

<b>Librarians' perception</b>	<b>N</b>	$\bar{x}$	<b>SD</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>p-value</b>
High	96	36.67	3.34	2.299*	.000
Low	161	35.68	3.26		

\* Significant at P< .05 level, df = 255.

The result on Table 2 revealed that the calculated t-value of 2.299 was higher than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance with 255 degree of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of Librarians' perception on service delivery in University libraries was rejected. This result therefore implied that, Librarians' perception significantly influences service delivery in University libraries.

**Ho3:** There is no significant influence of Librarian's self-concept on service delivery in University libraries.

The independent variable in this hypothesis is Librarian's self-concept; while the dependent variable is service delivery in University libraries. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was the statistical analysis technique used to test this hypothesis. The results of the analysis are presented in table 3.

**Table 3:** Summary of data and one-way ANOVA of the influence of Librarian's self-concept on service delivery in University libraries (N=257)

<b>Librarian's self-concept</b>	<b>N</b>	$\bar{x}$	<b>SD</b>		
Low – 1	74	34.93	3.40		
Moderate – 2	153	36.11	3.32		
High– 3	30	38.50	1.53		
Total	257	36.05	3.34		
<b>Source of variance</b>	<b>SS</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Ms</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig of F</b>
Between group	273.069	2	136.535	13.383*	.000
Within group	2591.273	254	10.202		
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 13.383 was higher than the critical F-value of 3.00 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, Librarian’s self-concept significantly influences service delivery in University libraries.

Since Librarian’s self-concept has significant influence on service delivery in University libraries, a post hoc analysis was carried out using Fishers’ Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 4. The result of the analysis in Table 4 showed that library staff whose self-concept is low is significantly different in their job performance from those whose self-concept is either moderate or high. Also library staff whose self-concept are moderate are significantly different in service delivery from those who are high in self concept in University libraries.

**Table 4:** Fishers’ Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis of the influence of Librarian’s self-concept on service delivery in University libraries

<b>(I) Librarian’s self-concept</b>	<b>(J) Librarian’s self-concept</b>	<b>Mean Difference (I-J)</b>	<b>Std. Error</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Low	Moderate	-1.17868(*)	.45226	.010
	High	-3.56757(*)	.69132	.000
Moderate	Low	1.17868(*)	.45226	.010
	High	-2.38889(*)	.63776	.000
High	Low	3.56757(*)	.69132	.000
	Moderate	2.38889(*)	.63776	.000

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

### **Discussion of the findings**

The purpose of this section is to discuss the findings that were discovered as a result of the analysis. The discussion is organized according to the study's variables.

The result of the first hypothesis study indicated that, librarians’ attitude significantly influenced service delivery in Universities library. The finding is in line with the view of Peter, Japhet and Daniel (2015) who observed that the right attitude, coupled with effective staff motivation, provides operative information service delivery without any discrimination in the public universities’ libraries in Kenya. Stokic (2018) also identified librarians' attitudes toward establishment and implementation of users’ relationship management (URM) in the academic libraries of Iran and study its effective and inhibiting components. Among the identified components in the establishment of users’ relationship management from the viewpoints of librarians,

"organizing" with the mean rate of 0.928 was recognized as the most important component affecting the establishment of URM in the academic libraries.

The second hypothesis found that librarians' perceptions influenced service delivery in university libraries significantly. This study's findings are consistent with those of Odu and Afebende (2015), who discovered that using directional signs to direct users to various divisions and parts of the library is a beneficial publicity variable. According to Upev and Beetseh (2017), librarians' activities in higher education are influenced by norms, including ethical and legal ones; ethical aspects of the information profession should be considered for professional practice and information services by librarians.

The finding is also with agreement with Dahleez and Mohammad (2016) who state that the impact of library job Engagement is in support with job performance in Islamic University of Northern Nigeria. The results of this survey revealed that librarians' job engagement with their academic institutions was extremely high. The findings also revealed that professionals' understanding of the perceived organizational assistance provided by these academic institutions was on par with the national average. Furthermore, the findings revealed that librarians performed a high percentage of appropriate and library task performance. The research also revealed statistically significant links between employment engagement in libraries, perceived organizational support, and task performance. In light of these findings, the study suggested that Academic Libraries Institutions should provide additional support to their parents' institutions and evaluate their impressions of this support on a regular basis. The study also recommended strengthening of the human relationships between librarians and users, enhancing their feeling of essential accessibility, for services delivery that promotes institutional needs.

The result of the third hypothesis indicated that, Librarian's self-concept have a significant influence on service delivery in University libraries. The findings support Marsh and Seeshing (2017) who observed that individuals with positive self-concept evaluate themselves positively and are likely to make favourable implications about themselves. In other view, a librarian with a negative self-concept with regards to delivery is likely to take negative feedback as an indication that she is certainly incapable in her profession and is likely to feel more discouraged in future endeavours. Self-concept also aids in self-regulation and determining appropriate attitude towards attaining goals. Based on this, clientele's understanding and ability to make predictions about his information procure at a particular time is more essential. Boulter (2002) further submitted that a positive self-concept helps maintain a favorable impression of the person and serves to minimize pain and maximize pleasure for

prospective outcome. A positive self-concept serves as a protective factor and encourages growth towards happiness.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the study, it is concluded that Librarians' Social Variables have influence on their Service Delivery in University Libraries in Cross River State, Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

On the basis of the findings of this research, the recommendations suggested are as follows:

1. University management should employ well trained professionals in the library. Librarians should perform their jobs in an ethical and morally justifiable manner, while also ensuring that library users get proper and frequent library orientation or user education programmes, which will remind them of the rules governing the use of the library.

2. The 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.

3. Librarians should offer quality and maximum-level service to users by responding to all requests for assistance in a courteous, timely, adequate, competent, accurate, and unbiased manner.

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