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## Information and communication technology (ICT) competencies and job performance of librarians in some selected university libraries in North Central of Nigeria

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# **Information and communication technology (ICT) competencies and job performance of librarians in some selected university libraries in North Central of Nigeria**

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## **Abstract**

The study investigated the era of ICT competencies and job performance of librarians in some selected university libraries in North Central of Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consists of 171 professional and para professional librarians from Francis Sarwuan Tarka University library and Benue State University library. A total of 171 questionnaires were distributed only 133 were retrieved. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics mean and percentage mean score of 2.5 and above and percentage score of 50% were considered. The study revealed that ICT competencies possessed by Librarians are digital literacy skills, professional skills, computer skills and information retrieval skills. The study also affirmed that the ICT competencies as regards job performance of librarians are it enhanced service delivery, facilitates library administration, increases efficiency, reduced stress and also increases librarian's confidence on the job. The study also revealed the challenges in developing and applying ICT competencies in respect to job performance as outdated and inadequate tools equipment, poor ICT skills because of lack of up to date and latest training, and insufficient access to ICT tools due to limited time on exposure to some of the equipments like the computer. The study recommends that librarians should be sensitized and provided training on digital literacy so as to improve their job output, there should be adequate provision of digital facilities in the library to encourage library staff to use them both for their personal need and meeting the needs of their users, and to align with global best practices, academic libraries should deploy approved library management software and packages for efficient and effective services to their patrons.

**Keywords: ICT Competencies, Job performance, Librarians, University Libraries; North Central; Nigeria**

## **Introduction**

The university libraries play a crucial role in helping tertiary institutions reach their aims and objectives of meeting students' information demands while also supporting their academic, intellectual, and extracurricular interests. The librarians must be present on the ground for this to be possible. According to Damilola et al. (2018), librarianship is viewed as a profession devoted to helping the public by offering timely and correct information and assisting in the advancement of society. If they want to succeed, librarians need to have a specific set of skills. Because of the impact of the ICT environment, the paradigm of librarianship has evolved in this digital age. Modern technology has an impact on library operations and services as well as the attitudes of library workers.

The mix of talents, knowledge, skills, and behavior connected to library technologies that are crucial for both professional performance and organizational success is what APLEN (2008) characterized as the core ICT competences for LIS practitioners. According to Mathews and Pardue (2009), in order for a library professional to exist in this increasingly globalized world, they must be skilled in the following ICT skills, such as web technology, system application, application software, and professional competencies like LMS, digitization, and RFID security system. ICT competences of librarians refer to those computer and/or technical know-how and abilities needed by librarians to adequately utilize information services in the wake of new technologies. ICT capabilities of library employees were considered by Oyedokun, Oyewumi, Akanbi, and Laaro (2018) as those pertinent skills and knowledge that individuals working in libraries needed to learn.

Depending on the activities and responsibilities involved, different positions will require different levels of ICT capabilities. Basic computer proficiency is necessary, for instance, for a librarian to be able to utilize office suites, execute word processing, and navigate toolbars. Librarians working in a web 2.0 setting should be proficient in using a variety of social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, interest, Yahoo, and blogs. Additionally, they must be able to access data from a variety of search engines, including Google and Altavista. According to Kumar (2017), ICT tools used in libraries include security measures like closed-circuit television (CCTV), radio frequency identification (RFID), and quick response (QR) code technology. Communication tools like email, voicemail, telephone, fax, video conferencing, and the internet are also included. Remote control technology also provides a platform to work with a remotely located computer system to access all subscribed e-resources at anytime and anywhere.

Job performance is simply the ability of a person to work efficiently in accordance with the demands of the position to meet the aims and objectives of the business. Igbinovia and Popoola (2016) describe job performance as a collection of employee behaviors that can be seen, measured, and evaluated; the behaviors must be in line with the objectives of the business. Additionally, a mix of qualitative characteristics, such as a person's skills, competences, motivation, and devotion, might affect how well they execute their jobs. at the north-central part of Nigeria, Basahuwa et al. (2020) investigate the ICT abilities and work performance of librarians at public universities. The survey found that there was a very high degree of professional ICT skills. The study came to the conclusion that ICT skills had an impact on how well librarians performed their duties. The research recommended that professional associations and interested parties, including the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) and the Librarian Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN), strengthen their strategies for enhancing librarians' ICT

skills through training and retraining. It is in the light of the above that this title ICT competencies and job performance of librarians in some selected university libraries in North Central of Nigeria is imperative.

### **Statement of the problem**

The technological and/or computer skills and knowledge that librarians need in order to properly utilize information services in the wake of new technologies are known as ICT competences of librarians. Because they must absorb complicated material, librarians must use critical thinking and a methodical approach to make conclusions based on several types of evidence. To keep up with the rapid technological development in their places of employment, librarians will likewise need to continuously upgrade their knowledge and abilities. These skills are crucial for librarians to have in order to deliver quality information services in the digital age and to execute their jobs more effectively. The development and success of university libraries may be influenced by the performance of librarians. Job performance has thus evolved into a crucial determinant of an organization's chances of success or failure. Furthermore, in order to execute their jobs more effectively, 21st-century librarians must have a functional understanding of computers and the internet, or digital literacy. In library services, digital technology enhance job performance, productivity, accuracy, and space efficiency.

Although the use of ICT in libraries and information services is not new, it is concerning that librarians lack the necessary skills. It therefore becomes imperative to survey ICT competencies and job performance of librarians in some selected university libraries in North Central of Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objective of the study is to evaluate ICT competencies and job performance of librarians in some selected university libraries in North Central of Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. To examine the ICT competencies possessed by librarians in some selected university libraries in north central of Nigeria.
2. To find out the ICT competencies that influences job performance of librarians in some selected university libraries in north central of Nigeria.
3. To find out the challenges in developing and applying ICT competencies in respect to job performance of librarians in north central of Nigeria

### **Literature review**

Any library's success depends on the availability of technical tools for librarians to use in the execution of their tasks and on their ability to effectively use ICT technologies to improve their job performance. The technological abilities that librarians need to be able to properly utilize information services in the wake of new technologies are known as ICT competences of librarians. According to Mart (2013), competence refers to the personal qualities that a person either possesses or must develop in order to do an activity in a certain setting. According to Rowe (2007), competence is a collection of information, skills, attitudes, and values required to carry out a job or other productive position.

In this era of globalization, it becomes imperative for librarians to acquire relevant skills and be competent in the application of the skills to the use of ICT in their profession. According to Shibanda (2001), information managers, particularly academic librarians, must capitalize on the benefits of the information age. In order for libraries to serve the ever-demanding customers and for librarians to remain relevant, they must have the necessary ICT skills and competencies.

ICT proficiency affects how well a librarian does their duties. Job performance has traditionally been valued as a key component of managing employees. Job performance has been linked to an employee's capacity to realize their own professional objectives, meet expectations, meet job targets, and/or meet standards established by their employers (Armstrong 2006). The majority of people describe job performance as what an individual performs while at work and at various job phases. Additionally, the intricacy of a job can have an impact on an individual's total performance.

According to Vazirani (2010), personal traits and skills might predict good work performance. ICT proficiency is correlated with work performance, which may be assessed and improved through training, according to Adeleke and Olorunsola (2010). Similar research by Batool and Ameen (2010) revealed a link between work performance and competency, with competency playing a role in both high levels of individual and organizational performance. . According to Ezeama et al. (2014), in the current digital era, librarians are required to adapt at utilizing computers, networking, and the internet in the delivery of library services using digital technologies. The ability of academic librarians to use digital technology in the twenty-first century strongly depends on their capability to possess the requisite skills. However, it has been shown that Nigerian librarians have extremely limited digital literacy abilities and competences when it comes to using digital technology to provide library services (Agim & Azolo, 2019).

In addition, Basahuwa et al. (2020) investigated the ICT proficiency and work performance of librarians in Nigeria's north-central state universities. A survey research design was employed for this investigation. 282 librarians from North-Central Nigeria took part in the study. Total enumeration was used to count the whole population. A standardized questionnaire that has undergone testing was used to obtain the data. 97.5 percent of participants replied, and

the construct's Cronbach's alpha reliability values varied from 0.914 to 0.95. The data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics (multiple regression, frequency distribution, simple percentage, mean, and standard deviation). The results show that ICT skills have a significant impact on librarians' ability to do their jobs effectively. The results also showed that the performance of librarians in their jobs was unaffected by basic ICT skills. The study concluded that librarians' job performance was influenced by their ICT skills.

Additionally, in the South-South area of Nigeria, Oyovwe-Tinuoye et al. (2021) investigated the effect of ICT skills on librarians' work performance. The study employed a descriptive survey approach, with a self-made questionnaire serving as the instrument for collecting data. Five research queries were addressed by the study. 233 librarians are employed by six federal, seven state, and eight private university libraries in the South-South of Nigeria. The study employed a method known as purposive sampling. The data were examined using frequency, percentages, and tables for simpler interpretation and understanding of the findings. The results show that the majority of respondents at the university library gained ICT skills through self-sponsorship. Additionally, it showed that most respondents lacked expertise in areas like system administration, web application development, and tools for system troubleshooting, webinars and digital conferencing, Web 2.0, website design, and digital communication. According to the study, ICT skill training improved service provision, library management, effectiveness, work performance, and reduced working stress.

### **Research methodology**

The study used a questionnaire as its primary data collecting tool and employed a descriptive survey research methodology. 171 professional and paraprofessional librarians from



the libraries of Francis Sarwuan Tarka University and Benue State University make up the study's population. Only 133 of the 171 questionnaires that were provided were actually collected. Using descriptive statistics, the mean and percentage of the data were calculated. A mean score of 2.5 or above and a percentage score of 50% were taken into consideration.

**Table 1**

**Population of the study**

S/N	Institution	Professional librarians	Para professional librarians
1	Francis Sarwuan Tarka University library	30	50
2	Benue State University library.	20	71
	<b>Grand Total 171</b>		

The table 1 above shows the population of the study. Francis Sarwuan Tarka University library has a population of 30 professional librarians and 50 para professional while the Benue State University library has 20 professional librarians and 71 para professional librarians respectively.

**Table 2**

**ICT competencies possessed by Librarians**

Items	SA	A	D	SD	-X	Decision
Digital literacy skills	42	37	29	25	2.7	Accepted
Professional Skills	47	47	21	18	2.9	Accepted
Information search skills	23	44	42	24	2.4	Rejected
Computer skills	53	34	33	13	2.9	Accepted
Information retrieval skills	43	41	21	28	2.7	Accepted

The table 2 above shows the ICT competencies possessed by librarians as digital literacy skills (2.7), professional skills (2.9), computer skills (2.9) and information retrieval skills (2.7) respectively.

**Table 3**  
**ICT competency as regards job performance of librarians**

Items	SA	A	D	SD	-X	Decision
It enhanced service delivery	42	44	21	26	2.9	Accepted
It facilitates library administration	45	46	33	9	2.9	Accepted
It increases efficiency	43	33	21	36	2.6	Accepted
It reduced job stress	34	54	34	11	2.8	Accepted
It increases librarians confidence on the job	44	39	38	12	2.8	Accepted

Table 3 shows the ICT competency as regards job performance of librarians as it enhanced service delivery (2.9), facilitates library administration (2.9), increases efficiency (2.6), i reduced stress (2.8) and also increases librarian’s confidence on the job (2.8)

**Table 4**  
**Challenges in developing and applying ICT competencies in libraries**

Items	SA	A	D	SD	-X	Decision
Outdated and inadequate tools, equipment, software and supplies.	42	34	38	19	2.7	Accepted
Poor ICT skills because of lack of up to date and latest training.	42	42	25	24	2.7	Accepted
Insufficient access to computers due to limited time on exposure to computer operations	47	39	38	9	2.9	Accepted
Depleting health conditions of an employee greatly hamper the employees’ ability to be productive	38	43	23	29	2.6	Accepted
Unwillingness to develop professional and skills growth due to lack of self-confidence and motivation	29	56	34	14	2.7	Accepted

Table 4 identified the challenges in developing and applying computer competencies in libraries as outdated and inadequate tools, equipment, software and supplies (2.7), poor ICT skills because of lack of up to date and latest training (2.7), insufficient access to computers due to limited time on exposure to computer operations (2.9), depleting health conditions of an

employee greatly hamper the employees' ability to be productive (2.6) and the unwillingness to develop professional and skills growth due to lack of self-confidence and motivation respectively.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it could be concluded that most librarians possessed ICT competency which is required for library operations. Furthermore, ICT competency had a positive influence on job performance as it enhances service delivery, facilitates library administration, increases efficiency, reduced job stress and increases librarians confidence on the job. Also, the challenges in developing and applying computer competencies in respect to job performance are outdated and inadequate tools, equipment, software and supplies, poor ICT skills because of lack of up to date and latest training, insufficient access to computers due to limited time on exposure to computer operations, depleting health conditions of an employee greatly hamper the employees' ability to be productive and the unwillingness to develop professional and skills growth due to lack of self-confidence and motivation.

## **Recommendations**

The study recommends thus:

1. To increase the quality of their work, library workers should be trained in digital literacy and made more aware of it.
2. The library should have enough digital resources available to encourage the staff to use them for both their own purposes and serving the needs of their patrons.
3. Academic libraries in north central Nigeria should use recognized library management software and packages to provide their customers with efficient and effective services in line with international best practices.

4. It is imperative that university libraries have enough financing. In a similar vein, these libraries have to consider internal revenue generation strategies.
5. Academic libraries should seriously consider recruiting librarians with digital literacy abilities.

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