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INFLUENCE OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS ON LIBRARIANS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS MENTORING IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH-WEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract
Mentoring is a mechanism that drives every profession to the advancement and accomplishment in the 21st century, librarianship as a profession is not an exception. This study investigated influence of demographic factors on librarian's attitudes towards mentoring in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. All librarians (104) in five Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria formed the population of the study. A total of 104 copies of questionnaire were administered across all the librarians, of which 99 copies, making the response rates of 95.2% was obtained. Data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to generate descriptive statistics (mean, percentages, frequencies and Standard Deviation) to compare and contrast as well as identify tendencies to actualize the objectives of the study. The findings of this study revealed that majority of the librarians in the Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria have a positive attitude towards mentoring. Also, the demographic factors (educational qualification, years of experience, etc.) greatly influenced librarians' attitudes towards mentoring in Federal University in South-west, Nigeria. This study affirmed that majority of the librarians in the Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria have a positive attitude towards mentoring, which is good for the progress and advancement of the profession (librarianship). This study is worthwhile in providing a platform for the library management to set libraries as a pacesetter of mentoring in the universities. This would greatly improve research and publication output of librarians as academic staff.

Keywords: Demographic factors, Librarian's attitudes Mentoring, Federal Universities, South-west, Nigeria.

Introduction

A university is a highest level of educational institution, in which students study for degrees, and academic research is done Sintayehu (2018). Federal Universities are institutions owned by the Federal government and are governed by the Federal educational policies. Generally, universities are saddled with the responsibilities of providing facilities for teaching, learning and research. Consequently, university library is established to provide facilities, services and information resources required to achieve the aim and objectives of university. These facilities are the information resources stocked in the library. The information materials are in print and electronic form. The print information materials are textbooks, journals, indexes, abstracts, newspapers and magazines, reports etc., while, the electronic form of information materials are e-journals, e-indexes, e-abstracts, e-newspapers and e-magazines, CD-ROM databases, videotapes/cassettes, diskettes, magnetic disk, computers among others.

However, librarians are the human resources in the library and the principal staff who are saddled with the responsibility of providing the information resources in the library for users. In other word, for universities to adequately discharge their duties, their libraries must be greatly equipped with vital information materials and personnel capable of meeting diverse information needs of users. That is, all the functions of the university can be carried or achieved through its library. The duties and responsibilities of librarians in university are effectively carried out due to certain traits or characteristics (attitudes) that they possess. These traits include but not limited to: love for knowledge and learning, empathy, friendliness, being approachable, courteous, creativity prowess, ability to work under pressure, searching skills, eloquence, ethical, versatility, resilience, objective, etc. Possessing the aforementioned traits, will enable users make good use of library resources and services, such that their information needs are met.

The attitudes of librarians in the provision of library services to users in the library to an extent can influence or make users to determine whether to use the library or not. The attitudes of librarians could be positive or negative. A good or positive attitudes could intensify the level of use of the information resources in the library by users. Most importantly, librarians' attitudes could also enhance the idea of mentoring in the library. Mentoring in library could take place between the senior librarians and the library officers or between the University Librarian, professional, and paraprofessionals (library officer cadre) in the library. The continuous mentoring of librarians to manage the information resources in the library is imperative. The library staff create the caliber of services that determines the prospect of the library; whether, the library will be dynamic, static, or an information powerhouse (Allyson et al., 2016).

According to Ozioko, Nwabueze and Igwesi (2013), from the university librarian to the rest of the librarians, each has a specific role to play. The extent to which the corporate goal is achieved depends on the professional capability and activities of each member. Mentoring in the library creates an opportunity for librarians, especially the unskilled staff to learn and developed their skills. Mentoring enable librarians and other members of staff to be effective in their job. Oluwabiyi (2020) opines that professional librarians should be able to articulate the vision, mission and direction of their libraries. They have to learn and keep learning new skills to help them assist readers and seekers of information most especially in this information technology age.

In term of research and publication, which is major requirement expected of librarians, mentoring strategies are also ideal for providing librarians the required skills for research and publication needed for their promotion and career progression. Mentoring, as explained by Darwin and Palmers (2019), is a process whereby an experienced senior staff member helps to develop technical, interpersonal and organizational skills of a less experienced junior staff member, who is called the protégé (mentee). A study by Nassali (2019) on the effect of coaching and mentoring new librarians in Makerere University, East Africa reveals that through guidance over procedural obstacles and challenges, new librarians' opinion changed from perceiving Library and Information Science as 'desert' profession to seeing it as more challenging. The respondents afterwards developed love for the profession and became proud librarians.

Considering the rapid development in the field of librarianship particularly with the emerging information and communication technologies (ICTs) coupled with a highly demanding library user population, the need for competent and effective leadership in librarianship cannot be over emphasised. The study of leadership issues is important to be able to decide on the type of leadership needed to move librarianship forward. Therefore, the experience and knowledge of seasoned professionals need to be imparted on the upcoming librarians to bring about the needed growth in the profession. The leadership competencies associated with mentoring should form a necessary component of the knowledge base and skills set for librarians, to bring about the needed professional growth and development (Nwankwo, Ike& Anozie, 2017). However, the demographic factors and attitudes of the librarians could be seen asan enabler of achieving the aforementioned objectives.

Therefore, it should be noted that demographic factors in this study are; gender, age, marital status, educational qualification and years of experience.

Gender is the identity of a person such as a male or a female. In library, gender rate is always of different percentages. Library "A" may have more males, while library "B" may have more females. Oluwabiyi (2020) opines that a mentor must have an open mind without any bias. That is, a good mentor must not exhibit gender bias. Age is of different categories such as children, teenagers, adolescents and adults. However, studies on cataloguers' demographics factors reveal that cataloguers were older in age compared to other categories of librarians (Regins & Scandura, 2014).Marital status, on the other hand, is characterised as single, married, divorce and widow. Marital status is associated with the level of experience of the librarians, which also adds value to mentoring in the library. The educational qualification is the level of education attained by the librarians. Educational qualification is a factor of learning, knowledge, experience and discipline. The educational qualifications equip librarians in mentoring process in the library. Also, librarian's years of experience is a determinant of effective mentoring to inexperienced staff in the library. These categories of staff could be new librarians, paraprofessionals and operational staff such as clerical staff, typist, messenger and security staff. While Young and Perrewe (2014) pointed out the importance of demographic factors, Hegstrad (2018) equally emphasized influence of demographic factors on mentoring The influence of demographic factors on mentoring has also been a matter of conjecture and limited literature to enlighten the impact of demographic variables and mentoring.

Statement of Problem

Mentoring has been said to be a tool for professional and self-actualisation goals. It helps to challenge mentees' thinking, increase self-awareness, improve mentees' ability to create relationships and improve their level of competence. Librarians need to have positive attitudes towards mentoring as this helps to discover talents, skills and potentials in early career librarians as well as identify their weaknesses and challenges such that these weaknesses and challenges are then worked upon. In a way to underscore the importance of mentoring, the Nigerian Academy of Science (NAS) recently opened application for mentoring programmes. This will enhance early career researchers (ECRs) in higher academic institutions (NAS, 2023).However, personal investigation by the researchers in some academic libraries in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria established that librarians in most of the academic libraries have poor attitudes towards mentoring ECR sin library. The consequence of the poor mentoring attitudes affects the dispositions of ECRs in library to work, which in turn disenables them to effectively discharge their duties, and inhibits their

professional development. This has equally affected their research and publication output. Could librarians' demographic factors (such as gender, age, marital status, educational qualification and years of experience) influence their attitudes towards mentoring? Thus, this calls for research. Another noticeable issue was that librarians were not conversant with the concept of mentoring practices in libraries, which could boost their research prowess. It is on this premise that this study investigates influence of demographic factors on attitudes of librarians towards mentoring in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

i. Find out the demographic characteristics of librarians in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria;
ii. determine the attitudes of librarians towards mentoring in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria; and
iii. investigate the influence of demographic factors (gender, age, marital status, educational qualifications and years of experience) on librarian's attitude towards mentoring in selected Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions were drawn to guide the study

1. What are the demographic characteristics of librarians in selected Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria?
2. What is/are the attitudes of librarians towards mentoring in selected Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria?
3. What is/are the influence of demographic factors on librarians' attitudes towards mentoring in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study revolves round the importance attached to mentoring in librarianship being a mechanism for achieving high research and publication output of librarians. Although studies on mentoring in librarianship have been conducted, however, no comprehensive study had been conducted on librarians' demographic factors and attitudes towards mentoring, particularly in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria. Therefore, the results of this study would contribute to a better understanding of the role mentoring could play particularly in the area of career progression and research and publication output of librarians. The outcome of this research will encourage the university library

management to establish mentoring relationships in the university libraries. Such relationships will enhance staff training internally thereby saving resources. Younger librarians will benefit from this study as it will open their eyes to why mentoring is germane for their career growth and development. In the same vein, older librarians will see reasons to pass on their experiences and knowledge to younger librarians in the field.

Review of Related Literature

The research literature is discussed under the following themes:

- Concept of Mentoring and relevance in Libraries
- Librarians' attitude towards mentoring

Concept of Mentoring and Relevance in Libraries

A mentor is a person who has acquired certain knowledge with experience and understands the need of others who desire to acquire similar knowledge and is willing to pass on the experience to them; a role model. Mentors teach responsible conduct explicitly and by example - mentoring involves verbal and practical demonstration. Mentors assist the mentees in understanding and adhering to the standards of conduct within their profession. Mentoring is one of the primary means for one generation to impart their knowledge to succeeding generations. However, both the mentor and the mentee have responsibilities for the success of the process. A "culture of mentoring" should be visible in all directions up and down the hierarchical chain in the library or any organization from support staff to management.

Mentoring relationship is mutually beneficial for the mentee, mentor and the organization. As Oluwabiyi (2020) puts it, "a good mentor should be wise, well informed, thoughtful, nice and influential, and all of the social and political aspects of library science and their implications as well as the issues and nuances of all subfields in the discipline should be well understood". For example, mentoring relationships can take various dimensions depending on the structure, function and content. There are two categories of the forms of mentoring strategies that are available for professional development of librarians i.e. traditional or informal, and formal mentoring (Nwabueze & Anike, 2016). Mentoring develops learning opportunity, gives analytical and reflective skills, and could take traditional or informal form such as; one-to-one, face-to-face relationship where selection is dependent on the personal choice of the mentor or the mentee (Idoko et al, 2016; Sodipe & Madukoma, 2013). Mentoring orients younger librarians in the field, addresses diverse questions of mid-career librarians as well as promotes

greater self-awareness and more informed decision making and solutions (Gray, Garvey & Larry, 2016; Martorana et.al, 2014). The essence of establishing mentoring program in any organization including university libraries according to Ugwuanyi (2013) in Idoko, Ugwuanyi & Osadebe (2016), is for professional support and development so that the librarians would improve their services to their users.

Librarians' Attitude towards Mentoring

Many scholars (Eyitayo, Bamidele & Aremu, 2015; Idoko, et al. 2016; Nwabueze & Anike, 2016) had conducted several studies on attitudes and mentoring, and their findings underscored the importance of mentoring in librarianship. Attitudes in general affect both management and staff. However, executives' attitudes have a strong and direct impact on employees. As Kreitner and Kinicki (2017) mentioned, employees feel their managers' attitudes and respond accordingly. Harrell (2014) posits that negative attitudes produce low worker morale and low productivity, while positive attitudes provide increased productivity, high morale and motivated response. The attitudes of librarians are an important force that can change the shape of libraries and information services in any library. Study of attitudes of librarians is of significance because if people that are responsible for implementing change respond poorly to it, then the anticipated effectiveness of using ICTs will not be achieved. The above researchers have further reported that the attitudes people have towards change determine their response to change. Failure to consider these attitudes leads to adversities and organizational losses. It is, therefore, imperative to have an understanding of complex and varied attitudes of librarians towards mentoring. Of literature reviewed, it could be observed that there is dearth of literature on demographic factors and attitudes of librarians towards mentoring, specifically on Federal University in South West, Nigeria. The gap this study seeks to cover.

Research Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey research approach. Survey research design entails gathering relevant data from the sample to the entire population. The respondents were the Librarians in five selected Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria using total enumeration method. The study population was 104. Therefore, a total of 104 copies of questionnaire were administered, of which 99 were filled and returned. The questionnaire was made up of two sections- Sections "A" which examines Demographic Information while, Section "B" comprises questions to obtain the opinions of the respondents

on attitudes of librarians towards mentoring. The research instrument was a self-developed scale by the researchers and the reliability coefficient for the instruments was tested to be 0.94 using Cronbach-Alpha method. The questionnaire was pre tested on librarians in another federal university in North Central, Nigeria which was not included in the study. The data collected for this study were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to generate descriptive statistics (mean, percentages, frequencies and Standard Deviation) to compare and contrast as well as identify tendencies to actualize the objectives of the study.

Data Analysis

Data were analysed as they related to the specific areas of the study using descriptive and inferential statistics such as simple percentages and Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis.

Research question 1: What are the demographic characteristics (gender, age, marital status, educational qualifications and years of experience) of librarians in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria?

Table 1: Demographic variables of respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	48	48.5
Female	51	51.5
Total	**99**	**100.0**
Age		
Below 25 years	16	16.2
25-35 years	35	35.4
36-45 years	30	30.3
45 years and above	18	18.2
Total	**99**	**100.0**
Marital status		
Single	19	19.2
Married	54	54.5
Divorced	9	9.1
Widow	17	17.2
Total	**99**	**100.0**
Highest Educational Qualification		
Masters	65	65.7
Ph.D	34	34.3
Total	**99**	**100.0**
Years of experience		
0-5 years	30	30.3
6-10 years	43	43.4
11 years and above	26	26.3
Total	**99**	**100.0**

Gender analysis of the respondents indicates that majority 51(51.5%) of the respondents are female, while the remaining 48(48.5%) were male. Librarians who are within the age range of 25-35 years, 35(35.4%), constituted the highest number of the respondents. This is followed by the age range of 36-45 years, 30(30.3%). Following this, were those in the age range of 45 years and above, 18(18.3%) and followed by 16(16.2%) that were below 25 years. This implies that the majority of the respondents are still in their active years of service and that they still have more years to spend in their work places. Majority of the respondents are married librarians 54(54.5%), while 19(19.2%) respondents were single, followed by

17(17.2%) that were widow and the least 9(9.1%) were divorced. Respondents with master's degree constituted the highest number with 75(75.8%), followed by PhD holders 24(24.2%), from the table, it is shown that no respondent indicated first degree, which could as a result of requesting them to state their highest qualification. Generally, the result implies that the studied libraries have highly qualified staff. Majority of respondents 43(43.4%) had worked for 6-10 years, followed by 30(30.3%) that had work for 0-5 years, and followed by 26(26.3%) that had worked for 11 years and above.

Research question 2: What is the attitudes of librarians towards mentoring in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria?

Table 2: Attitudes of librarians towards mentoring in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria.

S/n	Attitude towards mentoring	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D
	Positive						
1	Mentoring is a good way of helping new members to understand their roles	59(59.6%)	35(35.4%)	4(4.0%)	1(1.0%)	3.54	.628
2	Mentoring is a useful way of building skills	55(55.6%)	42(42.4%)	2(2.0%)	-	3.54	.540
3	Librarians generally learn most from observing colleagues	51(51.5%)	35(35.4%)	13(13.1%)	-	3.38	.710
4	Training provides valuable support for new librarians.	51(51.5%)	45(45.5%)	3(3.0%)	-	3.48	.560
5	Effective mentors provide examples from their own Experience.	56(56.6%)	35(35.4%)	8(8.1%)	-	3.48	.645
6	Effective mentors help mentees to identify their strengths and weaknesses.	51(51.5%)	41(41.4%)	6(6.1%)	1(1.0%)	3.43	.657
7	Successful mentoring leads To improved mentee self-confidence.	50(50.5%)	38(38.4%)	11(11.1%)	-	3.39	.682
8	I have a good knowledge about mentoring	40(40.4%)	51(51.5%)	8(8.1%)	-	3.32	.620
9	I am aware that mentoring has numerous benefits	48(48.5%)	48(48.5%)	3(3.0%)	-	3.45	.558

10	I have benefited immensely from mentoring	40(40.4%)	48(48.5%)	10(10.1%)	1(1.0%)	3.28	.686
11	I am indifferent about mentoring	42(42.4%)	39(39.4%)	10(10.1%)	8(8.1%)	3.16	.911
12	I see mentoring as key towards achieving self-actualization and organizational goals	43(43.4%)	37(37.4%)	18(18.2%)	1(1.0%)	3.23	.780
	Negative						
13	I do not see mentoring as key towards achieving self-actualization and organizational goals	20(20.2%)	11(11.1%)	37(37.4%)	31(31.3%)	2.20	1.097
14	I feel there is no need for mentoring younger librarian because they will equally learn on the job	21(21.2%)	11(11.1%)	43(43.4%)	24(24.2%)	2.29	1.062
15	Mentoring is a waste of time, as the time incurred on mentees can be channeled towards achieving other things	3(3.0%)	9(9.1%)	53(53.5%)	34(34.3%)	1.81	.724
16	Mentoring is not my thing	1(1.0%)	19(19.2%)	48(48.5%)	31(31.3%)	1.90	.735
17	I haven't benefited anything from mentoring as I haven't been mentored by anyone	4(4.0%)	9(9.1%)	60(60.6%)	26(26.3%)	1.91	.716
18	People can achieve whatever they want to achieve without being mentored	1(1.0%)	17(17.2%)	40(40.4%)	41(41.4%)	1.78	.763

Table 2 reveals the attitudes of librarians towards mentoring in selected Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria. Majority of the librarians have a positive attitudes towards mentoring as they agreed that mentoring is a good way of helping new members to understand their roles and mentoring is a useful way of building skills (Mean=3.54 and Mean=3.54) respectively; A significant number of the respondents attitudes was that training provides valuable support for new librarians and effective mentors provide examples from their own experience (mean=3.48 and Mean=4.48) respectively; while a notable number of the librarians (mean=3.45) also indicated that they are aware that mentoring has numerous benefits.

Research question 3: Which of the demographic characteristic/s influence/s librarian's attitudes towards mentoring in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria?

Table 3: Influence of demographic factors on librarian's attitudes towards mentoring

Demographic factors	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Educational qualifications	60	60.6
Years of experience	35	35.4
Gender	15	15.2
Marital status	5	5.1
Age	0	0

Note: Respondent chose more than one option

From Table 3, it is revealed that 66.6% agreed that educational qualification shaped librarian's attitudes towards mentoring, followed by 35.4% who indicated that years of experience contribute to librarian's attitudes towards mentoring, 15.2% said gender determines attitudes of librarians towards mentoring, while 5.1% said marital status helps in shaping the attitudes of librarians towards mentoring. However, no respondent indicated age as one of the demographic factors that determine that attitudes of librarians towards mentoring. in Federal Universities in South-west, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The study was designed to examine librarians' attitudes and demographic factors towards mentoring in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria. From the study, it could be inferred that the Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria under consideration recruits more female staff 51(51.5%) than the male counterparts and librarians who are within the age range of 25-35 years, 35(35.4%), constituted the highest number of the respondents. Majority of the respondents are married librarians and respondents with master's degree constituted the highest number with 75(75.8%). This implies that the studied libraries have highly qualified staff. Majority of respondents 43(43.4%) had worked for 6-10 years, which mean they are librarians with years of experience.

Findings revealed that majority of the librarians have positive attitudes towards mentoring as they agreed that mentoring is a good way of helping new members to understand their roles, and is a useful way of building skills, training provides valuable support for new librarians and effective mentors provide

examples from their own experience. This finding agreed with the findings of Idoko et al. (2016) and Oluwabiyi (2020), who noted that the essence of establishing mentoring program in any organisation including university libraries is for professional support and development so that the librarians would improve their services to their users. The mentor must have passed through different stages in the profession and advanced successfully. Idoko et al. (2016) mentioned that mentoring develops learning opportunity, gives analytical and reflective skills, develops organizational and professional knowledge, and reinforces self-confidence and willingness to take risks, offers ability to accept criticism, and accelerates professional development. Findings revealed that demographic factors (such as educational qualification, years of experience) influenced attitudes of librarians towards mentoring librarians' attitudes towards mentoring. However, age did not influence attitudes of librarians towards mentoring in federal university in South-West, Nigeria.

Conclusion

Librarians in university or any academic library are catalysts that accomplished the mission and visions of the University library in terms of teaching, learning and research. Library services are provided to users in an effective way by the Librarians and others supportive staff in the library as a result of attitudes of the Librarians in mentoring other librarians that are new in the profession and the supportive staff. The idea is to help develop technical, interpersonal and organisational skills of a less experienced junior staff member in the library. This is because lack of mentoring by librarians will affect the activities and services provided to users such that there will not be effective service delivery in the library. Nevertheless, this study has established that the demographic factors of librarians such as gender, age, marital status, educational qualification and years of experience do not correlate with librarians' attitudes towards mentoring in the library. However, this can be so because attitude is a strong inbuilt factor of the librarians that cannot be predicted.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of this study:

1. Library management should make it a point of duty to encourage well experienced librarians to mentor the younger librarians, particularly in the area of teaching and research which is required as a major criterion for promotion in Federal Universities in Nigeria.
2. Librarians should improve on their educational qualification to enable them

have more knowledge about librarianship as a profession and to be a good mentor to other staff that are new in the profession.

3. Library management should organize library as a pace setter of mentoring in the university by organizing from time to time training on mentoring. This will assist greatly ECRs in library in the areas of teaching and research.

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