

Full Length Research

Work Engagement and Productivity of Librarians in University Libraries in South-South, Nigeria

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This study examined the work engagement and productivity of librarians in university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. Three specific objectives and three research questions were raised to guide the study. The study employed a descriptive research design. The population of this study comprised 106 librarians from 15 federal and state university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. A sample of 86 respondents drawn from the 15 selected university libraries in Bayelsa, Delta and Edo States was used for the study. Participants for the study were drawn using the purposive sampling techniques. The data obtained from the copies of the questionnaires retrieved from the respondents were analysed using frequency counts and percentages. The study revealed that work engagement significantly influences librarians' job performance and productivity. The findings also showed positive interpersonal relationships among librarians contribute significantly to collaborate, motivate, job performance, and overall workplace productivity. It was recommended in the study that Library administrators should foster positive interpersonal relationships through teamwork, cooperation, and mutual respect to improve workplace efficiency.

Key words: Work Engagement, productivity, librarians, university, South-South, Nigeria

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INTRODUCTION

Work engagement plays a crucial role in determining the general productivity of workers in any organization. Work engagement occurs when librarians perceive their daily work tasks as meaningful, have a positive attitude, and are committed, enthusiastic, and passionate about their job. It equips employees with necessary skills to work for the company with specific job roles for desired organizational results, all while being actively involved in their work (Akinola, 2020). Work engagement measures how engaged individuals are in the tasks required for their job and is strongly linked to their job performance. The terms employee engagement and work engagement are often used synonymously. Work engagement pertains to how an employee connects with their work personally, while employee engagement relates to the connection between the employee and their organization (Tisu et al., 2020). Work engagement refers to the extent to which employees dedicate their full energy to tasks associated with their job. Work engagement is defined as a confident attitude or a positive mind set while working that contributes to positive work-related results. Librarians have a crucial role in overseeing extensive knowledge collections, and their expertise in organizing and retrieving information is vital for addressing the varied requirements of library patrons. Furthermore, interpersonal skills are becoming more and more crucial in the field of library science. Librarians serve as educators, collaborators, and advocates in addition to being information providers in their communities. Effective communication skills are crucial for engaging with patrons, grasping their information needs,

and offering personalized assistance. Librarians can improve library services and resources by working effectively with colleagues, faculty, and other stakeholders through collaboration skills (Laguna et al., 2017).

Employees who are engaged exhibit a state of mind at work that is positive and fulfilling, featuring energy, focus, resilience, dedication, and absorption in their tasks. Dedication involves employees actively engaging in a task, feeling a sense of ownership, displaying passion, and being motivated by the work. Employee absorption means that workers are fully concentrated on their tasks, feeling time pass without wanting to stop working. This indicates that dedicated employees are energetic in completing tasks and they offer a sense of reliability that managers can rely on. Librarians working in university libraries in Delta state, show a high level of dedication to their job, indicating progress and advancement within the organization. It has offered insight that will help university and other higher education employees understand their work engagement levels and ways to prevent job burnout. Nonetheless, library management in university libraries in Delta State, should motivate librarians to uphold positive work engagement behaviour (Akinola, 2020). Many scholars view work engagement as the active engagement and involvement of individuals in their work, resulting in a favourable impact on their job and the work environment. Even though the term work engagement is commonly utilized, there is no one-size-fits-all definition or understanding. Various perspectives propose viewing engagement as a trait, a psychological state, or a behaviour. Work engagement is crucial for organizations as it affects efficiency, competitiveness, and individual and organizational performance levels (Barría-González et al., 2021). Workers who are actively involved in the library have been proven to be more proactive, to promote innovation, and to strive to enhance the organization's outcomes (Ruiz-Zorrilla et al., 2020). Libraries are interested in identifying the factors that determine work engagement because of its link to high energy, responsibility, enthusiasm, and effective job connection. The level of enthusiasm employees has for their work is influenced by personal traits as well as aspects of the organizational environment.

Productivity expands beyond just output per hour to emphasize outcome-focused, efficient, and effective work, integrating quality, meaningful results, and employee well-being through a sync work, clear goals and leveraging technology for deep work and innovation, recognizing that true productivity is doing the right things well, not just doing more things. Productivity is an important key of an employee to an organization. Productivity of the librarians reveals the accomplishment of tasks based on the set goals of the institution. Thus, enhances productivity of workers in any organization. Library is noted as the "heart" of any institution of academic nature. Libraries serve as center of communication to ensuring of practical means of knowledge acquisition which leads to understanding of the minds of an individuals or groups. These libraries are set up to enhance the teaching and research missions of the institutions, particularly for users. University libraries in Delta State, librarians' productivity entails providing support from the organization that will result in employees work engagement which will increase commitment, and greater employee productivity. Hence, it becomes logical that librarians should be adequately and fairly motivated by their employers if they are to increase the rate of their productivity in the university system. Meyers et.al. (2019) also discovered that support from the organization such as university libraries in Delta state, can motivate librarians to harness strength, thereby increasing their productivity. Support from the organisation serves as a fundamental mechanism for fostering a positive mind set and a sense of meaningful work experience, reflecting how much the organization and its employees value their contributions and prioritize their well-being which will in turn enhance work engagement and productivity in university libraries in Delta state. When workers view the organization and its representatives as strong allies, they feel compelled to engage in their job duties. The functions of libraries are conducted in a dynamic, complex, and unstable setting that can lead to unpredictability in organizational performance (Adewoye & Salau, 2022). Librarian, as key personnel, must be productive to ensure efficient service delivery. However, productivity is often influenced by psychological and organizational factors, particularly work engagement. In Delta state, librarians face challenges such as inadequate funding, limited resources, and workload pressure, which may affect their level of engagement and productivity.

Statement of the Problem

Librarians play a crucial role in the effective functioning of libraries through the provision of timely and accurate information services. Despite their importance, many libraries in Delta state experience challenges such as low self-morale, inadequate motivation, limited professional development opportunities, and unfavorable working conditions. These challenges may negatively affect librarians' level of work engagement. Work engagement is a key factor that influences employee's productivity, commitment, and overall job performance. However, observations in some libraries in Delta State suggest varying levels of dedication, enthusiasm, and involvement among librarians, which may result in reduced productivity, poor services delivery, and declining user satisfaction. This study focuses on understanding how work engagement correlates with librarians' productivity. Although several studies have examined work engagement and productivity in other professions, there is limited empirical evidence focusing specifically on librarians in Delta State. This gap makes it difficult for library administrators and policymakers to develop effective strategies to enhance librarians' engagement and productivity. Therefore, this study attempts to determine work engagement and productivity of librarians in university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Research Objectives

1. Evaluate the impact of work engagement strategies on productivity of librarians in university libraries in in South-South, Nigeria.
2. Examine the relative impact of interpersonal relationship and work place productivity among librarians in university libraries in in South-South, Nigeria.
3. Assess the effect of promotion on the productivity of librarians in university libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What is the impact of work engagement on productivity among librarians in university libraries in South-South, Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between interpersonal relationship and workplace productivity among librarians in university libraries in South-South, Nigeria?
3. What is the effect of promotion on librarians' productivity in university libraries in South-South, Nigeria?

Literature review

Work engagement has been considered as most important component in organization research and good practice and widely known for its effect on various outcomes, but most important on organizational productivity. As stated by Akinola (2020), work engagement is demonstrated when people show passion for their job and are engaged in, attached to, and devoted to it thereby achieving higher productivity. Work engagement is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related psychological state characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption. In addition, work engagement theory of Khans denotes the degree to which a person shows self-preference in job tasks to promote connections between self and job, which can increase role performance through cognitive, emotional, and physical self-investment. Eze (2023) expressed the view that work engagement facilitates organization's expectations regarding roles, responsibilities, and accountability (what they should be doing), competencies (what they should possess), and conduct (where they should be). Additionally, it encourages employee's to uphold the company's core values and aids in coordinating individual goals with organizational objectives. Furthermore, it avails the opportunity to pinpoint and achieve employee's objectives and develop their skills. A work-engaged individual has psychological, behavioral, and emotional characteristics to attain desirable workplace outcomes.

Consequently, work engagement provides employees with the necessary functional capabilities to achieve the desired results in the workplace with defined job characteristics. As implemented to this research, work engagement implies library personnel's dedication, enthusiasm, and optimistic outlook about their work. Employee work engagement in libraries impacts students' academic journey. Organizational outcomes such as employees' performance, customers retention and market competitiveness are directly linked to employee performance. When employees demonstrate high engagement and commitment, organizations experience increased productivity and reduced turnover. As documented by Ogunbote, and Uwegbu. (2023), productivity is a product of conscious actions by an individual or organization to achieve a set goal and objective. More precisely, productivity is a measure that indicates how well essential resources are used to accomplish specified objectives in terms of quantity and quality, within a given period. Productivity is that which people can produce with the least amount of effort. While viewing it from the point of librarianship, they are tangible services which every librarian is expected to perform in order to satisfy the information needs of his/her clientele. (Orewa, 2017).

Empirical Studies

Oyebanjo et al. (2025) inquired into work engagement strategies and employee performance using a sample of eighty-seven (87) respondents. The result of the analysis indicates that employee compensation does influence employee performance, also to large extent training and career development has a significant impact on employee performance. Influence of work environment on employee performance was also positive. The influence of employee involvement and participation on employee performance shows a significance value and foster relationship. The study concludes that work environment, employee compensation, training and career development, employee involvement and regular promotion are very important elements that drive excellent employee performance in the work place. The study, therefore, recommends among others that organization should implement work engagement strategies which require continuous

review and improvement to boost employee performance towards achieving organizational goals and objectives while also, making them feels valuable and improves their participation in the decision-making process.

Akanksha and Neha (2025) established that leadership, organizational culture, technological advancements, work-life balance, and psychological safety contribute to engagement levels. They examined employee engagement and organizational productivity: An empirical study of the attitudes of the employees of It sector, using a sample of 513 middle-level employees .The sample size that was used was determined on the basis of the flowing formula: $n = Z^2 \cdot \sigma^2 / e^2$, Where the researchers have accepted the error term 0.058 and the S.D of the population (σ) as the proxy figure is 0.66. The analysis established among others that there is significant positive relationship between employee engagement and organizational productivity scores of the respondents, as the r is 0.902. Moreover, organizational productivity is the effective function of the employee engagement and with the enhancement of average score value of the employee engagement, the average score value of organizational productivity enhances.

Okolocha et al (2021) Brought to light the critical role that human resources play in any organization's success by underlining the significance of employee productivity in achieving an organization's purpose and vision. (Adekunle et al., 2022). Opined that it is possible to evaluate a librarian's workplace productivity by looking at the competences, practical skills, and cognitive talents they exhibit when performing their tasks. The calibre and volume of work required of librarians in universities determine how well they carry out their duties. This contention was made after studying the use of information and communication technologies and perceived job performance of university libraries' personnel. They found that the level of perceived job performance of university libraries personnels is high which fuels performance of productivity. Analysis by Parray (2020) on the level of interpersonal relationship among employees on influence on organisational outcome revealed that resentment among team members or workers can derail the achievement of organizational objectives. Consequently, Parray found high level of interpersonal relationship among employees and that the high level of interpersonal relationship among employees was a good predictor of high level of workplace productivity.

METHODOLOGY

The research adopted a correlational research design to examine relationships between two or more variable. The study population comprised 106 librarians from 15 federal and state university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. A sample of 86 respondents drawn from the 15 selected university libraries in Bayelsa, Delta and Edo States was used for the study. Participants for the study were drawn using the purposive sampling techniques. A self-developed questionnaire, entitled "correlational analysis of work engagement on the productivity of librarians Questionnaire (CAWEPQ)" which was divided into two parts was used as the research instrument. Part A was designed to elicit the respondents' personal information such as demographics. Section B contains twenty items with a Four-Point Likert scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree extent. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation. Criterion mean = 3.00.

Result`s and Discussion

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by gender

S/No	Gender	Freq.(N)	Percentage (%)
1	Male	33	39
2	Female	40	57
3	Inter-Sex	2	4
Total		75	100

Table 1 shows the gender distribution of the respondents. Male respondents accounted for 33 (39%), females constituted the highest proportion of respondents, accounting for 40 (57%) while 2 (4%) identified as intersex.

Table 2: Impact of work engagement on organizational productivity

S/No	Statement	Mean Response	Standard Deviation	Remarks
1	Work engagement improves librarians' efficiency in performing their assigned duties.	4.21	0.72	Agree

Table 2: Continuation

2	Engaged librarians are able to accomplish their task more effectively and within the stipulated time.	4.15	0.69	Agree
3	A high level of work engagement enhances librarians' commitment to achieving organizational objectives.	4.08	0.75	Agree
4	Work engagement positively influences librarians' job performance and overall productivity.	4.26	0.66	Agree
5	Librarians who are highly engaged in their work demonstrate greater dedication and output in service delivery.	4.18	0.71	Agree

Criterion mean = 3.00, weighted mean= 4.18

The results presented in Table 2 revealed respondents' perceptions of the impact of work engagement on the productivity of librarians in university libraries. All the items recorded mean of 3.00, indicating a general agreement among the respondents that work engagement significantly influences librarians' job performance and productivity. This is in line with Akanksha and Neha (2025) established that leadership, organizational culture, technological advancements, work-life balance, and psychological safety contribute to engagement levels. They examined employee engagement and organizational productivity: An empirical study of the attitudes of the employees of It sector, using a sample of 513 middle-level employees .The sample size that was used was determined on the basis of the flowing formula: $n = Z^2 \cdot \sigma^2 / e^2$, Where the researchers have accepted the error term 0.058 and the S.D of the population (σ) as the proxy figure is 0.66. The analysis established among others that there is significant positive relationship between employee engagement and organizational productivity scores of the respondents, as the r is 0.902. Moreover, organizational productivity is the effective function of the employee engagement and with the enhancement of average score value of the employee engagement, the average score value of organizational productivity enhances.

Table 3: interpersonal relationship and workplace productivity among librarians in universities

S/No	Statements	Mean Response	Standard deviation	Remarks
1	Positive interpersonal relationships among librarians enhance effective collaboration and team work in the workplace.	4.12	0.68	Agree
2	Good relationship with colleagues improves librarians' motivation and productivity at workplace.	4.18	0.71	Agree
3	Mutual respect and cooperation among librarians contribute to higher job performance.	4.05	0.72	Agree
4	Supportive interpersonal relationships facilitate efficient service delivery in university libraries.	4.10	0.69	Agree
5	Healthy workplace relationships among librarians positively influence overall productivity in the university library system.	4.20	0.66	Agree

Criterion mean=3.00, weighted mean 4.13

The results indicated that all items recorded mean scores above the criterion mean of 3.00, suggesting that respondent agree that positive interpersonal relationships among librarians contribute significantly to collaborate, motivate, job performance, and overall workplace productivity. The relatively low standard deviation values further indicate consistency in respondents' perceptions. This finding is supported by the study of Parray (2020) on the level of interpersonal relationship among employees on influence on organizational outcome revealed that resentment among team members or workers can derail the achievement of organizational objectives. Consequently, Parray found high level of interpersonal relationship among employees and that the high level of interpersonal relationship among employees was a good predictor of high level of workplace productivity.

Table 4: effect of promotion on librarians' productivity

S/No	Statements	Mean Response	Standard deviation	Remarks
1	Timely promotion motivates librarians to perform their duties more effectively.	4.22	0.67	Agree
2	Regular promotion enhances librarians' commitment to their job responsibilities.	4.15	0.70	Agree
3	Librarians who receive promotions as at when due show improved job performance.	4.18	0.68	Agree
4	Delay in promotion negatively affects librarians' work performance.	4.05	0.74	Agree
5	Timely promotion encourages librarians to put in greater effort in their work.	4.20	0.69	Agree
6	Regular promotion increases librarians' productivity in service delivery.	4.12	0.71	Agree
7	Librarians' morale and performance improve when promotions are conducted as scheduled.	4.25	0.66	Agree
8	Lack of timely promotion reduces librarians' motivation to perform optimally.	4.08	0.73	Agree
9	Regular promotion contributes to librarians' willingness to take on additional responsibilities.	4.10	0.72	Agree
10	Timely and regular promotion positively influences librarians' overall job performance.	4-24	0.65	Agree

Criterion mean=3.00, weighted mean = 4.16

The results indicate that all the items recorded mean of 3.00, suggesting that respondents agreed that timely and regular promotion has a positive influence on librarians' morale commitment, productivity, and overall job performance. The low standard deviation values imply consistency in respondents' views. The weighted mean of 4.16 further confirms that promotion practices play a significant role in enhancing librarians' performance in university libraries. This finding is supported by Oyebanjo et al. (2025) inquired into work engagement strategies and employee performance using a sample of eighty-seven (87) respondents. The result of the analysis indicates that employee compensation does influence employee performance, also to large extent training and career development has a significant impact on employee performance. Influence of work environment on employee performance was also positive. The influence of employee involvement and participation on employee performance shows a significance value and foster relationship. The study concludes that work environment, employee compensation, training and career development, employee involvement and regular promotion are very important elements that drive excellent employee performance in the work place. The study, therefore, recommends among others that organization should implement work engagement strategies which require continuous review and improvement to boost employee performance towards achieving organizational goals and objectives while also, making them feels valuable and improves their participation in the decision-making process.

Summary of findings

The following were established:

- i. The study found that work engagement significantly influences librarians' job performance and productivity.
- ii. The findings showed positive interpersonal relationships among librarians contribute significantly to collaborate, motivate, job performance, and overall workplace productivity.
- iii. It revealed that timely and regular promotion has a positive influence on librarians' morale commitment, productivity, and overall job performance.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study established a positive influence on work engagement and the productivity of librarians in university libraries. Influence of timely and regular promotion on librarians' job performance.

Informed by the empirical evidence, the following recommendations are made to improve on:

- i. Universities should implement targeted engagement programs that actively involve librarians in decision making and professional activities to enhance productivity.
- ii. Library administrators should foster positive interpersonal relationships through teamwork, cooperation, and mutual respect to improve workplace efficiency.
- iii. Institutions should ensure timely and transparent promotion policies to motivate librarians and strengthens commitment to organizational goals.
- iv. Continuous professional development, including training and workshops, should be provided to equip librarians with the skills necessary for effective service delivery.
- v. Supportive work environment that offers recognition, resources, and leadership backing should be maintained to encourage engagement and reduce workplace stress.
- vi. Engagement initiative should be aligned with institutional and societal objectives, such as improving library services, supporting research, and contributing to national knowledge and economic development.

Author Conflicts Statement

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