

## Full Length Research

# Human Resources Development Practices and Job Performance of Librarians in Federal Universities in South- East, Nigeria

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Accepted 25 May 2025

This study investigated human resource development practices and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The study was guided by four objectives, four research questions and four null hypotheses. This study adopted correlation design which also involved simple linear method. The population of this study consisted of one hundred and seventy three (173) librarians in the five (5) federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The census technique was adopted to cover all the one hundred and seventy three (173) librarians in the federal university libraries in South East, Nigeria. Two sets of instrument (rating scales) were used in this study: Human Resource Development Scale (HRDS) with 46 items and Job Performance Scale (JPS) with 21 items. The reliability of the instruments was established using Cronbach alpha statistics which gave reliability indices of 0.72 and 0.75 for HRDS and JPS respectively. The research questions were answered with Pearson (r) statistics, while the hypotheses were tested with t-test of significance of simple linear correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study were that; there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between continuing education and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria; that there is a high positive and significant relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria, etc. Based on these findings, the researcher recommended among others that; the managements of federal university libraries in South East, Nigeria and beyond should always provide their staff with opportunities for continuing education to upgrade themselves for improved job performance; and that the management of the university libraries should always map out adequate funds to sponsor their librarians to conferences and seminars as this will aid them to acquire more knowledge on how to effectively deliver in their duties.

**Keywords:** Human Resources Development, Continuing Education, Mentoring, Job Rotation, Conferences, Job Performance

**Cite This Article As:** Opara, I.C (2025). Human Resources Development Practices and Job Performance of Librarians in Federal Universities in South- East, Nigeria. *Inter. J. Acad. Res. Educ. Rev.* 13(1): 15-25

## INTRODUCTION

Libraries play important roles in the Nigerian university system. The main function of a university library is to provide materials for teaching and research for members of the academic community, the library building where reading takes place and large collections are kept and consulted by users. According to Akanwa and Udo-Anyanwu (2017), the university library is a library that is established in the university environment, which supports the mission, objectives and

functions of its parent body (the university) by providing information resources, staff and library accommodation to its users. Ezecheta (2022) describes the university libraries as organized collections of information resources (print and non-print) which form an integral part of the university. A university library therefore, is a library established in a university community to provide information resources to students, lecturers and other categories of users for the purposes of learning, teaching and research.

It is only the human resources (librarians) who work in these university libraries that provide services which users of the library need to achieve their aims of using the library. Human resources are very essential in all establishments, because their activities are directly tied to productivity. Consequently, human resources in every establishment or organization play vital roles to its functional existence and effective operations. The quality of any organization's product clearly depends to a large extent upon the quality of its human resources, their background, exposure and size (Akanwa, 2017). The hallmark of every organization is its human resources. Institutions of higher learning like universities and colleges are labour intensive organizations and depend on people for the delivery of services. Thus, effectiveness of academic libraries depends on the efficiency of their staff training and development programmes. Staff training and development programmes cover a broad range of activities designed to provide staff with the knowledge and skills that are related to their roles and responsibilities in the library (Osigbemhe, cited in Iwuchukwu & Echedom, 2020).

Existing today are different techniques of staff training in university libraries. But for the purpose of this research work, the following techniques are considered as viable tools in enhancing performance in university libraries. These include but not limited to: continuing education, mentoring programmes, job rotation, conferences/seminars and workshops. One major type of human resource development practice in university libraries is continuing education. Continuing education supplements the skills and knowledge of the learner and also prepares the individual for personal growth, professional competence and professional advancement. Continuing professional education in librarianship is the process of making sure that individual librarians/library staff has the opportunity to stay current with developments, knowledge, skills and constantly learn and advance their potentials and professional understanding. Madukoma and Ali (2022) define continuing education as the action taken to sustain, update and develop the knowledge and skills essential for staff professional job. As the name implies, it is an on-going obligation as long as we remain in our various professions. Continuing education is an obligation for each librarian to participate in it, so as to update their skills, knowledge and learn new ideas and skills for higher quality service delivery.

Similarly, mentoring is also used as a major tool for staff development in university libraries. Mentoring involves the provision of emotional support and guidance given to a younger individual (mentee) by a more mature, experienced and probably older person (mentor). Idoko, Ugwuanyi and Osadebe (2016) see mentoring as a process of learning and development which is based on a personal relationship wherein an experienced librarian (mentor) helps a new librarian (mentee) to develop professionally and achieve career goals. Job rotation is also one of the human resources development practices in libraries. Job rotation, which is an integral process in the public service, also exists in university libraries. It is the redeployment of librarians from one section of the library to another to enhance staff effectiveness and experience. According to Amah (2016), job rotation refers to the planned and coordinated transfer of staff from one job to another to acquire experience. Cobblah (2015) states that library managers use job rotation in the work place as a vital tool that can be used to align employees' values and library goals. This means that job rotation creates more rooms for workers to gain more values as they move from one place to another which is geared towards achieving organizational goals. Thus, this triggers a mastery of almost all the sections in the library and the promotion of library service delivery (job performance).

Another viable tool used to improve job performance in university libraries is conference. According to Eruvwe, Emeka-Ukwu and Iheme (2023), a conference is a gathering that frequently lasts a few days and is arranged around a certain topic or to bring people together who share interest. Attending a conference involves participating in a face-to-face conversation or a virtual conversation. Chukwu (2017) is of the view that conference attendance advances the professionalization of staff by providing valuable opportunities to keep current on various tools necessary to perform day-to-day job responsibilities, to be knowledgeable of industries ideal, to learn new tips and methods and to build an informed network of colleagues. Above all, they serve as platforms for answering existing challenges within the profession and for knowledge-sharing. This could assist and improve job performance in university libraries.

As rightly stated above, human resource development in university libraries should be part of the institutional documented and pragmatic policy involving all librarians. This will spur them into commitment to duty, and increase expected performance of librarians which is effective job performance. Furthermore, it should be noted that job performance is usually complemented with motivation of staff without which no wholesome commitment to duty will be rendered. Since it is the belief that continuing education, mentoring, job rotation, conferences, etc. serve to enhance job performance, it implies that they go together with job performance. Hence this study was conducted to ascertain the extent these factors go together and in which direction.

## Statement of the Problem

University libraries are established to support the attainment of core mandates of teaching, learning, research, and community services. These can be achieved through Human Resources Development (HRD) otherwise known as staff development. Staff development is critical for the growth and development of competencies needed to enhance working abilities of employees in any organisation. Human resources development is required for librarians most especially in this digital age when job performance is complex, dynamic, and challenging. Human resource development can take place after a staff has been hired/employed and then provided with the opportunity to learn new skills through conferences, continuing education, mentoring, job rotation, etc. With all these development programmes, librarians could be in better positions to provide efficient and effective services to meet the higher institution's core mandates and mission. Therefore, as professionals, librarians need to upgrade their knowledge and skills to enhance the performance of professional duties and responsibilities.

Regrettably, preliminary investigation has shown that human resources development programmes are not adequately provided in various university libraries in Nigeria and in many African countries. Saka, Aliyu and James (2021) observe that library personnel in many university libraries are not adequately empowered in terms of professional skills that could be acquired through various human resources development practices to enable them contribute their best to the overall development of institutions of higher learning in Nigeria. This is inimical to the achievement of individual competency and effectiveness on the job and the promotion of good service delivery to library users. This may partly explain why some librarians are not performing adequately in certain tasks, hence the low level of job performance being experienced in many university libraries today. This study therefore ascertained the relationship between human resources development practices and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.

## Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between human resource development practices and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the relationship between continuing education and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.
2. Ascertain the relationship between mentoring and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.
3. Establish the relationship between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.
4. Ascertain the relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.

## Research Questions

This study answered the following research questions:

1. What is the coefficient of relationship between continuing education and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria?
2. What is the coefficient of relationship between mentoring and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria?
3. What is the coefficient of relationship between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria?
4. What is the coefficient of relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria?

## Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- Ho<sub>1</sub>:** The coefficient of relationship between continuing education and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria is not significant.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>:** The coefficient of relationship between mentoring and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria is not significant.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** The coefficient of relationship between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria is not significant.

**Ho<sub>4</sub>:** The coefficient of relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria is not significant.

## Review of Literature

In university libraries, many categories of staff are employed in order to perform various operations and render services to library users. These are seen as human resources or manpower employed, and they constitute the most important and the most productive resource of the library. Onyeneke and Obasi (2023) quoting Agu see employees as the key resource in every business. The authors maintain that the human being is the only type of organization resource capable of self-management as well as managing other resources. Other resources namely material, money and machines cannot run themselves but require the touch of human beings in order to be productive. Human resource development programmes are used to enhance the development of employees of an organization. According to Mmom (2022), human resource development programmes refer to all the policies, practices, and procedures used to develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies of staff to improve the effectiveness and efficiency both of the individual and the organization. Human resource development is used as a viable method of enhancing career growth in the library as staff are exposed to different types of work techniques to increase their efficiency.

Education is the deliberate transformation that takes place in a learner, which is obtained via acquisition of new knowledge, capabilities, values, and attitudes imparted by changers who may be regarded as instructors, mentors, or educators. In university libraries, education and training provides the foundation for the acquisition of individual and corporate knowledge, abilities required for job performance and in the delivery of effective library services to patrons and to attain the institutional goals. According to Malaolu, Emenike and Ogbuabor (2019) continuing education creates room for introduction of additional courses and course contents in the library curriculum. It enhances effective learning which is tailored towards rendering effective library services to the patrons. It offers community services to the university community as it trains some of the members of staff who belong to that community. Continuing education is a formal and post educational training an employee obtains after he/she has acquired his first educational qualification in his chosen career while still on the job. Yu, Gong, Jiang, Hu, Sun and Luo (2018) in their study of the effect of continuing education with digital technology on professional growth and job satisfaction of librarians, found that continuing education would significantly and positively affect professional growth, and this by so doing, would remarkably and positively affect job performance. Continuing education, as part of in-service training, enables librarians to gain insights into the information profession which requires continuous up-to-datedness in carrying out daily operations.

With the evolution of new technologies and ways of interacting with information, university libraries face increasingly rapid change and new demands in order to satisfy the current information needs of their users. It is in these unsteady circumstances that inexperienced librarians in tertiary institutions find themselves often facing the uncertainties of the new information environment with little or no guidance beyond their initial library school training. The totalities of these factors contribute to an increasing need for libraries to establish mentoring programmes for new librarians (Okurame, 2018). It should be noted that there may be tremendous improvement arising from innovative ideas of different work teams as a result of good and early mentoring. In other words, mentoring could be seen as a means of using a well-experienced and versatile role model to impact knowledge and to direct a newly recruited and less experienced worker in his chosen career. A librarian is mentored by an experienced mentor in librarianship so as to spur innovative and positive changes in the library. Studies in the recent past have shown that most university libraries in Nigeria, Africa and developed countries have developed effectual mentoring programmes (Bello & Mansor, cited in Alala, Aguwa & Onyegbula, 2022). Cobblah (2017) study established that there is a positive relationship between staff training and development (mentorship) and work performance of library staff in selected university libraries in Ghana. Similarly, Otsonu, Asom, Zuwaira and Olije's (2016) findings revealed that lecture method, job rotation, coaching method, mentorship among others were accepted as methods used for staff development in special libraries which enhance staff service delivery.

University libraries engage in the redeployment of their staff from one office to the other. Job rotation is another excellent on-the-job training method utilised by organisations to develop personnel at all levels, junior, managers and executives. Job rotation is one of the most powerful methods of staff development that exposes personnel to wide range of managerial settings, culture, challenges and experiences (Afolabi, 2014). Ivwighrehweta, Ejitagha and Oyeniran (2017) define job rotation to mean a job design technique directed to rotate personnel in a planned manner between two or more jobs. Job rotation practices in university libraries in Africa, particularly university libraries in Nigeria, can be said to have a strong relationship with tasks performance. A study by Malaolu, Emenike and Ogbuabor (2019) on training and manpower development, employee productivity and organizational performance in Nigeria shows that

majority (70%) of the respondents agreed that job rotation development has enhanced their efficiency, job productivity and organizational performance. Also, the study by Akpojotor and Oyovwe-Tinuoye (2016) which focused on the influence of job rotation on employee productivity in federal university libraries in Nigeria, discovered that job rotation enhances employee productivity in library operation and also leads to increase in productivity in a particular task. No wonder Cheraskin and Stevens (2014) are of the view that the need for organizations including university libraries to pass on the structural knowledge from experienced staff and managers to new members is critical.

Furthermore, many university library staff have benefited from human resource development programmes including being given the opportunity to attend conferences. Conferences are primarily organized by professional organizations or academic disciplines to further discussions within their groups. Conference attendance enables the participants to share research findings, discuss emerging trends in the discipline, interact with experts in the fields, develop publishing and presentation opportunities, and build networks. The conference as a means of staff development whether local, national or international encourages staff development, improves relationships among libraries, opens a new horizon in the profession and helps to recognize the interdependence of knowledge and information (Ifidon and Ifidon, cited in Chukwu, 2017). Conferences provide platform for delegates to share experiences, learn from each other and also learn best practices in the profession (Olubola, 2017). Conferences/seminars have greater numbers of their participants from professional bodies and enhance unity of fellow professionals and create a common platform for the resolution of professional issues and challenges. Conferences/seminars introduce latest managerial approaches to run the administration of the library to produce effective service delivery. Chukwu (2017) examined the impact of conference attendance on job performance of professional librarians of tertiary institutions in Imo State, Nigeria and observed that conference attendance impacted professional librarians in their job performance by helping them maintain greater focus towards their jobs. From the explanations above, one could infer that attending conferences could go a long way in increasing the job performance of a librarian that works in a university library.

## METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted a correlation design using simple linear method. Correlation research design, according to Offor and Acholonu (2021), describes an existing condition which involves collecting data in order to determine whether and to what extent a relationship exists between two or more quantifiable variables. The population of the study comprised all the one hundred and seventy three (173) librarians in the five (5) federal university libraries studied. They are: Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUUAU); Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO); University of Nigeria, Nsukka (UNN); Nnandi Azikiwe University Awka (NAUA); and Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu, Alike, Ikwo (AF-FUNAI) Ebonyi State. The census technique was adopted to cover all the one hundred and seventy three (173) librarians in the federal university libraries in South East, Nigeria. The research instrument used for data collection is a four-point rating scale. At the end of the administration and collection, it was realized that five (5) copies of the instrument were not appropriately filled. This reduced the number of retrieved instrument to 168. This number was used for the analysis. Pearson (r) Correlation statistics was used to answer the research questions, while t-test of significance of simple linear correlation statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## Data Analysis

**RQ<sub>1</sub>:** What is the coefficient of relationship between continuing education and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria?

**Table 1:** Summaries of simple linear correlation (Pearson r) used to estimate the magnitude and direction of relationship between continuing education (X) and job performance (Y) of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria

V	n	$\Sigma$	R	MR	DR	Remarks
X	168	2914	0.54	Moderate	Positive	Moderate
Y	168	11762				Positive Relationship

Size (n), Summation ( $\Sigma$ ), Pearson r (r), Magnitude of Relationship (MR), Direction of Relationship (DR) and Remarks

Table 1 shows the summaries for the coefficient of relationship between continuing education and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The result shows that the obtained coefficient of 0.54 indicates that a moderate magnitude of relationship exists between continuing education and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. This coefficient also indicates that the direction of the relationship is positive. The positive nature indicates that an increase in one variable leads to increase in the other variable. The answer to the

V	n	$\Sigma$	r	$\alpha$	df	$t_{cal}$	$t_{tab}$	Decision
X	168	3662						
Y	168	11762	0.66	0.05	166	11.363	1.96	Ho <sub>2</sub> is rejected

Sample Size (n), Summation ( $\Sigma$ ), Coefficient of Relationship (r), Alpha Level ( $\alpha$ ), Degree of Freedom (df) and t-test of Significance of Simple Linear Correlation between two Variables

Table 4 shows the test of the significance of the coefficient of relationship between mentorship and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The result indicates the degree of freedom as 166, t-calculated value as 11.363 and t-tabulated value as 1.96. This shows that the t-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value, hence the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of its alternative. This means that the coefficient of relationship between mentorship and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria is significant.

### Research Question 3

RQ<sub>3</sub>: What is the coefficient of relationship between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria?

**Table 5:** Summaries of simple linear correlation (Pearson r) used to estimate the magnitude and direction of relationship between job rotation (X) and job performance (Y) of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria

V	n	$\Sigma$	r	MR	DR	Remarks
X	168	3051	0.64	High	Positive	High
Y	168	11762				Positive Relationship

Size (n), Summation ( $\Sigma$ ), Pearson r (r), Magnitude of Relationship (MR), Direction of Relationship (DR) and Remarks

Table 5 shows the summaries for the coefficient of relationship between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The result shows that the obtained coefficient of 0.64 indicates that a high magnitude of relationship exists between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. This coefficient also indicates that the direction of the relationship is positive. The positive nature indicates that an increase in one variable is highly likely to also lead to increase in the other variable in the same direction. The answer to the above question is that there is a high positive relationship between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.

### Hypothesis 3

Ho<sub>3</sub>: The coefficient of relationship between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria is not significant.

**Table 6:** Summaries of t-test of simple linear correlation statistics for testing the coefficient of relationship between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria

V	N	$\Sigma$	r	$\alpha$	df	t <sub>cal</sub>	t <sub>tab</sub>	Decision
X	168	3051	0.64	0.05	166	10.732	1.96	Ho <sub>3</sub> is rejected
Y	168	11762						

Sample Size (n), Summation ( $\Sigma$ ), Coefficient of Relationship (r), Alpha Level ( $\alpha$ ), Degree of Freedom (df) and t-test of Significance of Simple Linear Correlation between two Variables

Table 6 shows the test of the significance of the coefficient of relationship between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The result indicates the degree of freedom as 166, t-calculated value as 10.732 and t-tabulated value as 1.96. This shows that the t-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value. The researcher rejected the null hypothesis hence the conclusion that the coefficient of relationship between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria is significant.

### Research Question 4

RQ<sub>4</sub>: What is the coefficient of relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria?



**Table 7:** Summaries of simple linear correlation (Pearson  $r$ ) used to estimate the magnitude and direction of relationship between attendance to conferences (X) and job performance (Y) of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria

V	n	$\Sigma$	r	MR	DR	Remarks
X	168	3194	0.78	High	Positive	High
Y	168	11762				Positive Relationship

Size (n), Summation ( $\Sigma$ ), Pearson  $r$  (r), Magnitude of Relationship (MR), Direction of Relationship (DR) and Remarks

Table 7 shows the summaries for the coefficient of relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The result shows that the obtained coefficient of 0.78 indicates that a high magnitude of relationship exists between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. This coefficient also indicates that the direction of the relationship is positive. The positive nature indicates that an increase in one variable would likely lead to increase in the other variable. The answer to the above question is that there is a high positive relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria.

#### Hypothesis 4

Ho<sub>4</sub>: The coefficient of relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria is not significant.

**Table 8:** Summaries of t-test of simple linear correlation statistics for testing the coefficient of relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria

V	n	$\Sigma$	r	$\alpha$	df	$t_{cal}$	$t_{tab}$	Decision
X	168	3194	0.78	0.05	166	16.016	1.96	Ho <sub>4</sub> is rejected
Y	168	11762						

Sample Size (n), Summation ( $\Sigma$ ), Coefficient of Relationship (r), Alpha Level ( $\alpha$ ), Degree of Freedom (df) and t-test of Significance of Simple Linear Correlation between two Variables

Table 8 shows the test of the significance of the coefficient of relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The result indicates the degree of freedom as 166, t-calculated value as 16.016 and t-tabulated value as 1.96. This shows that the t-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value. The researcher rejected the null hypothesis; therefore concluded that the coefficient of relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria is significant.

#### Summary of Findings

The above findings are summarized as follows:

1. there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between continuing education and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria;
2. there is a high positive and significant relationship between mentoring and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria;
3. there is a high positive and significant relationship between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria;
4. there is a high positive and significant relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria;



## Discussion of Findings

It was found that there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between continuing education and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The positive sign shows that an increase in one variable could lead to increase in the other variable, implying a corresponding relationship between the two variables (continuing education and job performance). This finding is true because when librarians in federal universities are sent for continuing education, the knowledge acquired by these individuals will help them to deliver effectively in their library services, thus, bringing about the improvement therein. The above finding corroborates with the study by Yu, Gong, Jiang, Hu, Sun and Luo (2018) who, in their study of the effect of continuing education with digital technology on professional growth and job satisfaction of librarians, found that continuing education would significantly and positively affect professional growth, and this by so doing, would remarkably and positively affect job performance.

The study revealed that there is a high positive and significant relationship between mentorship and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The positive sign shows that an increase in one variable could lead to increase in the other variable, implying a corresponding relationship between the two variables (mentorship and job performance). This finding is because in a university library where mentorship is practiced and given a priority as a means of training staff, there is high tendency that the librarians will be effective in their service delivery and job performances. This finding is in consonance with the finding of Cobblah (2017) who established that there is a positive relationship between staff training and development (mentorship) and work performance of library staff in selected university libraries in Ghana. Similarly, Otsonu, Asom, Zuwaira and Olike's (2016) findings revealed that lecture method, job rotation, coaching method, mentorship among others were accepted as methods used for staff development in special libraries which enhances staff service delivery. This finding has proved that mentorship is a potent factor that can be used to improve or enhance librarians' job performance in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The similarities that were recorded among the findings above could be linked to the use of similar variables.

It was also found that there is a high positive and significant relationship between job rotation and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The positive sign shows that an increase in one variable could lead to the same measure of increase in the other variable, implying a corresponding relationship between the two variables (job rotation and job performance). This finding is because in an academic library where job rotation is practiced and given a priority as a means of training staff, there is high tendency that librarians in universities would be effective in their job performances. That is to say when university libraries engage in high practice of job rotations, it will result to effective performance in such libraries, but when the reverse is the case, the library could be negatively affected. This finding is in line with the study by Malaolu, Emenike and Ogbuabor (2019) on training and manpower development, employee productivity and organizational performance in Nigeria. The finding indicated that majority (70%) of the respondents agreed that job rotation development has enhanced their efficiency, job productivity and organizational performance. Also, the study by Akpojotor and Oyovwe-Tinuoye (2016) which focused on the influence of job rotation on employee productivity in federal university libraries in Nigeria, discovered that job rotation enhances employee productivity in library operation and also leads to increase in productivity in a particular task.

It was also found that there is a high positive and significant relationship between attendance to conferences and job performance of librarians in federal universities in South East, Nigeria. The positive sign shows that an increase in one variable could lead to increase in the other variable, implying a corresponding relationship between the two variables (attendance to conferences and job performance). This finding is true because when librarians in university libraries are exposed to conferences, the knowledge they acquire will be directly put into the course of their services (job performance) which will come out to be effective. This will bring about improvement in the manner which the librarians will perform their jobs. This finding agrees with Chukwu (2017) who examined the impact of conference attendance on job performance of professional librarians of tertiary institutions in Imo State, Nigeria and observed that conference attendance impacted professional librarians in their job performance by helping them maintain greater focus towards their jobs.

## CONCLUSION

This study has revealed that human resources development plays a key role in the career growth of librarians in university libraries. Based on this, it was concluded that if human resource development practices in university libraries and indeed any other libraries are prioritized, they would go a long way in bringing out the best from these librarians, and by so doing increase their level of efficiency in terms of job performance.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The managements of federal university libraries in South East, Nigeria and beyond should always provide their staff with opportunities for continuing education to upgrade themselves for improved job performance.
2. The university libraries' management should not relent in the use of mentorship since it is positively relates with the job performance of librarians.
3. Job rotation should be encouraged in university libraries since it was established that it is positively linked to effective job performance of librarians.
4. The management of the university libraries should always map out adequate fund to sponsor their librarians to conferences and seminars. This will aid them to acquire more knowledge on how to effectively deliver in their duties.

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