

Membership of the Nigerian Library Association and Job Performance

Ebong Nyama Nkebem, Cross River University of Technology Library, Nigeria

Abstract

This study examined the relationship between membership of Nigerian Library Association and job performance of librarians in University Libraries in the South - South geo-political zone of Nigeria. Ex-post facto was the design for the study. A validated research questionnaire with responses based on Four Point Likert-type scales was used. A total of 172 librarians in 11 Universities were used. One hypothesis was formulated and tested for significance at 0.05 level of significance. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and simple regression analysis were the statistics used. The result revealed a significant relationship between membership of Nigerian Library Association and job performance of Librarian. Also the construct could predict job performance of librarians in Nigerian University Libraries.

Introduction

Professional Association such as the Nigerian Library Association (NLA) gives library's occupation ground for exchange of ideas, self control and some other benefits.

Aguolu and Aguolu(2002) posit that one of the main characteristics of any profession is the existence of an active professional association to protect the interest of its members, to determine the standards of education and performance expected of them and to ensure that its members truly live up to their expectations. He further maintained that the respect and recognition to a profession by society are largely determined by the public accorded understanding and acceptance of the vital role of the profession in that society.

Librarians enjoy membership status which actually illuminates their minds in the practice of their profession. The activity of the International Federation of Library Association and Institutions (IFLA) remains a focal point from where the inspiration of survival of the Nigerian Library Association emanates. Through networking, ideas are exchanged among members and this constitutes a strong bond of unity among members. This study therefore is to examine the relationship between membership of Nigerian Library Association and their job performance in Nigerian University Libraries.

Objectives of the Study

To assess the relationship between membership of Nigerian Library Association and job performance of librarians in University Libraries in the south south Geo-political zone of Nigeria.

Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between membership of Nigerian Library Association and job performance of Librarians in University Libraries in Nigeria.

Conceptual Review

Professional Associations like the Nigerian Library Association is a powerful organ which regulates and formulates rules and regulation governing its members. It helps to create unity among members. According to the new encyclopedia Britannica (2003), Library Associations and international organizations provide a steady influence in favour of library cooperation. These associations found at national, state and local levels, provide a forum for discussing and adopting standards that encourage the sharing of resources. Such standards include the framework for interlibrary lending, the international cataloguing codes and standards, and communications standards that allow library computer systems to be linked to each other.

The Nigerian Library Association (NLA) started as a division of the West African Library Association (WALA). WALA was established in 1954 as an offshoot of a UNESCO Seminar on the Development of Public Libraries in Africa held at Ibadan in 1953. (NLA 44th National Conference/AGM Programme). As a professional association, NLA is a member of the Common Wealth Library Association, the International Federation of Library Association (IFLA) and the International Federation of Documentation (FID). Presently, there are as many state chapters of NLA in the country as there are thirty-six (36) states with a Federal Capital Territory (FTC) Chapter in Abuja. The objectives of NLA include the following:

1. To unite persons interested in Libraries, Librarianship and information service.
2. To safeguard and promote the professional interests of librarians;
3. To promote the establishment and development of libraries and information centres;
4. To watch legislation affecting libraries and to assist in the promotion of such legislation as may be considered necessary for the establishments, regulation and management of libraries within Nigeria.
5. To promote and encourage bibliographical study, research and library co-operation and;
6. To do all lawful things as incidental and conducive to the attainment of the above objectives. (NLA 44th National Conference/AGM Programme).

Andrew, G (2008) buttressed that Librarians hold a professional position and have privileges and responsibilities commensurate with their academic role. As members of a profession, librarians are expected to keep current with and contribute to the advancement of that profession. A commitment to continuing growth and development is central to the definitic of librarianship. Some representative activities relevant to promotion that demonstrate professional growth and contributions are improving job performance by enhancing personal skills and knowledge, particularly through course work that earns degrees or certificates. Participating in professional and scholarly associations, for example, doing committee work, holding office, presenting papers, participating in panel discussion, and organizing programs. Building productive relationships with professional colleagues outside Yale to exchange information and foster creative problem solving within the library. Teaching workshops, institutes, or seminars sponsored by professional or scholarly organizations. Scholarly publications in librarianship or other relevant academic fields.

Prior to its independence, the Nigeria Division within WALA had laid the foundation

for a professional association, which worked actively to influence the Nigerian Government and promote library development in the country. To date, it has to its credit the following notable achievements. The Nigerian Division of WALA successfully made a proposal for a National Library Policy, which became the blueprint for early library development and led to the inauguration of the library Advisory Committee in 1958. This committee became the forum for the discussion of library development at the national level and gave advice on library matters and conditions of service for librarians in the Federal Civil Service. The Nigerian Library Association made representation to Government for the establishment of the National Library of Nigeria and the National Library Act of 1962. The Association was instrumental in securing Government support for the professional education and training of library personnel leading to the establishment of the institute of Librarianship at the University of Ibadan. The promulgation of the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) Decree in June 1995 and the subsequent inauguration of the Council by the Honourable Minister of Education, Professor Borishade on 28th May, 2002. The association has successfully influenced the Government in inaugurating the practice of the Library and information profession in the country. Presently, the NLA has 37 chapters with each state and the Federal Capital Territory having its own chairman and local administration. Similarly, the association has twelve registered subjects and professional sections, each looking after its own interest group. The NLA has successfully mobilized its members to be aware of the wind of change blowing around the world of information by encouraging training and retraining in Information and Communication Technology. (NLA 44th National Conference Annual Programme 16).

From the foregoing, the Nigerian Library Association has actually made librarians to work together to promote library services and set standards for the profession. The world book encyclopedia (2001) buttressed this by adding further that most associations offer opportunities for continuing education. They may hold conferences or publish journals to communicate information about the field. It observes that other library associations serve the specialized interests of their members. These groups include the special Libraries Associations such as American Association of Law Libraries, the Association of Research Libraries etc. In its own respect, the Nigerian Library Association is an umbrella to these types of Libraries in Nigeria.

In line with the educational development, librarians are encouraged to publish in the association news letters and magazines which are of international standard. On the whole, the NLA has played very serious professional role to uplift the status of all the members and make them responsible members of the society as a whole and of their immediate working environment. There is great ethical orientation in the life of its members as a result of the association's activities. NLA has provided great opportunity to its members to enlighten themselves through in-service training, workshops, seminars, conferences (both National and International). The experiences gained through these learning programmes had actually improved on members' job performance in their various working environments.

Methodology:

Research design: This study was carried out using ex-post facto design. Eleven (11) University Libraries in the South South geo political zone were selected and one hundred and seventy two (172) librarians were used as sample. A validated questionnaire with 20 items was used for data collection. The responses were based on a four point Likert-type scale. The data were tested to 0.05 level of significance using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and simple Regression analysis

Hypothesis (Ho): The null form of this hypothesis stated that there is no significant relationship between membership of Nigerian Library Association (NLA) and job performance of librarians. To test the hypothesis, Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was done, while the significance of the correlation coefficient was tested using associated probability.

Table I: Results of Correlation analysis between librarians' performance and membership of professional body (NLA).

	Descriptive		Statistics
	Mean		Std. Dev.
Variable			
Membership of Professional body	14.76		2.99
Librarians' Performance	18.78		3.38
Statistics	Variable	Information Literature	Librarians' Performance
Pearson Correlation	Membership of Professional body	1.000	0.652*
	Librarians' Performance	0.652*	1.000
Sig. (2tailed)	Membership of Professional body		0.000
	Librarians' Performance	0.000	‘1’
Sums of Squares And Cross Product	Membership of Professional body	1529.744	1226.695
	Librarians' Performance	1126.965	1953.041
Covariance	Membership of Professional body	8.948	6.590
	Librarians'	6590	11.421
N	Membership of Professional body	172	172
	Librarians' Performance	172	172

*Significant at 0.05 level.

From Table I we observe that the correlation coefficient (0.652) has an associated probability that is about zero. Since this associated probability is less than the chosen level of significance (0.05). The null hypothesis was thus rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between staff performance and their membership of a professional body.

To find out if staff performance can be predicted using membership of a professional body, simple linear regression analysis was done and tested for significance using the F-ratio test. The results are presented in Table II.

ANOVA Presentation of the regression of Librarians' Performance on membership of professional body.

Source of Variation F	SS	df	ms
Regression	830.237	1	830.237 125.703*
Residual	1122.804	170	6.605
Total	1953.041	171	

$a = 7.914 \pm 0.989; b = 0.737 \pm 0.066; r^2 = 0.425$

*Significant at 0.05 level, df = 1,170

Predictors (constant), membership of professional body Dependent variable: Staff Performance

From the Table, it can be observed that the calculated F-value (125.703) is greater than the critical F-value (3.84). On this basis, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative was retained. This means that staff performance can be predicted significantly from membership of professional body. The obtained prediction equation is

	y	=	7.914 + 0.737x
Where	y	=	Staff performance
	x	=	Membership of a professional body.

Discussion

This hypothesis sought to assess the relationship between membership of Nigerian library Association and Job Performance of Librarians in University Libraries. The analysis produced a significant relationship between Membership of Nigerian Library Association and job performance of librarians. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. This result indicated that membership to Nigerian Library Association has relationship with job performance of members who are librarians. This means as members of NLA, job performance stands to improve. They performed their duties better and more effective than when they were not members of the association. And for those who are not members of NLA, their performance stand below standard.

It implies that those librarians who are members of the NLA benefited from so many things that will keep them up to date. As a professional association, NLA is a member of the commonwealth Library Association, the International Federation of Library Association IFLA and the International of Federation of Documentation (FID). This gives the NLA

ample opportunities to be more exposed to international connection for current trend in the profession. The benefits as members of the NLA rub-off on her members. These benefits include training of members through workshops, seminars and conferences, awarding of prizes to hard working members thereby encouraging them to be more effective, encouraging to publish in the association journals and newsletter, registering members who are well trained with years of experience as chartered librarians in order to maintain standard of practice, helping young members to grow in the profession by encouraging them to attend courses in library school through award of scholarships and providing various avenues for meetings and for exchange of ideas and update of knowledge.

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Web site Andrew.gray@yale.edu.