

Job Characteristics Dimensions and Librarians' Affective Commitment

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Abstract

Affective commitment is considered germane to the achievement of the goals of university libraries. Studies however indicated a decline in the commitment of librarians in public universities. Commitment of library personnel may be affected by certain fundamental psychological factors such as job characteristics which existing studies have not given adequate attention to in public universities in South-South Nigeria. Thus, this study approached the gap from the job characteristics dimensions to affective commitment. The study adopted survey research design, and data gathered from 515 librarians in public universities in South-South Nigeria using total enumeration. A structured questionnaire was adapted, validated and the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients obtained for the constructs ranged from 0.75 to 0.96. The response rate was 77.7%. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential (multiple regression) statistics. Findings from the descriptive statistics showed that affective commitment among librarians in public universities in South-South Nigeria was high ($M=3.86$); librarians' job contains job characteristics dimensions to a high extent ($M=4.01$). The multiple regression analysis conducted revealed that job characteristics dimensions had a significant influence on librarians' affective commitment ($Adj.R^2= 0.166$, $F(5, 394)= 16.394$; $p < 0.05$). While skill variety and feedback had a positive and significant influence on librarians' affective commitment, task identity, task significance and job autonomy had no significant influence on librarians' affective commitment in public universities in South-South Nigeria. It was recommended that library management should improve on job characteristics such as skill variety and feedback to enable affective commitment of librarians.

Keywords:

Librarians'
commitment, Job
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Libraries, Public
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Background to the Study

University libraries are established to provide effective and efficient services that will match and satisfy the identified information needs of the users in the university community. Although library personnel are a university library's key assets that determines the library's success, managing competent, knowledgeable, and skilful hands, without a reasonable level of commitment from library personnel, the goals of the library may not be achieved (Tella & Ibinaiye, 2019). Succinctly put, creating and sustaining commitment among library personnel is very germane to the achievement of the goals of university libraries. On the other hand, where commitment is compromised, it poses concern to library management. This explains why management of libraries and researchers are attracted to the subject of employee commitment, more especially affective bond with libraries.

Meyer and Allen (1997) viewed commitment from three dimensions namely affective, continuance and normative. Affective commitment is an instance where an employee has positive emotions/psychological attachment to the organization (Ogechukwu, Eketu & Needorn, 2018) including university libraries. Indeed, affective commitment is perhaps the most desirable type of commitment that organizations prefer to instil in their employees because it is an important core essence of organizational commitment (Mercurio, 2015). Affective commitment can be influenced by personal characteristics, structural, job-related characteristics and work experience (Ebikeseke & Dickson, 2018). However, work-related experiences happen to be the most effective variable to create affective commitment among employees (Satardien, 2014). These work-related experiences may fulfil employees' emotional needs to feel comfortable and remain attached to the library. Kiyani, Ayupp and Affective commitment may not only be determined by organisational factors, but by factors inherent in the work itself (job characteristics; Rasool, 2018).

Job characteristics are a terminology used to describe the peculiar qualities or nature of the job such as skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. Accordingly, as the five core dimensions (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback) are enhanced, three psychological conditions in an employee (experienced meaningfulness, responsibility and knowledge of the result of activities) are triggered. Wegman, Hoffman, Carter, Twenge and Guenole (2016) affirmed that the collective experiences from these job dimensions (positive psychological states) serve as gauge for the enrichment of jobs and argued that there could be a positive connection between job characteristics and employee commitment.

Considering the dynamism of today's workplace, employees are not only interested in pay rewards, in fact, they value and are also interested in how the work is structured to make them feel a sense of personal fulfilment. In this regard, certain characteristics of the job require enrichment to the extent that it will increase a library personnel's sense of responsibility, empowerment and subsequently, a sense of attachment to the organization. This is not by any means to underestimate the place of monetary reward in

influencing employee behaviour, especially in the face of economic deprivation, but rather to emphasize other possible salient drivers of positive psychological states of employees in the workplace. Additionally, studies have equally established the fact that the characteristics of employees' job make them feel good about themselves and more committed to jobs and their organization (Jaja & Okpu, 2014). Extant studies have demonstrated that job characteristics have a positive impact on the affective behaviours of employees.

Commitment among librarians in Nigerian universities is reportedly low, with signs of indolence, non-chauntant attitude, absenteeism, tardiness (Akinyemi & Ifijeh, 2012; Fika, Ibi, & Abdulrahman, 2016). Perhaps, low commitment level among library personnel may have resulted from factors related to job characteristics. Regrettably, job characteristics is an aspect that is rarely explored as antecedents of employee commitment in the field of librarianship compared to the field of organizational behaviour. However, an empirical work on gauging the influence of job characteristics on librarians' affective commitment becomes very important and timely.

Statement of the Problem

Several authors in their various studies have expressed concern regarding how the commitment among library personnel working in university libraries is declining at an alarming rate (Aina, Adeyeye, Ige, 2012; Badia & Madawaki, 2016). The decline in the commitment of librarians in public universities are reflected in the high rate of tardiness, absenteeism, indolence and cyber loafing. Commitment of library personnel may be affected by certain fundamental psychological factors such as job characteristics. Extant literature has not given adequate attention to job characteristics as antecedents of librarians' commitment in South-South Nigeria. It is on this basis that this study seeks to investigate whether job characteristics have influence on librarians' affective commitment in public universities in South-South Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives that guided study were:

1. Found the level of librarians affective commitment in public universities in South-South Nigeria.
2. Ascertained the extent to which job characteristics are present in the jobs of librarians in public universities in South-South, Nigeria.
3. Determined the influence of job characteristics on librarians' commitment in public universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of librarians' commitment in public universities in South-South, Nigeria?
2. What is the extent to which job characteristics are present in the jobs of library personnel in public universities in South-South, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

H₀1: Job characteristics have no significant influence on librarians' affective commitment in public universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Conceptually, affective commitment is an individual's identification with, and involvement with the organisation and its goals (Meyer et al., 1997; Nwulu & Ateke, 2018). Oyinlade (2018) explained that affective commitment to an organisation emanate from feelings of love and affinity for the organisation. Bon and Shire (2017) regard affectively committed individuals as those who feel closer to the organisation and has to involve in the organisational goals due to their emotional attachment. Affective commitment is characterised by a strong belief and devotion to organisational objectives, goals, and values, to which employee identifies his/her self and generating a sense of pride to be an organisational member of such organisation (Haque & Aslam, 2014; Salazar-Fierro & Bayardo, 2015). Psychological phenomena and emotional ties, a sense of unity and the desire to achieve the goals and objectives of the organisation according to Breitsohl and Ruhle(2013), and Amune (2015) exemplify affective commitment. In line with this thought, Ogechukwu, Eketu and Needorn (2018) described affective commitment as the employee's positive emotional/psychological attachment to the organisation. Drawing from the definitions offered by several authors, it can be deduced that affective commitment is an employee's affirmative keenness towards the organisation, which is demonstrated to ensure that organisation succeeds in accomplishing its goals and objectives.

Over the years many proponents of job characteristics have attempted to define the concept of job characteristics according to their understanding of the construct. For instance, Thirunavukarasu and Sritharan (2016), referred to job characteristics as the "extent that a job is structured to provide regular feedback as well as a sense of task completion and for employees to monitor their own behaviour and gain an increased sense of personal control" (p. 1). Similarly, Pohl, Santo and Battistelli (2012) described job characteristics as reflecting how a job is performed, the range and nature of tasks associated with a particular job. Furthermore, Putra, Sudja and Martini (2018) conceptualized job characteristics as the nature of the task performed by employees that are felt by employees thus affecting the behaviour of the employees. Deductively, job characteristics could mean an individual perception of aspects of jobs as an element that influenced the effect that the job had on behaviour and motivation. In the opinion of Kang and Liu, those factors or attributes related to a job such as working environment, physical and mental demand, skills and knowledge required are regarded as job characteristics (Kang & Liu, 2018).

Skill Variety

Skill variety entails the degree to which employees employ different skills to complete their work. According to Ngari, Muathe and Kilika (2018), skill variety is defined as "the range of skills required to complete a particular piece of work that leads to the desired

individual and job results” (p. 79). Johari, Shamsudin, Yean, Yahya and Adnan (2018), pointed out that this particular dimension in job characteristics is seen as the main catalyst to boost the intrinsic motivation of the employee. Park (2017) purported that employees who extensively use their abilities and skills may find the job as being enormously meaningful to him or her. In the literature, skill variety produces a psychological state of meaningfulness. Corroborating this statement, Huang (2015) concluded that employees who experience meaningfulness in their job would have a high level of commitment to the organisation (including the library personnel).

Task Identity

Task identity involves the degree to which the job requires an employee to perform a task that is clearly identifiable and has a visible outcome. Individuals who are responsible for a larger part of a whole will consider that work more meaningful compared to those with smaller parts (Park, 2017). Task identity is an important and critical element of employee and work outcomes (Nyabundi & Kagiri, 2017). Literature has suggested that a job with a good quality of task identity should be provided in each task as clear as possible and be definite (Numan, 2007). Additionally, a job high on task identity facilitates an employee's understanding of how his/her role fits into the bigger picture and provides a sense of accomplishment. Conversely, employees who happen to work in jobs with low task identity feel that they lack personal achievement. Khayat and Gheitani (2015), concurred by stating that task identity assists employees in understanding the relationship between the jobs assigned to them and other activities in the organisation.

Task Significance

Task significance as defined by Magaji, Akpa and Akinlabi (2018), referred to the degree to which the task has a substantial impact on other people's well-being, either within or outside the organisation. Every employee needs to feel a sense of context relevance of how what they do on a daily basis at work help the organisation to achieve the greater whole. Khayat and Gheitani (2015) claimed that when a job is high on task significance, it invokes in the employee feelings that he/she is adding value to the organisation and the user of the services rendered. Salau, Adeniji and Oyewumi (2014) attested that increased recognition of task significance would stimulate the employees to further, raise their commitment towards the attainment and realisation of the goal and objectives of the institutions/organisations. Grant, Campbell, Chen, Cottone, Lapedis and Lee (2007) advocated that jobs that are structured to allow one to see how they benefit others, allow employees to empathise, identify with and overall develop stronger affective commitments.

Job Autonomy

Job autonomy is defined as the degree to which the job offers considerable liberty, proving free hand and choice to the individual in scheduling the work processes and procedures that will facilitate better performance (Odor, 2019). Volmer, Spark and Niessen (2012) purported that when an employee is allowed to determine the pace, sequence and methods to accomplish a task, s/he is said to have job autonomy. Shreds of evidence

abound that autonomy increases perceived control over work demand, allowing the possibility for employees to craft their job in such a manner that will reduce work-role conflict, as well as increasing their attachment to the organisation (Kar & Misra, 2013). This perception of job control may lead to an increased level of intrinsic motivation and the outcome is effectiveness in work and commitment to the organisation (Sarinah, Akbar, & Prasadja, 2018). From the perspective of Hackman and Oldham's model of job characteristics, employees' perceptions of their job autonomy tend to impact their psychological states of "experienced responsibility for work". Indeed, giving employees autonomy increases their feeling of responsibility for the outcome of the work performed. Sisodia and Das (2013) observed that commitment tends to be greater when people have high levels of responsibility for the jobs they performed.

Job Feedback

Feedback according to Hackman and Oldham (1976), referred to the extent to which the job itself provides information about the effectiveness of one's performance. Simply imply, it is the extent to which carrying out the work activities required by the job provides the individual with direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his /her performance. Feedback is present in a job when the mechanism is put in place for the employee to know about significant others' (e.g. managers, colleagues, users) perception of their behaviour and accomplishments. To this end, feedback has been delineated as both evaluation from others (e.g. supervisors or customers) and feedback from the job itself (Choudhary, 2016). The literature suggests that feedback should be given to employees allowing them to assess and evaluate the level of completion, which is the result of the task itself (Salau, Adeniji & Oyewunmi, 2014; Choudhary, 2016; Armstrong, 2018).

Empirical Review

Empirically, support for the nexus between job characteristics and commitment has been reported in the literature. Taghavi and Gholami's (2012) study revealed that job characteristics commitment was significantly related to commitment. The study further reported that dimensions of job characteristics- skill variety, task significance and autonomy had a positive and significant relationship with organisational commitment. Kang and Liu (2018) found a remarkable significantly positive effect of the five dimensions in job characteristics (skill variety, task significance, task identity, autonomy and feedback) on employee organisational commitment. The study of Obi-Nwosu, Joe-Akunne and Oguegbe (2013) revealed that while dealing with others and task identity predicted organisational commitment, the remaining five dimensions; skill variety, task significance, autonomy, feedback from the job, and feedback from agents did not predict organisational commitment.

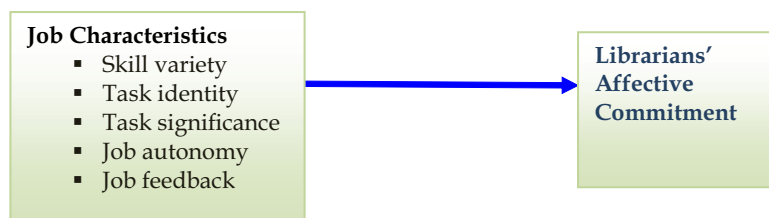
Pratiwi, Shalihatulhayah and Mayasari (2013) reported in a study that while skill variety, task significance, autonomy and feedback have a positive effect on organisational commitment, task identity negatively affects organisational commitment. The study of Baiquni and Lizar (2018) revealed that job characteristics had positive and significant

effect on affective commitment. Pee (2011) found that job autonomy and task significance had a linear positive effect on employees' affective commitment, whereas skill variety and task identity had curvilinear effects such that high levels initially improved employees' affective commitment, but at a very high level they had negative impacts. The study further suggests that the lack of job autonomy is detrimental to employees' affective commitment and increasing autonomy can improve the situation.

Theoretical Review

Theoretically, commitment and job characteristics variables in this study were anchored on the Three-Component Theory of Commitment proposed by Meyer and Allen (1997) and the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) proposed by Hackman and Oldhan (1976). The job characteristics theory is founded on the assumption that jobs can be designed in manners that will make employees to derive satisfaction from the job they perform, as well as help them to feel that they are doing meaningful and valuable work. Specifically, the theory identifies the task's condition under which individuals will be internally motivated to perform their jobs effectively. The relevance of this theory is based on the fact that it captures the five dimensions used to describe job characteristics in this study which are skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. Meyer and Allen's model of commitment explicate the psychological bond between an employee and his or her employing organisation. The theory explains that individuals in the organisation are affectively attached an organisation because they want to.

Conceptual Model



Methodology

The study adopted survey research design. The population of the study consisted of 515 librarians from 16 public universities in South-South, Nigeria. Total enumeration was used to include all the members in the study. A structured questionnaire was adapted, validated and used to gather data used in this study. Items included in the questionnaire were adapted because they have been employed in other countries and in different industries or sector. A pre-test was carried out on 30 copies of questionnaire. Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients for the constructs are affective commitment (0.89), skill variety (0.83), task identity (0.94), task significance (0.75), job autonomy (0.79), feedback (0.96). A Cronbach's Alpha is considered as good when the value obtained is more than 0.70 (Obeka, 2011). Since the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients is greater than 0.70, the instrument was considered reliable. The response rate was 77.7%. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential (simple and multiple regression) statistics through the use of Statistical package for Service Solution SPSS 21.0 version. Librarians as used in this study constitute professional librarians and library officers.

Results

Analysis of research questions

Research Question One: What is the level of librarians' commitment in public universities in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of librarians' affective commitment in public universities in South-South, Nigeria

Statements	Very High Extent	High Extent	Moderate Extent	Low Extent	Very Low Extent	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage contributions
Affective Commitment (Mean=3.86)								36.7%
I do feel a strong sense of belonging in this library.	169 (42.3%)	168 (42.0%)	47 (11.7%)	13 (3.2%)	3 (.8%)	4.22	.83	
I do feel 'emotionally attached' to this library.	118 (29.5%)	173 (43.3%)	25 (6.3%)	25 (6.3%)	4 (1.0%)	3.94	.91	
This library has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	120 (30.0%)	175 (43.8%)	70 (17.5%)	25 (6.3%)	10 (2.5%)	3.93	.97	
I enjoy discussing this library with people outside it.	115 (28.8%)	172 (43.0%)	73 (18.3%)	31 (7.8%)	9 (2.3%)	3.88	.99	
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this library.	137 (34.3%)	138 (34.5%)	80 (20.0%)	26 (6.5%)	19 (4.8%)	3.87	1.10	
I really feel as if this library's problems are my own.	112 (28.0%)	151 (37.8%)	81 (20.3%)	31 (7.8%)	25 (6.3%)	3.74	1.14	
I think I could not easily become attached to another library as I am to this one.	85 (21.3%)	171 (42.8%)	85 (21.3%)	35 (8.8%)	24 (6.0%)	3.65	1.09	
I do feel like 'part of my family' in this library.	93 (23.3%)	150 (37.5%)	91 (22.8%)	42 (10.5%)	24 (6.0%)	3.62	1.13	
Continuance Commitment (Mean=3.37)								32.1%
Right now, remaining on this job in this library is a matter of necessity to me.	86 (21.5%)	164 (41.0%)	82 (20.5%)	35 (8.8%)	33 (8.3%)	3.59	1.16	
One of the major reasons I continue to work in this library is that leaving would require considerable sacrifice-another library may not match the overall benefits I have.	82 (20.5%)	152 (38.0%)	84 (21.0%)	46 (11.5%)	36 (9.0%)	3.50	1.20	
One of the few negative consequences of leaving this library would be the scarcity of available alternatives.	70 (17.5%)	154 (38.5%)	82 (20.5%)	60 (15.0%)	34 (8.5%)	3.42	1.19	
I feel I have too few options to consider leaving this library.	79 (19.8%)	148 (37.0%)	75 (18.8%)	52 (13.0%)	46 (11.5%)	3.41	1.26	
It would be very hard for me to leave my library right now even if I wanted to.	65 (16.3%)	139 (34.8%)	100 (25.0%)	53 (13.3%)	43 (10.8%)	3.33	1.21	
Too much of life would be disrupted if I decided to leave my job at this library right now	74 (18.5%)	125 (31.3%)	86 (21.5%)	71 (17.8%)	44 (11.0%)	3.29	1.26	
I feel it would be too costly for me to leave my library in the near future.	59 (14.8%)	141 (35.3%)	84 (21.0%)	63 (15.8%)	53 (13.3%)	3.23	1.26	
I am afraid of what might happen if I quit my job without having another one lined up.	62 (15.5%)	129 (32.3%)	95 (23.8%)	47 (11.8%)	67 (16.8%)	3.18	1.31	
Normative Commitment (Mean=3.28)								31.2%
I do think that wanting to be a staff in this library is still sensible.	94 (23.5%)	115 (28.8%)	120 (30.0%)	40 (10.0%)	31 (7.8%)	3.50	1.18	
Things were better in the days when people stayed with one library for most of their careers.	85 (21.3%)	125 (31.3%)	107 (26.8%)	40 (10.0%)	43 (10.8%)	3.42	1.23	
I do believe that a person must always be loyal to his or her library.	78 (19.5%)	135 (33.8%)	87 (21.8%)	57 (14.3%)	43 (10.8%)	3.37	1.25	

One of the major reasons I continued to work for this library is that I believe that loyalty is important and therefore feel a sense of moral obligation to remain.	63 (15.8%)	135 (33.8%)	99 (24.8%)	54 (13.5%)	49 (12.3%)	3.27	1.23	
Jumping from one library to another is unethical to me.	65 (16.3%)	130 (32.5%)	87 (21.8%)	50 (12.5%)	68 (17.0%)	3.19	1.32	
I think that people these days move from library to library too often.	71 (17.8%)	118 (29.5%)	84 (21.0%)	66 (16.5%)	61 (15.3%)	3.18	1.32	
I was taught to believe in the days when people stayed with one library from most of their careers.	61 (15.3%)	121 (30.3%)	93 (23.3%)	70 (17.5%)	55 (13.8%)	3.16	1.27	
If I get another offer for a better job elsewhere, I would feel it would not be right to leave my library.	70 (17.5%)	115 (28.8%)	88 (22.0%)	64 (16.0%)	63 (15.8%)	3.16	1.33	
Librarians' Commitment (Mean=3.50)								

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2020

Decision rule: 1-1.49 = very low level; 1.5-2.49 = low level; 2.5-3.49 = moderate level; 3.5-4.49 = high level; 4.5-5.0 = very high level. The cut-off mean is 3.0.

Interpretation

Table 1 presents the result of descriptive statistics on librarians' opinions on their commitment level. From the Table, it can be deduced that librarians in public universities in South-South, Nigeria have high affective commitment to their libraries. This may suggest that the affectionate connection of librarians to their libraries is highly remarkable. Specifically, under affective commitment, all most all the librarians perceived highly that they feel a strong sense of belonging in the library (mean=4.22), while a good number of them also feel on a high level, being part of the library employees (mean=3.62), though this was considered to be the lowest under affective commitment measurement. This may imply librarians' willingness to happily discharge their duties. In addition to this, other statements under affective commitment showed high levels of commitments. This may boost the effectiveness of the librarians.

Research Question Two: What is the extent to which job characteristics are present in the jobs of librarians in public universities in South-South, Nigeria?

Table 2: Descriptive analysis of job characteristics dimensions of librarians in public universities in South-South Nigeria

Statements	Very High Extent	High Extent	Moderate Extent	Low Extent	Very Low Extent	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage contributions
Skill Variety (Mean=4.20)								
My job provides variety of experiences on the job.	178 (44.5%)	159 (39.8%)	50 (12.5%)	12 (3.0%)	1 (0.3)	4.25	.80	21.0%
I can use the skills that I have to handle the problem in my job	172 (43.0%)	170 (42.5%)	48 (12.0%)	5 (1.3%)	5 (1.3%)	4.25	.81	
The job I do is such that utilises variety of skills, talents and abilities.	148 (37.0%)	188 (47.0%)	49 (12.3%)	13 (3.3%)	2 (.5%)	4.17	.81	
My job supports additional training and education	162 (40.5%)	159 (39.8%)	52 (13.0%)	14 (3.5%)	13 (3.3%)	4.11	.98	
Task Significance (Mean=4.04)								
How well I work affects the lives of other people.	149 (37.3%)	178 (44.5%)	45 (11.3%)	19 (4.8%)	9 (2.3%)	4.10	.93	20.2%
My job influences day-to-day institutional success.	138 (34.5%)	179 (44.8%)	56 (14.0%)	14 (3.5%)	13 (3.3%)	4.04	.96	
My job gives me a sense of achievement	142 (35.5%)	176 (44.0%)	45 (11.3%)	17 (4.3%)	20 (5.0%)	4.01	1.04	
It is only when my job gets done, other jobs can be completed	136 (34.0)	174 (43.5%)	56 (14.0)	22 (5.5%)	12 (3.0%)	4.00	.99	
Task Identity (Mean=4.02)								
Once I start a task I have to finish it.	135 (33.8%)	192 (48.0%)	50 (12.5%)	16 (4.0%)	7 (1.8%)	4.08	.88	20.1%
I understand the job from start to end.	135 (33.8%)	177 (44.3%)	64 (16.0%)	12 (3.0%)	12 (3.0%)	4.03	.94	
I do a complete task from start to finish.	116 (29.0%)	194 (48.5%)	68 (17.0%)	14 (3.5%)	8 (2.0%)	3.99	.88	
I have chance to do an entire piece of work from beginning to end.	130 (32.5%)	179 (44.8%)	60 (15.0%)	15 (3.8%)	16 (4.0%)	3.98	.99	
Feedback (Mean=3.90)								
Satisfaction of my supervisor is known while doing my job	141 (35.3%)	147 (36.8%)	76 (19.0%)	29 (7.3%)	7 (1.8%)	3.97	.10	19.5%
Satisfaction of the users are known while doing my job	121 (30.3%)	166 (41.5%)	76 (19.0%)	26 (6.5%)	11 (2.8%)	3.90	.10	
There is clear and direct information about job outcomes.	127 (31.8%)	158 (39.5%)	75 (18.8%)	25 (6.3%)	15 (3.8%)	3.89	1.04	
I receive on the job feedback from my superior about my activities.	114 (28.5%)	178 (44.5%)	59 (14.8%)	30 (7.5%)	19 (4.8%)	3.85	1.07	
Job Autonomy (Mean=3.88)								
I can set my own schedule for completing assigned tasks.	135 (33.8%)	167 (41.8%)	54 (13.5%)	28 (7.0%)	16 (4.0%)	3.94	1.06	19.4%
My job gives me a chance to use my personal initiative and judgment in carrying out the work.	129 (32.3%)	189 (47.3%)	35 (8.8%)	23 (5.8%)	24 (6.0%)	3.94	1.09	
My job provides opportunity of self-directed flexible working hours	112 (28.0%)	178 (44.5%)	64 (16.0%)	23 (5.8%)	23 (5.8%)	3.83	1.08	
I have freedom to decide how I perform assigned tasks.	106 (26.5%)	181 (45.3%)	64 (16.0%)	30 (7.5%)	19 (4.8%)	3.81	1.06	
Job Characteristics (Mean=4.01)								

Source: Field survey, 2020

The decision rule: 1-1.49 = very low extent; 1.5-2.49 = low extent; 2.5-3.49 = moderate extent; 3.5-4.49 = high extent; 4.5-5.0 = very high extent. The cut-off mean is 3.0

Interpretation

The findings in Table 2 revealed a high extent of job characteristics dimensions in librarians' jobs in public universities in South-South Nigeria was high (mean=4.0). This implies that librarians acknowledge the features of job characteristics to a high extent that allow them adequately discharge their professional duties on the job. Among all the measures of job characteristics measured, skill variety was considered highest with a mean score of 4.20. Task significance (mean = 4.04), task identity (mean=4.40) were also on a high level of staff rating, feedback (mean=3.90) and job autonomy (mean=3.88) were also considered to be high among the five constructs. The percentage contribution of the five constructs to job characteristics is captured in the last column of the table. Skill variety (21.0%) contributed highest to job characteristics while job autonomy (19.4%) offered the smallest amount of contribution, although job autonomy was also perceived high. This might imply that librarians need more independence on the job to adequately perform tasks allotted to them and to promote staff effectiveness.

Under task identity, librarians claimed at a high extent that, once they start a task they have to finish it (mean=4.08), while there was also a high response from librarians in having the chance to do an entire piece of work from beginning to end (mean=3.98), though this was considered to be the lowest under task identity dimension. This result implies that librarians in public Universities in South-South Nigeria perceive that their role fits into the bigger picture and it provide them a sense of accomplishment.

Task significance was also rated to a high extent by librarians in public universities in South-South, Nigeria. This was attributed to them knowing that how well they work affect the lives of other people (Mean=4.10) and that their job influence day-to-day institutional success (Mean=4.04). This implies that their job is significant and important to the library users and also gives them a sense of meaningfulness.

On feedback dimension, librarians rated highly the satisfaction of their supervisors as they carry out their jobs (mean=3.97), while they also claimed, on a high extent to receive on-the-job feedback from superiors about their activities (mean=3.85), although this was considered to be the lowest under feedback measurement. This implies that positive feedback report from supervisors is a key feature present in the jobs of librarians which engender positive outcome like librarians' commitment as was established in the regression analysis.

Furthermore, under job autonomy, the number of librarians who claim that they can set their own schedules for completing assigned tasks was high (mean=3.94), while those who have freedom to decide how they perform assigned tasks was high (mean=3.81). This may infer that a good number of librarians can set their own schedules for completing assigned tasks. This may also imply library management in public universities in South-South, Nigeria are interested in allowing library personnel to have psychological ownership of their job by giving them job freedoms.

Testing of Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: Job characteristics have no significant influence on librarians' affective commitment in public universities in South-South, Nigeria.

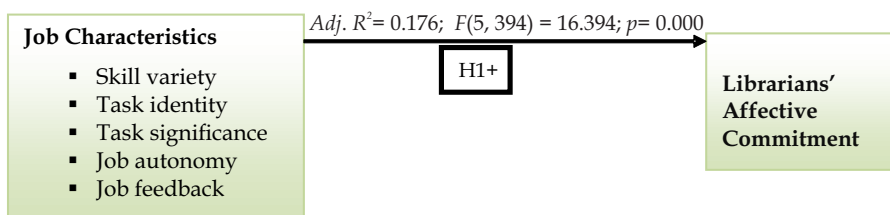
Table 3: Multiple linear regression analysis of the influence of job characteristics on librarians' affective commitment dimension

Model	Predictors		T	P	Partial R ²	R	R ²	R ² (Adjusted)	F	DF	p
1	(Constant)		7.056	0.000		0.420	0.176	0.166	16.883	5, 394	0.000
	Skill variety	0.192	3.499	0.001	0.160						
	Task identity	0.027	0.449	0.653	0.021						
	Task significance	0.083	1.411	0.159	0.065						
	Job autonomy	0.085	1.340	0.181	0.061						
	Feedback	0.162	2.734	0.007	0.125						
Dependent Variable: Librarians' Affective Commitment											

Source: Researchers' field survey 2020

The multiple regression analysis as shown in Table 3 revealed that job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, job autonomy, feedback) had a significant influence on librarians' affective commitment. The model indicates a very good fit, suggesting the result of the regression model is reliable ($R = 0.420$; $R^2 = 0.176$; $Adj. R^2 = 0.166$; $F(5, 394) = 16.394$; $p = 0.000$). Of the five dimensions of job characteristics, skill variety ($\beta = 0.192$; $t = 3.499$; $p = 0.001$) and feedback ($\beta = 0.162$; $t = 2.734$; $p = 0.007$) had weak, positive and significant influences on affective commitment of librarians at 5% level of significance. Skill variety had a higher influence among the five dimensions measured. However, task identify ($\beta = 0.027$; $t = 0.449$; $p = 0.653$), task significance ($\beta = 0.083$; $t = 1.411$; $p = 0.159$) and job autonomy ($\beta = 0.085$; $t = 1.340$; $p = 0.181$) did not significantly influence affective commitment. The five predictors accounts for 16.6% ($Adj. R^2 = 0.166$) of the variance in affective commitment. The finding simply suggests that the model can be used to predict affective commitment of librarians in public universities in South-South Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework (Resultant Model)



Resultant Model Summary

The resultant model showed that job characteristics accounts for 16.6% (Adjusted $R^2=0.166$) of the variance in affective commitment at 5% significant level. Based on the hypothesis formulated for this study, inferably the null hypothesis is rejected and restated thus: Job characteristics have significant influence on librarians affective' commitment in public universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Discussion of Results

This study investigated the influence of job characteristics dimensions on librarians' affective commitment in public universities in South-South, Nigeria. The discussion of findings was based on the result of the four research questions and three hypotheses tested in this study. The findings from this study revealed that librarians in public universities in South-South, Nigeria exhibit high level of affective commitment to their libraries. Specifically, the factors that contributed mostly to librarians' affective commitment were that the librarians were emotionally attached and have strong sense of belonging to their libraries. This finding is in consonance with the study of Shehu and Opeke (2019), who found a high level of commitment affective among librarians in public university libraries in Nigeria. This finding corroborates the finding of Mayowa-Adebara (2018) who investigated the level of librarians in South-west, Nigeria and found that librarians exhibit high levels of affective commitment. The finding of Udofia and Ibegwam (2019) was also in line with the present study that found that affective commitment was high. However, the study of Oyuvwevotu (2018) revealed an opposing result that affective commitment was low among librarians in public universities in South-East Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria.

The outcome of this present study revealed that the extent to which job characteristics are present in the jobs of librarians in public university in South-South was high, based on the decision rule stated. In other words, librarians in the study context understand the characteristics of their jobs. This is in consonance with the study of Akinola and Mayowa-Adegebera, (2020) among librarians in university libraries and found that librarians in university libraries in Southern Nigeria had a very much understanding of their job characteristics. Corroborating this finding is the study of Obi-Nwosu, Joe-Akunne and Oguegbe, (2013) who found that task identity dimension of job characteristics is high in the private sector in Anambra State. The authors' study also established that librarians use variety of skills when performing their duty. The study indicated that librarians feel the presence of skill variety than the remaining dimensions of job characteristics (task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback). The study established that librarians' job do provide them the opportunities of variety of experiences, skills and ability, and that they can use the skills that they have to handle the problem in their jobs as well as their job supports additional training and education. Pentareddy and Suganthi (2015), argued that when the five core dimensions of job characteristics are present in a job, employees experience meaningfulness, responsibility and knowledge of results on the job, also they tend to feel good about their work and perform well.

The result for hypothesis from the multiple linear regression analysis revealed that job characteristics significantly influenced librarians' affective commitment in public universities in South-South Nigeria ($Adj. R^2 = 0.166$; $F(5, 394) = 16.394$; $p = 0.000$). This result implies that job characteristics significantly influenced librarians' affective commitment in public universities in South-South Nigeria. A further evaluation of the dimensions of job characteristics on affective commitment revealed that only skill variety and feedback contributed to librarians' affective commitment. However, task identity, task significance and job autonomy did not contribute to librarians' affective commitment. Buttressing these findings, Ozturk et al. (2014), found a direct relationship between job characteristics and employee commitment, however, only autonomy, feedback and interaction had positive effect on affective commitment, while skill variety and task identity had no significant impact on affective commitment. The findings of this study corroborated researches conducted by Malik and Narang (2015), Pentareddy and Suganthi (2015), and Baquini and Liza (2018), which found that job characteristics significantly influenced affective commitment. However, contradicting the present findings, Pee (2011) found that job autonomy and task significance had a linear positive effect on employees' affective commitment. Pee's study further warns that the lack of autonomy is detrimental to employees' affective commitment, adding that increasing autonomy can improve the situation. Supporting the study of Pee (2011), Nzewi et al. (2017) also contradicted the present study. They found that job autonomy had a positive effect on employees' affective commitment.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the data analysed and findings established, the study revealed that a high level of affective commitment was found among librarians' commitment in public universities in South-South Nigeria. The study found that job characteristics are present in the jobs of librarians to a high extent. This implies that librarians feel a sense of meaningfulness, responsibility and sense of personal fulfilment from the work they perform. Job characteristics had positive and statistically significant influence on affective commitment of librarians in public university libraries in South-South Nigeria. However, the relative coefficient result indicated that of the five dimensions of job characteristics measured, variety of skills used to perform work and the knowledge of the result of work performed by librarians had positive and significant influence on librarians' affective commitment. On the other hand, task identity, task significance and autonomy had no significant influence on librarians' affective commitment. In other words, these characteristics inherent in librarians' jobs can positively trigger their commitment level. Based on the strength of the findings, the study recommends that management of libraries should emphasis on skill variety and feedback to boost the affective commitment on librarians. More so, future studies could replicate same study in other geo-political zones in Nigeria and also extent it to private universities in Nigeria.

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