



STAFF RECRUITMENT (PRE-ENGAGEMENT) VARIABLES AND EMPLOYMENT OF LIBRARY STAFF IN TERTIARY INSTITUTION LIBRARIES IN RIVERS STATE

Comfort N. Owate & Pauline Chinasa Iroeze

Department of Library and Information Science, University of Port Harcourt, Choba,

University Library, Federal University of Technology, Owerri.

Email: comfort.owate@uniport.edu.ng & paulinechinasa1980@gmail.com.

ABSTRACT

The study examined staff recruitment (pre-engagement) variables and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State. The study was guided by four research questions and four objectives. In line with the objective, four null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. A non-linear correlation research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised all the number of applicants (employed and not employed) who applied for library job from 2015 to 2020 in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The reliability index was established using Cronbach Alpha and .8171 was obtained which showed that the instrument was reliable. Data collected for the study were analyzed using Cramer's Correlation Coefficient to answer the research questions posed for the study, while Chi-Square was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study are; that the coefficient of relationship between age and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State is positive and significant; that the coefficient of relationship between academic qualification and the employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State is significant; that there is a positive and significant coefficient of relationship between work experience and the employment of library staff in tertiary institutions in Rivers State is significant. It was recommended that though there is the need for presentation of evidence of age before employment, job vacancies in university libraries should not be specified for applicants of a particular age bracket; that given the level of competition in the labour market, prospective applicants should endeavor to acquire the requisite qualifications in order to brighten their chances of securing a job in university libraries in Nigeria and beyond; that university library management should re-consider the idea of employing only those with certain level of work experience as applicants can still acquire the experience on the job when employed and that there should be no consideration for gender as a factor when employing workers in university libraries.

Keywords: Staff recruitment, Library staff, Tertiary institutions, Rivers State, Variables

INTRODUCTION

Every organization needs to succeed and survive, or compete effectively in the global economy in this era of globalization; hence employers must be in the position to recruit employees that will help it actualize its aim and objectives. The success of a business or an organization is directly linked to the performance of those who work for that organization. The inability for an organization to achieve success can be a result of work place failures. To maintain a standard, every organization has some variables it looks out for in engaging their employees. It is vital that every organization selects people with the quality essential for continued success in this competitive global village. The only means of achieving this success is through proper recruitment practice.

Librarianship today has become a complex profession requiring specific and detailed knowledge of many kinds. It is no longer all-comers' affair, but one that requires that rigid standard to be set for those entering into the profession. Fundamentally, the library is made up of the building, books (information materials like print and non-print), and most importantly the brain. The brain entails the staff or personnel who organize the operations of the library. A library can have an excellent collection of documents, online resources and a magnificent building, but if it does not have a competent workforce (staff), it will lose its relevance; because the complicated services which a modern library renders do not organize and run 'themselves' but must be modified, improved and extended in the light¹ of changing conditions (Uzuegbu & Arua, 2012). The key, therefore, to successful library services rest on having reliable, honest, informed and skillful persons in both major and intermediate positions.

For effective and efficient service delivery, it is required that the academic library be staffed with a mix of the relevant personnel, which include academic librarians (i.e., professionals), Para-professionals, and support staff, Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) (2014). Whichever category, the quality of persons recruited to render



library services determines to a great extent, the quality of output and satisfaction given to the clientele or library users. As a result, the selection of library personnel becomes a matter of foremost concern to librarians and information managers working along with other members of the top management to achieve effective results. The most developed of all academic libraries is the university library. This is because universities have the mission of training high level man power needed for the overall development of their nations. According to Opara (2017), university libraries contribute by performing the functions of conservation, transmission and creation of knowledge. This suggests that university libraries are laboratories that serve the varying information needs of the knowledge seeking community and their parent institutions. They store information materials for advance learning and research, ranging from undergraduate to postgraduate level as well as members of the academic staff and other members of the university community (Onwubiko & Uzoigwe, 2014). Narrowed to managerial perspective, a university library is a service institution which stands on a tripod of finance, human resources and information materials. Each of these is crucial with human resources as the most crucial and of absolute importance because the quality of services depends on the quality and quantity of staff. Qualified librarians are to their libraries what the libraries are to their parent institutions. A well trained and dedicated library staff plays complimentary role in the achievement of library objectives and the overall educational goals of the university.

The word experience can be viewed in various ways; it is an active, involvement in an activity or exposure to events or people over a period of time that leads to an increase in knowledge at skills. This relates to Mishra (2010) proposition that skill acquired is an experience. Moreover, this skill is gained through being involved in or exposed to something over a period of time. People tend to perform certain job functions well as a result of prior knowledge or experience. One with some related work experience stand a better chance of being employed as librarian. However, it doesn't mean that one without such can't

perform well. There are on the job training, orientation, etc. that can put a new employee on the know. Philosophically, experience is a knowledge acquired through the senses and not through abstract reasoning. Therefore, in this study, experience shall comprise skills or abilities acquired, and general contributions to knowledge within the period.

The word gender has been variously defined in many books and literature. According to Oxford dictionary (2015) gender is defined as the state of being male or female with reference to social and cultural differences rather to biological ones. The American Psychological Association (2011) highlights that gender refers to the attitudes a given culture attributes to a person's biological sex. Furthermore, gendering goes beyond individual identities and is imposed on rather than developed from individuals dividing them into two complementary but unequal sets, i.e., "women" and "men". It gives them identity and status shaping their everyday behavior and interaction and privileging some while disadvantaging others. Through this division, norms and roles are constructed into significant social institutions of society or in other words into the "gendered social order". Its power makes men and women to be entrapped in their gender structure that is built by the society and act in a passively shaped way without being able to deviate because of danger of stigmatization (Lorber, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

Acquiring high quality and talented personnel is critical to the success of any university library. As the job market becomes increasingly competitive and more saturated with available skills growing more diverse, employers have become more selective in their choices. This is because poor recruitment decisions can produce long-term negative effects such as inefficiency, bad organization image, poor performance etc. In recent times, it has been observed that internal and external advertisements for librarians in university libraries in Nigeria lay emphasis on such variables like educational qualification, work experience, publication, membership to relevant professional bodies,



Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills and referee reports as essential components of curriculum vitae accompanying application letters for employment into their libraries. But no one knows to what extent each of these variables influences the suitability or otherwise of applicants for employment as sometimes they seem to be mere window dressing. There is no doubt that staff recruitment variables are indispensable for employment in libraries or organizations. It has been observed that in the employment of librarians in university libraries, the employers of librarians in the universities do not lay much emphasis on recruitment variables like age, academic qualification, work experience and gender and this tends to affect their productivity in the office. However, in recent times, it seems that these variables are no longer considered when employing library staff. This may have been due to the issues of favoritism, nepotism and relationships. This scenario may have adverse effects on library services provided.

Not only that the views of practicing librarians in the context of what, or to what extent some of these variables should be considered during recruitments are scarcely known, review of empirical studies show that there is a paucity of literature on the influence of staff recruitment variables on employment of library staff in the universities in Rivers State, Nigeria. Given the fact that the universities in the South-East zone of Nigeria are ranked among the best universities in Nigeria, and that it could not have been possible without the support of their libraries, one would want to know the recruitment variables usually utilized by these libraries to secure the services of their staff Ekere (2011). It therefore, becomes imperative to ask; how do the selected staff recruitment variables of age, academic qualification, work experience and gender influence employment of professionals and para-professional librarians in the Universities in Rivers State Nigeria? This study was an attempt at finding plausible answer to this question, thereby filling the obvious gap that exists in literature on the subject of employment and recruitment variables in the university libraries studied.

Purpose of the Study

Generally, the purpose of the study ascertained the influence of staff recruitment (pre-engagement) variables on the employment of library staff in the libraries in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to;

1. determine the relationship between age and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State.
2. ascertain the relationship between academic qualifications and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State.
3. establish the relationship between work experience and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the relationship between age and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State?
2. What is the relationship between academic qualifications and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between work experience and employment of library staff in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significance level to guide the study.

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between age and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State is not significant.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between academic qualifications and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State is not significant.

HO₃: There is no significant relationship between work experience and the employment of library staff in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.



Literature Review Conceptual Clarification

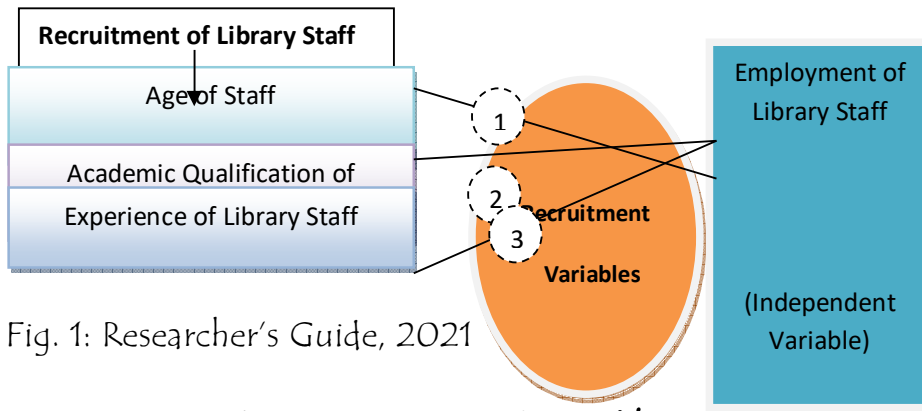


Fig. 1: Researcher's Guide, 2021

Recruitment and (Pre-Engagement) Variables

The recruitment of staff in any organization is regularly carried out to fill existing vacancies. As explained by Opara (2010), recruitment is the process of finding and attracting suitable qualified people to apply for job vacancies in the organization. It is a set of activities an organization uses to attract job candidates who have the needed abilities and attitudes. Recruitment is the process of generating a pool of qualified applicants for organizational job vacancies. For Ofori and Aryeetey (2011), recruitment is the process of generating a pool of competent individuals to apply for employment within an organization. The general purpose of recruitment according to Gamage (2014) is to provide the organization with a pool of potentially qualified job candidates. The quality of human resource in an organization highly depends on the quality of applicants attracted because organization is going to select employees from those who were attracted because organization is going to select employees from those who were attracted.

In fact, the basic purpose of recruitment is to create a pool of suitably qualified candidates to enable the selection of the best candidates for the organization, by attracting more employees to apply in the organization (Gamage, 2014). The author further stated that available evidence indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between recruitment and the performance of an enterprise. It is an

exercise that has stages. The stages in recruitment includes; searching for candidates by networking, advertising or other methods. Utilizing professional interview techniques to understand the candidates' skill but motivations to make a move, screening potential candidates using testing, (skill or personality) is also a popular part of the process. The process is meant to not only evaluate the candidate but also to evaluate how the candidate will fit into the organization.

In some, if one pursues reviews of recruitment research, one finds a mix of optimism and pessimism. Reviewers were pleased that research on recruitment had increased and they were confident that progress in understanding the effect of recruitment activities was being made, yet they also seemed frustrated that more progress in understanding recruitment process has not occurred. Sundheim (2011) states that three factors are crucial in the selection of employees in a company. One, the employer should ensure that prospective employees do not pay a fee during application. This is also applicable where the organization is outsourcing the recruitment exercise. Second, where the recruiter is outsourced, the organization should ensure the efficacy of the recruiter in terms of past qualification and general success in the business. Three, the goal of the organization should be clearly understood by employers and applicants respectively.

Writing on some of the challenges facing recruitment in organization, (Istvan 2010) observed that there are a plenty of techniques used in recruitment and hiring today among which are some methods not accepted by experts universally, or not recommended for the hiring process. As argued by (Istvan 2010). One possible approach is to compare hiring techniques on the basis of their validity, impartiality, scope of usage, and cost. In all, Singha and Thaly (2013) noted that there is a variety of recruitment approaches (e.g., employee referral, campus recruitment, advertising, recruitment agencies/consultants, job sites/portals, company websites, social media etc.) and most organizations will use a combination of two or more of these as part of a recruitment process or to deliver their overall recruitment strategy. However, which



recruiting channels should be used depends on the jobs position, on the company's employer brand, on the resources the company has, etc. One can use them all and find out which suits the best. Every recruiting channel offers different benefits and limitations and works better for certain situations and companies. The key is collecting real-time recruitment metrics on these recruiting channels to figure out what works best for the company in different situations. The recruiting experience of each company is different and the best way to figure out what works best is to analyze metrics based on the past recruiting efforts, not the efforts of everybody else. Once the company has its recruiting metrics solution in place, it is time to start the recruiting channels that the company thinks will work for it (Sinha & Thaly, 2013).

Age and Employment of Library Staff

Age is a period of human life, measured by years from birth, usually marked by a certain stage or degree of mental or physical development and involving legal responsibility and capacity. It is also the length of time that a person or thing has existed. It is a common knowledge that every applicant to a job must indicate his or her age. More often than not, employers demand for birth certificate, declaration of age and other documents to attest to the age given by prospective employees. The significance of this demand is what many researchers have sought to know. Yearta (2015) stated that age does not affect employee work performance, Smalley and Whitten (2016) are of the opinion that difference of age could also be a potential factor for work performance. Again, Shultz and Adam (2017) asserted that there were significant differences between age groups concerning work performance. Kujala, Remes, Tammelin, and Laitinen (2015) emphasized that younger people are poor on work performance. Birren and Schaie (2011) stated that older people are very poor on work performance.

Age is an important determinant of work performance of an employee. Based on the person correlation result, most of the employees, in government agricultural agencies in Malaysia are youths and have a wonderful work performance (Shaffril & Uli, 2010). Cappelli and

Ragovsky (2015) stated that the youths should be concentrated more in terms of strengthening their knowledge and skills. In support also, Schwartz and Kleiner (2019) stressed on the relationship between age and employment. Their work showed that, the age of employees is crucial to their employment and concluded that many companies faced with more mature workers will have to revise their attitudes. Similarly, Walker (2018) also observed that age is a factor which influences employment. The author observed that older work forces are ignored and the younger work force are highly engaged. The emphasis here appears to be like revised ease in terms of experience, although it is likely that no employer would go for tired and almost retiring work force.

Employing an age diverse work force could have real benefits for any organization. People of all ages have the potential to contribute positively to your business at every level. We recognize that all businesses are unique. This work is not intended to cover all individual circumstances or provide advice, but it will give you a range of examples of how other - small, medium and large- organizations are realizing their potentials through the way they advertise jobs and recruit new staff. It includes practical steps you can take to get you started and ensure you get the best person for the job. By this, it is becoming difficult in varying countries to place the best age bracket that are more favored when it comes to age and employment in their study, Gayen, McQuaid and Raeside (2010), made a four-wheel comparison by age and employment status in order to investigate age of workers mostly sought for in a social network environment. Their findings on how that age was influenced by experience showed that the older cadre of the work force was recruited mainly because of their experience while the younger cadre was sought for based on their qualifications. However, as an implication, researchers agreed that over fifty (50) workers' cadre (older work three) tend to be the age group that is most likely to be not in employment but concludes that as population age, there is a need to ensure that barriers of employment against those over fifty (50) are reduced.



Academic Qualification and Employment of Library Staff

Academic qualification in this context entails the academic attributes that make somebody suitable for a specific job. It is the type of a skill needed to function optimally for a particular job or activity. There have been various studies with various results on the nature of relationship between prospective employees' qualifications and their employment in organizations. According to Singh (2014), libraries need the services of professionally qualified librarians for proper administration of the system. A library having good collection and adequate staff may not essentially provide effective library services, unless it is managed by professionally qualified librarians having managerial capabilities. The author further stresses that educational qualifications of librarians influence the organizational health of libraries. Higher academic and professional qualifications lead to better library management and ultimately better library services. Specifically, Nnadozie (2016) observes that because of the complexity of university librarianship, its professional manpower is required to possess specific educational qualifications in addition to other professional certifications. For enhanced service delivery, there is need for adequate staffing in the library. Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) (2014) maintains that for effective and efficient service delivery, it is required that the academic library be staffed by a mix of the relevant personnel, which include Professionals, Para-professionals, and support staff. The body (LRCN) further specified the qualifications required for academic library staff as follow:

Professional Librarians

- Minimum of first degree in Library and Information Science (LIS) or first degree in another discipline with masters in LIS;
- Certification with Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria;
- Evidence of publication of scholarly works;
- ICT competencies and literacy; and
- Regular training and retraining.

Para-professional Librarians

- Minimum of National Diploma in Library and Information Science;

- ICT competencies and literacy; and
 - Regular training and retraining. (pp. 8-10).
- With the afore-listed benchmarks, the calls from Paliwal (2002);

Ansari (2003); Ifidon and Ifidon (2007); Nnadozie (2007) and Ifidon (2008) that adequate qualification be checked during recruitment, particularly on the professional library staff that are ranked at par with professors, readers and lecturers has been given a solid foundation for assessment. This is indeed a welcome development because the success of any library in achieving its goals, according to (Singh, 2014) is determined to a great extent by the competence of its human resources. Joining the proponents of academic qualification for employment, Shaffril and Uli (2010), are of the opinion that employees with higher educational qualifications perform better than their colleagues who possess lower or no educational qualification. Although, much as academic qualifications alone may not guarantee total and quality job delivery, it gives an employee a sound and solid platform and serves as a threshold for explosive performance, all other things being equal. Hence, LIS professionals are expected to be academic of higher order with competence to work in a hypertext, networked and digital environment. Shaffril and Uli (2010) capped the issue by stated that employees with higher educational qualifications perform better than colleagues who possess lower or no educational qualification.

Work Experience and Employment of Library Staff

Work experience comprises years of exposure to work, skills or abilities acquired and general contribution to knowledge within a given period of time. It entails skills gained through being actively involved in or exposed to something over a period of time. Philosophically, experience is knowledge acquired through the series of engagements and not through abstract reasoning. Shaffril and Uli (2010), observe that working experience is a significant factor in employment, noting that the use of experienced manpower yields to good work performance. The authors claim that the more experienced an applicant is, the higher work performance he has, hence the centrality of the place of experience in



determining the employability of a candidate. According to Akhilesh and Prerana (2016), employability skills are transferable core skill groups that represent essential functions and enabling knowledge, skills, and attitude required by the 21st century workplace. They are necessary for career success at all levels; and job industries irrespective of their fields always look for competent, best qualified, skilled, experienced and suitable employee for their organizations. The Library and Information sector is not an exception to this. Experience is one of the mandatory requirements for those being interviewed for appointments into university libraries. The needfulness of money in library operations notwithstanding, the centrality of the place of experienced librarians cannot be compared with any other resource of the library (Ifidon & Ifidon, 2007). The iconographic power of a university library expresses a purpose not just to collect, but also to organize, preserve and make knowledge accessible. In its prominence and placement, the university library conveys its integral role in supporting universities' core missions of research and education. The attainment of the lofty expectations from university libraries requires that the services of blended and experienced librarians are secured (Uzuegbu & Arua, 2012). There is a positive role of experience during recruitment of prospective employees which cannot be over-emphasized. It helps in developing skills in communication and team work as well as helps a young person to decide if a work area is likely to be what they want. It also gives a prospective employee an insight into the kind of work he/she will likely be doing.

In today's society, employers look very closely at prospective employees' Curriculum Vitae (CV) to see why they should be employed and not someone else. A CV- short for the latin phrase "curriculum vitae" meaning "course of life" – is a detailed document highlighting your professional and academic history. CVs typically include information like work experience, achievements and awards, scholarships or grants you've earned, coursework, research projects and publications of your work. A CV is typically two or three pages long, but its not unusual for it to be much longer for mid-level or senior job applicants

as it serves as a full outline of one's career accomplishments. Indeed, career guide (2021). Work experience is one of such factors they look out for during this exercise. One of the most valuable benefits of work experience is that of placing a prospective employee in a real-life situation, it gives him/her opportunity to work with people for whom the job is their full-time occupation. Hence, a successful period of work experience will not only look good on an applicant's CV but has the potentials of increasing his chances of securing a job during employment. It is worthy to note that requirements for experience during recruitments in libraries must be based on relevance to library operations. Hence, such experience must have been obtained while working in a library or similar organization.

Specifically, it has been recommended that applicants being considered for the position of a University Librarian (UL) must possess at least fifteen years post-qualification experience in an academic or research library, three or more of which must have been spent in an administrative position; while those for Deputy University Librarian (DUL) should possess at least twelve years of post-qualification experience in an academic or research library, three of which must have been spent in an administrative position. Those applying for Senior Librarian (SL) should possess at least nine years post-qualification experience in an academic or research library; while those for Librarian 1 and Librarian 11 should possess at least six- and three-years post-qualification experience respectively (Ifidon & Ifidon 2007).

Work experience in an establishment is usually considered as a key to effective job performance. According to Ekere and Ugwu (2011), the higher the working experience, the more satisfaction librarians derive from their job. It then follows that for one to stay put in a job for so long, would confirm the value of the job and at the same time would moderate the satisfaction of the worker. It goes to show the satisfaction of the acquaintance, adaptation and convenience of the worker, unlike the worker with shorter working experience. Hence, work experience is a factor that can influence employment and job satisfaction in university



libraries in Nigeria. Evidently, the experience one gathers during work over years is bound to help the Librarian overcome associated challenges in future. This could be the reason that prompted Singh, (2014) to describe experienced staff as an indispensable asset of any university library.

The preference for older people (experienced working population) than younger people (non-experienced working population) has been stressed by City Restoration Development (2012). This establishment of the opinion that experienced workforce performs better than inexperience or fresh work force in any establishment. This was also captured in the work of Shaffril and Uli (2010) that working experience is a significant factor noting that the use of experienced manpower yields good work performance. The authors claim that the older the employee is the higher work performance he has. Borghaans and Nelen (2019) also stated that younger employees are less experienced and therefore, has lower work experience compared to older workers.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a correlation research design. This research design is considered appropriate for the study because the purpose of the study is to ascertain the relationship that exists between the variables (age, academic qualifications, work experience and gender) and the other variable (employment). The population of this study is 1351. It comprised all the number of people (employed and unemployed) who applied for library job from 2010 to 2020 in tertiary institutions in Rivers State (From the Registrars' Establishment, 2020). The sample for this study comprised all the 1351 people (employed and not employed) who applied for library job from 2015 to 2020 in from the schools under investigation. The Crombach Alpha Scale of test of reliability was used to test the reliability of the instrument via SPSS version 23 and .891>.71 was obtained which showed that the instrument was highly reliable. The data collected were analyzed using Crammer's Correlation Coefficient to answer the research questions, while Chi-Square was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Decision Rule: When the calculated Chi-square (χ^2_{cal}) is less than the tabulated Chi-square value (χ^2_{crit}), the null hypothesis was rejected otherwise the null hypothesis was accepted.

RESULTS

Research Question One: What is the relationship between age and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State?

Table 1: Crammer's Correlation Coefficient and Chi-Square on Relationship between Age and Employment of Library Staff

n	ϕ^1	χ^2_{cal}	df	χ^2_{crit}	Decision
1351	0.260	91.42	2	5.991	H ₀₁ is accepted

ϕ^1 = Crammer's Coefficient; df = degree of freedom; n = sample size

Presented in Table 1 are the Crammer's coefficient and Chi-square for investigating the degree of relationship between age and employment of library staff. The table shows that the Crammer's coefficient (ϕ^1) of relationship between age and employment of library staff in tertiary institutions in Rivers State is 0.260. This is a positive coefficient of relationship, and an indication that there is a consideration for age as a factor in employment of library staff in libraries.

Hypothesis One: The relationship between age and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State is not significant. Data in Table 1 also shows that the calculated Chi-square (χ^2_{cal}) of 91.42 is less than the tabulated Chi-square value (χ^2_{crit}) of 5.991. Therefore, based on this result, the null hypothesis one is rejected. Hence, the conclusion that the relationship of relationship between age and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State is significant.

Research Question Two: What is the coefficient of relationship between academic qualification and the employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State?



Table 2: Crammer's Correlation Coefficient and Chi-Square on Relationship between Academic Qualification and the Employment of Library Staff

n	φ^1	χ^2_{Cal}	df	χ^2_{Crit}	Decision
1351	0.292	115.293	3	7.815	H_{02} is rejected

φ^1 = Crammer's Coefficient; df = degree of freedom; n = sample size

Table 2 presents the Crammer's coefficient of relationship between academic qualification and the employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State. The Crammer's coefficient between the two variables is 0.292 indicating a positive relationship between academic qualification and the employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Two: The coefficient of relationship between academic qualification and the employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State is not significant. Data in Table 2 also shows that the calculated Chi-square (χ^2_{Cal}) of 115.293 is less than the tabulated Chi-square value (χ^2_{Crit}) of 7.815. Based on this result, the null hypothesis two is therefore rejected. Hence, the conclusion that the coefficient of relationship between academic qualification and the employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State is significant.

Research Question Three: What is the coefficient of relationship between work experience and the employment of library staff in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 3: Crammer's Correlation Coefficient and Chi-Square on Relationship between Work Experience and the Employment of Library Staff

n	φ^1	χ^2_{Cal}	df	χ^2_{Crit}	Decision
1351	0.270	98.127	2	5.991	H_{03} is rejected

φ^1 = Crammer's Coefficient; df = degree of freedom; n = sample size

Table 3 presents the Crammer's coefficient of relationship between work experience and the employment of library staff in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The Crammer's coefficient between the two variables is 0.270. This indicates a high relationship between work experience and the employment of library staff in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Hypothesis Three: The coefficient of relationship between work experience and the employment of library staff in tertiary institutions in Rivers State is not significant.

Data in Table 3 also shows that the calculated Chi-square (χ^2_{cal}) of 98.127 is less than the tabulated Chi-square value (χ^2_{crit}) of 5.991. The null hypothesis three is therefore rejected. Hence, the conclusion that the coefficient of relationship between work experience and the employment of library staff in tertiary institutions in Rivers State is significant.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following are the major findings of the study.

1. The coefficient of relationship between age and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State is positive and significant.
2. The coefficient of relationship between academic qualification and the employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State is significant.
3. There is a positive and significant coefficient of relationship between work experience and the employment of library staff in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In this section, the results of the research findings are discussed based on research questions and hypotheses used for the study and presented under the following headings;



Relationship between Age and Employment of Library Staff

The first objective of the study was to ascertain if any relationship existed between age and employment of library staff in the two public university libraries in Rivers State. The result of data analyses in this direction indicated that there was a positive and significant relationship between the two hypothesized variables. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This goes to explain that age is considered as a factor in the recruitment and employment of staff in academic libraries of FUTO and IMSU. This therefore, may be predicated on the fact that a staff whose age is young could have greater potential for work performance in the library than the older ones and as a result, could be considered for a job. This finding is a confirmation of the findings by Uzegbu and Arua (2012) who found that age is, to a greater extent, one of the major factors considered during employment library and information professionals. Lending credence to this, Shaffril and Uli (2010) stated that age is an important determinant of work performance of an employee.

Relationship between Academic Qualifications and Employment of Library Staff

The second objective of this study was to establish the relationship between academic qualification and the employment of library staff in FUTO and IMSU libraries. The finding of this study has revealed that there is a significant coefficient of relationship between academic qualifications and the employment of library staff, thus leading to the rejection of the non-significant hypothesis. This relationship could be explained by the fact that the nature of services provided by university libraries requires a high level of intellectual capacity and academic competence. It may as well be attributed to the recognition that effective and efficient library service delivery in university libraries could be a mirage unless competent and well qualified individuals are hired to execute library functions. This is why a competent and qualified workforce is regarded as the most variable asset of any library. This finding is in consonance with the statement by Singh (2014) that libraries need the services of professionally qualified librarians for proper

administration of the system. Corroborating this finding, Nnadozie (2016) posited that because of the complexity of university librarianship, its professional manpower is required to possess specific educational qualifications in addition to other professional certifications. The result of the study equally agrees with Ifidon and Ifidon (2007) who recommended that applicants to be selected for library work must have adequate professional qualification in librarianship.

Relationship between Work Experience and Employment Library Staff

The third objective of the study was to determine the relationship between work experience and the employment of library staff in libraries in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Result of the data analyses indicated that there is a positive and significant coefficient of relationship between work experience and the employment of library staff. This can be seen from the correlation coefficient which is 0.270. This result may be linked to the desire of university library managers to hire applicants that have had good understanding of how the library system works and are ready to bring that wealth of experience to bear rather than experimenting with fresh minds. It may also be that experienced applicants are believed to understand the everyday reality of the working in a university library and possess the requisite skills and competence for effective and efficient service delivery. The finding of this study is in agreement with the findings by Shaffril and Uli (2010) that work experience is a significant factor in employment, noting that the use of experienced manpower yields to good work performance. The authors claim that the more experienced an applicant is, the higher work performance he has, hence the centrality of the place of experience in determining the employability of a candidate. Lending support to this finding, Uzuegbu and Arua (2012) stated that the attainment of the lofty expectations from university libraries requires that the services of blended and experienced librarians are secured.



CONCLUSION

This study examined staff recruitment (pre-engagement) variables and employment of library staff in tertiary institution libraries in Rivers State. The background to the study treated exhaustively the variables of the study such as age, work experience, academic qualifications and gender and their relationships with staff employment in university libraries. The statement of the problem was an attempt at finding if the above study variables could influence the employment of staff in university libraries. The study was guided by four research questions and four objectives. In line with the objective, four null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The literature from various authors were reviewed to cover the study variables such as concept of employment, recruitment, academic libraries as well as age, academic qualifications, work experience and gender, and their association with staff employment in university libraries. Two theories such as the Signaling Theory and Screening Theory were adopted for the study. Some related empirical studies were as well reviewed in the study.

A non-linear correlation research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all the number of people (employed and unemployed) who applied for library job from 2015 to 2020 in Federal University of Technology, Owerri and Rivers State University, Owerri. The instrument for data collection captioned "Recruitment and Employment of Library Staff Checklist (RELSC)" was used to collect data for the study. The instrument for data collection was validated by three research specialists; one from Measurement and Evaluation while the other two were from the Department of Library and Information Science, Faculty of Education, Rivers State University, Owerri. The reliability index was established using PPMC method and it was (r) 0.81. Data collected for the study were analyzed using Crammer's Correlation Coefficient to answer the research questions posed for the study, while chi-square was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made;

1. Though there is the need for presentation of evidence of age before employment, job vacancies in university libraries should not be specified for applicants of a particular age bracket.
2. Given the level of competition in the labour market, prospective applicants should endeavor to acquire the requisite qualifications in order to brighten their chances of securing a job in university libraries in Nigeria and beyond.
3. University library management should re-consider the idea of employing only those with certain level of work experience as applicants can still acquire the experience on the job when employed.

REFERENCES

- Adio, G., & Popoola, S. O. (2010). Demographic variables and self-efficacy as factors influencing career commitment of librarians in federal university libraries in Nigeria. *Philosophy and Practice (E-Journal)*, Paper no. 329. Retrieved from <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/329>.
- Aina, L.O. & Ajiferuke (2012) Research methodologies in Information Science. in Aina, L.O. (ed.). *Research in Information Science: An African Perspective*. Ibadan: Sterling – Horden Publishers.
- Cappelli, P. & Ragovski (2015). Self- assessed skills and job performance (NCAL Technical Report TR94-08). Available at: <http://www.literacy.org/PDFs/TR9408.pdf>
- City Research Development (2012). The importance of skills and experience on workers. Available at: www.ccityregion.net.
- Cole, G.A. (2010). *Personnel and human resources management* (5th ed.). London: book power.
- Connelly, B.L., Certo, S.T. & Reutzell, C.R. (2011). Signaling theory: A review and assessment. *Journal of Management*, 37(1), 39-67.
- Fereshteh, G.G & Seyed, J. F.H. (2017). Factors affecting the performance of the agricultural advisors in increasing production



in the wheat self-sufficiency plan (WSP) in Qazvin province. Available at: [http://www.apec.upm.edu.my/agrex/FULL%20paper%20pdf%20\(AGREX08\)/fereshteh%20ghiasvand-60.pdf](http://www.apec.upm.edu.my/agrex/FULL%20paper%20pdf%20(AGREX08)/fereshteh%20ghiasvand-60.pdf).

- Gayen, K., McQuaid, R. & Raeside, R. (2010). Social networks, age cohorts and employment. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 30 (5/6), 219-238.
- Ghiasi, M., & Limoni, S. T. (2015). Investigating the factors affecting the level of job satisfaction among the librarians at Central Library of Islamic Azad University of District 3. *Library Philosophy and Practice*, Paper 1350, 1-3. Retrieved from
- Ifidon, S. E. (2008). Review of library and information practice in Nigeria. *Heartland Journal of Library and Information Science*. 2(1&2): 102-110.
- Jabroun, N. & Balakrishnan, V. (2010). Participation and job performance in the Malaysian Public service department. Available at: <http://emeraldinsight.com/Insight/viewPDF.jsp?contentType=Article&Filename=html/Output/Published/EmeraldFullTextArticle/Pdf/3480100305.pdf>.
- Jackson, J.A & Clouse, R.W (2018). Academic library status: A review of employment opportunities. *Behavioral and Social Sciences Librarian*, 6 (3), 139-166.
- Jones, Deetta (2014) "want to motivate your staff? Give them good job to do". Deetta Jones blog. July 16, 2014. Accessed Sep. 12,2020.
- Koontz, H. & Weihrich, H. (2018). *Essentials of management*. New Delhi, India: Tata
- Lewis, A. (2015). *Employee selection*. London: Hutchinson.
- Librarian's Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN) (2014). Minimum standard and guidelines for academic libraries in Nigeria. Retrieved from www.lrcn.gov.ng. on 21/7/2020.
- Linz, S.J. (2012). *Job satisfaction among Russian workers*. William Davidson Institute McGraw Hill.
- Mindia, P. N. (2018) Effects of e-recruitment and internet on recruitment process: An empirical study on multinational

- companies of Bangladesh. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management (IJSRM)*, 6 (1), 1-6. www.ijerm.in.
- Mishra, V. K. (2010). Comparative study of essential qualifications/experience for library staff, skills required in ICT environment and syllabus of LIS education in digital era: a case study. *Change Management*, 3(4), 351-355.
- Africa's Development (NEPAD). Library Philosophy and Practice. Available: <http://unllib.unl.edu/LPP/nkiko-yusuf.htm>.
- Nwachukwu, C.C. (2010). Human resources management. Port Harcourt, Nigeria:
- Onwubiko, C. P. C. (2014). *Fundamentals of management in libraries*. Owerri: CREMB publishers.
- Opara, U. N. (2007). *Guide to use of libraries* (2nd ed.). Owerri: spring field publishers limited.
- Plumbley, P. (2015). *Recruitment and selection*. London: IPM. *recruitment: The future of librarianship in Colorado*. Colorado: Library Research Routledge.
- Rutherford, D. R and David, C. W. (2004). *University Library Administration*. New York: the H.W. Wilson company.
- Rynes, S.L. (2019). Recruitment, job choice and post- hire consequences. In M.D Dunnett (Ed.), *Handbook of industrial and organizational psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 399- 444). Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Susan M.H. (2020) What is employment? Definition and examples of employment Susan M. Health field, July 11, 2020.
- Uzomah, P.N (2014). Trends in conducting and reporting research works. (Common errors and specifications) 4, 52-54.
- Walker, A. (2018). Age and employment. *Australian Journal on Aging*, 17(1), 99- 103.
- Wanous, J.P. (2012). *Organizational entry*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Yearta, S.K (2015). *Does age matter? Journal of Management Development*, 14, (7), 28-35.
- Yusuf, H. O. & Dada, A. A. (2016) Impact of teachers' qualification and experience on the performance of students in colleges of



education in Kaduna State, Nigeria. *The Online Journal of Quality in Higher Education*, 3 (2), 52-61 older employees. United Kingdom: Gower.