

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITIES AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF LIBRARIANS IN PUBLIC ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study focuses on Emotional Intelligence Capabilities and Job Performance of Librarians in Public Academic Libraries in South East Nigeria. Two objectives were formulated with corresponding research questions and hypotheses. The research used correlation research design. The population of the study was 667 consisting of all professional and para-professional in academic libraries which is limited to universities and polytechnics libraries in South East. Nigeria. The sample size is 316 derived from the application of William Bill (2004). A structured Questionnaire titled “Emotional Intelligence Capabilities and Job performance of Librarians in Academic Libraries in South east Nigeria” was used to collect data for the study. Data were analyzed using PPMC at 0.05 level of significance. It can be said that there was a significance relationship between self-awareness and job performance of librarians. The findings show that self-awareness and self-management influences job performance of librarians. The study concluded that librarians who possess a better understanding of their emotional strength, limitation and behavioural patterns are more likely to perform their duties effectively and efficiently and also librarians who are able to regulate their emotions, manage stress and maintain self-discipline are more likely to demonstrate higher level of job performance. Based on the findings, it is recommended that public academic libraries should organize regular training programme, workshops and self-development seminars that librarians self-awareness and self-management enabling them to better understand their emotions strength, weakness and behavioural patterns for improved job performance

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Job Performance, self-awareness, Self-management Librarians
Academic Libraries, South-East Nigeria

Introduction

Emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as one of the most influential constructs in organizational psychology because it explains how individuals recognize, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions to enhance personal effectiveness and interpersonal

relationships. The increasing complexity of modern workplaces has shifted attention from cognitive intelligence alone to emotional competencies that enable employees to communicate effectively, adapt to organizational changes, resolve conflicts, and maintain productive relationships. Thus, emotional intelligence has become an essential attribute for professionals whose work depends largely on interpersonal interactions, including librarians.

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Similarly, Wei, Zhao, Zhang, Liu and Zhang (2022) described emotional intelligence as a comprehensive emotional capability that enables individuals to recognize emotions in themselves and others, regulate emotional reactions, employ emotions in cognitive processes, and maintain effective interpersonal relationships. Further, emotional intelligence integrates emotional awareness with behavioural competencies, making it an indispensable resource for enhancing employee effectiveness, leadership, teamwork, and organizational productivity.

Maddocks (2023) argued that emotional intelligence should not merely be viewed as a personality trait but as an evaluative capability through which individuals interpret emotional experiences before responding to them. Accordingly, emotionally intelligent individuals continuously evaluate emotional information, allowing them to make balanced decisions, regulate behaviour appropriately, and interact more effectively with others. This is an indication that emotional intelligence is a dynamic psychological process that influences both individual behaviour and workplace interactions.

The concept of emotional intelligence (EI)) has gained considerable attention in the field of organizational behaviour and psychology due to its significant impact on individual and group performance. Emotional intelligence is defined as the ability to recognize, understand and manage one's own emotions and the emotions of others; plays a critical role in shaping work place, dynamics and individual job outcomes. In the context of librarianship where interactions with diverse stakeholder are privotal, the application of emotional intelligence becomes particularly relevant librarians as custodians of knowledge and facilitators of information access navigate complex emotional and professional landscapes which influence their job overall performance (Eniekebi, Adomi and Umuokor 2024).

Emotional intelligence comprises five key components: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, empathy, and relationship management. These components serve as important dimensions for assessing the job performance of librarians and paraprofessional staff in libraries. Self-awareness is one of the fundamental dimensions of emotional intelligence and refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and accurately evaluate his or her own emotions, thoughts, strengths, weaknesses, values, and behavioural tendencies. Within the workplace, self-awareness serves as the foundation upon which other emotional intelligence competencies are built. According to Extremera, Mérida-López, Sánchez-Álvarez and Quintana-Orts (2021), self-awareness is the emotional capability that enables individuals to identify and accurately interpret their emotional experiences while understanding the influence of these emotions on cognition and behaviour. Similarly, Wei, Zhao, Zhang, Liu and Zhang (2022) described self-awareness as the ability to consciously recognize one's emotional states, understand their causes, and appreciate how emotions influence behaviour and workplace performance.

Self-management is a core dimension of emotional intelligence that refers to an individual's ability to regulate, control, and direct emotions. According to Agu, Emezue, Anyanwu, Anayochukwu, and Ifegwu (2022) defined self-management as the ability of employees to exercise self-control, regulate emotional reactions, and manage workplace behaviour in ways that support organizational objectives.

Social awareness refers to an individual's ability to accurately perceive, understand, and interpret the emotions, concerns, perspectives, and needs of others across different social contexts. According to Keefer, Parker, and Saklofske (2023), social awareness is the capacity to recognize emotional signals in others and to use this understanding to facilitate positive interpersonal interactions and adaptive social behaviour.

Empathy refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and appropriately respond to the emotions, feelings, and perspectives of others. It involves placing oneself in another person's situation. According to Castillo-Gualda, Cabello, and Fernández-Berrocal (2021), empathy is the capacity to understand and appropriately respond to the emotional experiences of other individuals through accurate emotional perception and perspective-taking. Relationship management refers to an individual's ability to establish, maintain, and strengthen positive interpersonal relationships through effective communication, collaboration, influence, conflict resolution, and teamwork. According to Schlegel and Mortillaro (2022), relationship management is the ability to utilize emotional information effectively to develop constructive interpersonal relationships, resolve conflicts, and facilitate cooperative interactions.

Job performance reflects the extent to which employees successfully accomplish the responsibilities assigned to them in line with organizational goals and standards. In academic libraries, job performance represents the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality with which librarians perform professional duties, provide information services, support teaching and research, manage information resources, and contribute to the achievement of institutional objectives. Job performance is conceptualized by Yaya, Opeke and Onuoha (2016) to mean the level of positive attitude that a librarian displays when performing duties in the library.

The person who performs the professional library job in the library is called a librarian. A librarian is therefore, a professionally trained person who may possess a degree or an HND, a Master's and/or a Ph.D in library and information science, and works in a library or similar institution. Nwokocha (2013) observes that a librarian is not just a person who works in a library but a graduate of a recognized University with a minimum of a first

degree in library and information science. He further opined that Holders of Higher National Diploma (HND) obtained from polytechnics may also be admitted as librarians.

Some empirical studies have been done in relation to the study at hand, such as Rahman, Ahmad, Ullah, Khan and Ahmad (2025), whose study investigated the influence of emotional intelligence on the job performance of librarians: Evidence from public libraries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study found that librarians in public libraries generally demonstrated a high level of emotional intelligence, with positive perceptions across their major dimensions, including emotional perception, emotional use, and emotional understanding various studies have been done in this areas, however, none of the studies covered the specific aspects of the present study. In the light of the foregoing, this study investigates the emotional intelligence and job performance of librarians in academic libraries in South East zone, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Emotional intelligent is one of the critical factors that an employee possesses in order to enhance job performance and overall organizational good health. Emotional intelligence also encourages solid interpersonal relationship among employees. In academic libraries, emotional intelligence has been observed as critical in the job performance of librarians the research work of Basalywa, Unegbu & Babalola (2020), Emmanuel and Kolaude (2020) and America Library Association (2020) have carefully shown that emotional intelligence has good relationship with job performance of librarians. Although these research works only expressed their finding in specific academic libraries and certain categories of personnel in other regions and places, they are limited both in scope and intensity. To relate emotional intelligence to librarians in academic libraries in the entire South East zone of Nigeria remains empirically unexplained because of unavailable research works on them. There is therefore a observable neglect on the job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in the entire South East. This may lead to speculations and guess work. In other to fill this void and minimize guess work, this research becomes very imperative. It is therefore on this premise that this research work titled Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance of Librarians in Public Academic Libraries in South East Nigeria is embarked upon.

Objectives

The main purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence and job performance of librarians in the public academic libraries. The specific objectives are to:

- i. determine the relationship between self-awareness and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria.
- ii. establish the relationship between self-management and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria.

Research Questions

This research is to provide answers to the following research questions:

- i. What is the relationship between self-awareness and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the relationship between self-management and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

Two null hypotheses are formulated for this study.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between self-management and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria.

Literature Review

The concept of emotional intelligence influences human relationships, leadership effectiveness, well-being, and job performance. Emotional intelligence refers to an individual's ability to recognize, understand, regulate, and appropriately utilize emotions in oneself and others to facilitate effective thinking, decision-making, and interpersonal relationships. Since its introduction by Salovey and Mayer in 1990, the concept has evolved through several theoretical perspectives and has become an important predictor of workplace success alongside cognitive intelligence.

Owan, Nwannunu, Obogo, Owan, Okon, Etorti and Ngwanya (2026) explained that emotional intelligence involves emotional perception, emotional regulation, emotional understanding, and emotional utilization, all of which are measurable competencies that predict workplace effectiveness among academic staff. Thus, emotional intelligence can be developed through appropriate training and continuous professional development.

Similarly, Eniekebi and Agbanu (2024) observed that emotional intelligence enables librarians to recognize and regulate emotions while interacting effectively with colleagues and library users. According to them, emotionally intelligent librarians demonstrate better communication skills, improved customer service, stronger teamwork, and greater adaptability to workplace challenges. Ogungbeni, Ogungbo and Yahaya (2013) argued that emotional intelligence contributes significantly to librarians' productivity because emotionally competent professionals are better able to manage workplace stress, maintain positive attitudes, and establish healthy interpersonal relationships.

Self-awareness is widely recognized as the foundation of emotional intelligence because it enables individuals to understand their emotions, thoughts, values, strengths, weaknesses, and behavioural tendencies, and how these influence their actions and interactions with others. It involves consciously recognizing one's internal emotional states while appreciating the impact of these emotions on decision-making, relationships, and performance. Self-awareness is not merely self-reflection but a continuous process of monitoring, evaluating, and understanding oneself within different personal and professional contexts (Carden, Jones & Passmore, 2022).

Self-management is a core dimension of emotional intelligence that refers to an individual's ability to regulate emotions, control impulses, adapt to changing situations, and maintain behaviours that support the achievement of personal and organizational goals. It involves consciously managing emotional reactions, remaining composed under pressure, demonstrating self-discipline, and directing one's thoughts and actions toward productive outcomes. As one of the competencies that builds upon self-awareness, self-management enables individuals to translate emotional understanding into appropriate

behaviour, thereby enhancing interpersonal relationships and job performance (Otor & Jato, 2023).

Job Performance

Job performance is a multidimensional concept that describes the extent to which an employee successfully performs the duties, responsibilities, and behaviours expected by an organization. It reflects how effectively individuals utilize their knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies to accomplish assigned tasks and contribute to organizational objectives. According to Koopmans (2021), job performance refers to the collection of behaviours and actions that employees exhibit in carrying out their work responsibilities to achieve organizational objectives. Importantly, job performance extends beyond task completion to include behaviours that promote organizational effectiveness, adaptability, cooperation, and professional responsibility. Similarly, Campbell and Wiernik (2023) described job performance as behaviours under an individual's control that contribute directly or indirectly to organizational goals. They argued that performance should not be viewed merely as outcomes because outcomes are often influenced by external factors beyond employees' control. Rather, job performance comprises observable work-related behaviours such as task execution, communication, cooperation, problem-solving, and adherence to professional standards.

Empirical Review

The following empirical studies are considered related to the study at hand; Oba-Adenuga (2022) examined the relationship between self-awareness and task performance among academic staff in selected private universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. The main purpose of the study was to examine the interaction between self-awareness and task performance among academic staff in selected private universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. One hypothesis was postulated to guide the study; a survey research design was employed in this study. The sample for the study comprised 308 full-time academic staff of selected private Universities in Ogun State, Nigeria, determined using the Raosoft calculator. Multi-stage sampling techniques were adapted to obtain responses from all the

cadres of the academic staff. A structured and adapted questionnaire titled “Self-awareness and Employee Performance (SEP)” that was used for the study went through validity and reliability tests with Cronbach Alpha ranges between 0.728 and 0.954. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential (Multiple and Hierarchical Regression) statistics. The study revealed that self-awareness had significant relationship with task performance ($r(296) = 0.833, p < 0.05$). Based on the result of the study, it was therefore recommended that the management of private universities should train their academic staff to acquire the competencies associated with self-awareness because a thorough understanding of oneself is an important determinant self-efficacy for improving personal performance.

Oba-Adenuga, Asikhia and Akpa (2022) investigated the influence of self-management on employee research output in selected private universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. The study sought to determine the extent to which self-management influences the research output of academic staff in selected private universities. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 1,464 full-time academic staff in six selected private universities in Ogun State. A representative sample of academic staff was selected using an appropriate sampling technique. The research instrument was a structured questionnaire designed to measure self-management and employee research output. The instrument was validated by experts, while its reliability was established before administration. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the respondents' demographic characteristics, whereas Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed to test the hypothesis. The findings revealed that self-management had a positive and significant influence on employee research output. The study concluded that employees who effectively manage their time, emotions, and work-related activities demonstrate higher levels of performance. It was recommended, among other things, that university management should organize regular capacity-building programmes to strengthen the self-management skills of academic staff in order to improve their research productivity.

Methodology

The research adapted correlational design. The population of the study is 667. It consists of all professional and para-professional in academic libraries which is limited to universities and polytechnics libraries in South East. Nigeria.

The sample size is 316 derived from the application of the statistical formula of William Bill (2004). A structured Questionnaire titled “Emotional Intelligence Capabilities and Job performance of Librarians in Academic Libraries in South east Nigeria” was used. The instruments were validated and the reliability of the instrument were carried out and analyzed by the use of standardized Cronbach Coefficient Alpha Formula.

Data Analysis and Results

Test of Hypotheses and Research Questions

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between self-awareness and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria?

Hypotheses One: There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria.

Table 1: PPMC on significant relationship between self-awareness and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria

Variable	N	r	Sig. (2 tailed)	Remark
Self-Awareness		.531		
Job Performance of Librarians			.000	Reject
Total	258			

Table 1 Reveals the summary of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient between self-awareness and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria. The table indicated that $n(258) = .531$ in correlation (r), $p = .000 < 0.05$. The result of the r -value produced a significance value of .000 which is less than the 0.05 alpha level. This, therefore, led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, which assumed that there is no significant

relationship between self-awareness and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria. An alternate hypothesis was established thus: There is a significant relationship between self-awareness and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between self-management and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria?

Hypotheses Two: There is no significant relationship between self-management and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria.

Table 2: PPMC on significant relationship between self-management and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria

Variable	N	r	Sig. (2 tailed)	Remark
Self-Management		.209		
Job Performance of Librarians			.021	Reject
Total	258			

Table 2 reveals the summary of the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient between self-management and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria. The table indicated that $n(258) = .209$ in correlation (r), $p = .021 < 0.05$. The r -value yielded a significance value of .021, which is less than the 0.05 alpha level. This, therefore, led to the rejection of the null hypothesis which assumed that there is no significant relationship between self-management and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria. The finding implies a significant relationship between self-management and the job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

Research question one investigated the relationship between self-awareness and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria. The study revealed a relationship between self-awareness and job performance of librarians. The corresponding

hypothesis further showed that there is a significant relationship between self-awareness and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria. This is an indication that self-awareness can influence the job performance of librarians. Librarians who are conscious of their emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and behavioural patterns are more likely to perform their professional responsibilities effectively and maintain productive interactions with library users and colleagues.

Research question two investigated the relationship between self-management and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria. The study revealed a relationship between self-management and job performance of librarians. The corresponding hypothesis further showed that there is a significant relationship between self-management and job performance of librarians in public academic libraries in South East, Nigeria. This is an indication that self-management can influence the job performance of librarians.

Conclusion

The study concludes that self-awareness is significantly related to the job performance of librarians in public academic libraries. This implies that librarians who possess a better understanding of their emotions, strengths, limitations, and behavioural patterns are more likely to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. Self-management has a significant relationship with the job performance of librarians in public academic libraries. This suggests that librarians who are able to regulate their emotions, manage stress, and maintain self-discipline are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of job performance.

Recommendations

Management of public academic libraries should organize regular training programmes, workshops, and self-development seminars that enhance librarians' self-awareness, enabling them to better understand their emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and behavioural patterns for improved

job performance. Library management should provide continuous professional development programmes on emotional regulation, stress management, resilience, and time.

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