

LEADERSHIP STYLES AND THEIR IMPACT ON LIBRARY SERVICE DELIVERY IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN ONDO STATE, NIGERIA

AKINYEMI, Omolabake Eunice;¹ OBASEKI, Grace Morenike²
& OKEDELE, Eno-obong Louisa³

¹ Albert Ilemobade Library, Federal University of Technology, Akure, Ondo State, Nigeria.
akinyemiomolabake1@gmail.com

² Joseph Ayo Babalola University Library, Osun State, Nigeria. obasekigrace12@gmail.com

³ Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo State, Nigeria. baysup2louisa@gmail.com

Abstract

Service delivery is a key factor in the attainment of organisational goals. The service delivery in the university libraries depend greatly on the leadership style adopted by the leaders. This paper investigates different leadership styles (democratic, transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire) and their impact on service delivery in Ondo State University libraries. This study used a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted of 53 library personnel working in selected university libraries in Ondo State, Nigeria. A total enumeration sampling technique was used for the study. The study's instrument was a self-structured questionnaire. Out of 53 questionnaires administered, 49 were received and found useable (92.5%). Descriptive statistic tools were used to analyse the data. A regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance. The analysis was done using SPSS version 23. The findings revealed that library service delivery in the university libraries of Ondo State is high ($\bar{x}=2.55$). Also, the library service delivery is greatly impacted by the leadership styles, democratic ($PV=0.013$), transactional ($PV=0.026$), and transformational ($PV=0.009$); except laissez-faire ($PV=0.090$) leadership style that was hardly impacted library service delivery. Based on the findings, the study concludes that in Ondo State University libraries, library service delivery can be improved by each of the leadership styles under study except the laissez-faire leadership style. And the study recommends that more of the leadership styles that significantly impacted service delivery should be embraced by the Ondo State University libraries' administration.

Keywords: Leadership Styles, University Libraries, Service Delivery, Library Personnel

Introduction

Globally, every organisation aims to maintain its targets and goals while guaranteeing the advancement of its businesses. The advancement, however, hinges on the leader's capacity to successfully manage the subordinates. Leadership, therefore, is known as the process of persuading a group of people in an organisation such as the library, to work toward achieving a common objective. Leadership is a dynamic process in which a single person persuades a group of individuals to freely contribute to achieve a particular objective (Chowdhury 2014). The concept of



leadership has been a key factor in the achievement of organizational objectives including libraries. Leadership is the pillar that supports all other elements of a library, especially the staff, and ensures that they collaborate to achieve the goals, missions, and visions of the institution. (Constantino 2016).

The University Library is a service-oriented organisation under the leadership of the University Librarian. As a leader, he has a special role to supervise the activities of the library and guide its staff in achieving its goals and objectives. Therefore, the style of leadership implemented by a University Librarian influences the way library personnel perform their work, as the service delivery hinges on the leadership style of the University Librarians. Akpanabia (2015) contends that nothing is more elusive than leadership. Therefore, leadership styles can be defined as the distinct actions and methods a leader employs to influence and direct employees in an organisation to achieve the organisational goals. Leadership style is a key constituent for the effectiveness of service delivery in a services-oriented organisation like the library. These leadership styles include autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, transformational, transactional, relational, managerial, and motivational leadership styles, and more (Obaseki and Bakare, 2022; Xu et al., 2022). Hence, this study will concentrate on four (democratic, transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire) leadership styles.

A democratic leadership is a style where the leader regularly takes the group's opinion on all matters before making decisions. Democratic leadership is the kind of leadership style that invites input from the workforce, which inevitably enables employees to take part in making decisions and resolving issues within the organisation. It is known as participatory or shared leadership (Uzohue, 2016). A democratic leader in a university library might solicit feedback from personnel to pinpoint problem areas and carry out fixes that improve the user experience. Transactional leadership, as defined by (Al-Maaitah et al. 2021), is an approach that revolves around the exchange amongst a leader and the subordinates. Transactional leaders in university libraries might use performance incentives to motivate employees to reach service delivery goals. However, a university librarian demonstrating this kind of leadership will employ distinct techniques to penalize underperforming library personnel and commend those who have performed well.

Transformational leadership is an approach where a leader inspires or motivates followers to put the needs of the group before their interests by articulating a vision for the future. According to Martin (2015), this approach focuses on building relationships between people and unifying the company around a common vision and set of values to effect genuine, meaningful change. In a university library, where a transformational leadership style is adopted, the leaders can inspire library personnel to offer library services efficiently. Transformational leaders can improve service delivery and meet the changing requests of library clients by cultivating a culture of innovation and continuous improvement (Yukl, 2013). Laissez-faire leadership is a style that allows the employees a free share of ideas, where the leader participates little in the decision-making process. Laissez-faire leadership is a style by which managers give insignificant supervision to employees (Northouse 2018). A

laissez-faire leadership style is good to adopt when staff members possess extensive training, expertise, and skill, in the organisation' operations. Although it may lead to inconsistent or poor service delivery in a service-oriented organisation (Jerome, 2018). Consequently, a laissez-faire leadership style in a university library (a service-oriented organisation) may result in a lack of coordination and direction in the provision of services since staff members might not be given clear instructions on expectations or priorities. Therefore, for services in a university library to be in line with the library's mission and goals, a laissez-faire leader might need to exercise more supervision and guidance.

On the other hand, service delivery is a crucial component of any service-oriented organisation such as the library, in achieving its goal. The growth and survival of any institution or organization depend on its ability to provide services. Service delivery can also be defined as the way, when, and place in which a customer receives a service (Martins and Ledimo 2015). However, service delivery in the library can be defined as the library operations performed by library personnel to ensure that information resources are available to clients to answer their questions, meet their information needs, and ultimately help the university achieve its goals and objectives. The quality of the university library's resources and services is a way of achieving their goals for universities (Olorunfemi and Ipadeola, 2018). The library services include inter-library loans; online and offline Current Awareness Services (CAS); online and offline Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI); Internet Services (IS); Reference and Information Services; Electronic Document Delivery Services; User Education; Circulation Services, and so forth (Agoh and Omekwu 2021).

However, it is a universal view that is maintained by research that leadership is a crucial element that influence the job performance of employees in an organisation in the world over. Many organizations are not able to attain their set goals due to the leadership style they adopted. This, of course, has resulted in poor performance in many organisations. The library generally is a service-oriented organisation, and the leadership style adopted by the head of a library is one of the key factors that determine the service delivery by library personnel. It was discovered through the researcher observations from informal interactions with library personnel in university libraries that leadership styles in university libraries are poor and ineffective. This has gradually resulted in poor service delivery by library personnel. There is thus a need to address the impact of leadership style on library service delivery. It is against this, that this present study explores leadership styles and their impact on service delivery of University Libraries in Ondo State, Nigeria.

Research Objectives

This study's objective is to investigate the leadership style and their impact on library service delivery in university libraries in Ondo State, Nigeria. Other objectives are to:

- i. determine the level of service delivery in the Ondo State University libraries.
- ii. investigate which leadership styles are most highly valued in the Ondo State University libraries.



- iii. determine the impact of four different leadership styles (democratic, transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire) on library service delivery in the Ondo State University libraries.

Research Questions

- i. What is the extent of library service delivery in the Ondo State University libraries?
- ii. Which leadership styles are most highly valued in the Ondo State University libraries.?

Research Hypothesis

H0: There is no significant impact of leadership styles on service delivery in university libraries in Ondo State, Nigeria.

Literature Reviewed

The University Libraries' Service Delivery

The goal of the library, as a service-oriented organization, is to deliver relevant services that address the information requests of the community it serves. The totality of the actions taken by library staff to provide print and electronic resources as well as information sources to library patrons at the appropriate time in the simplest format possible so that the resources are readily available, retrievable, and used makes up the library's service delivery. (Esiebo, & Abdulsalami, 2019). University libraries rely heavily on library services because effective service delivery is essential to achieving their objectives. Ensuring that users' information needs are satisfied effectively and efficiently through the provision of information resources for research, learning, and teaching is the aim of service delivery in university libraries (Kimi & Preeti, 2019).

The following are some of the services provided by library personnel in the university libraries: Internet Services (IS), Inter-Library Loan Services (ILLS), Reference Services (RS), Answering Users' Queries, Bibliography Services, User Education, Current Awareness Services (CAS), Selective Dissemination of Information Services (SDI), Internet Services (IS), and Circulation Services (CS) (Agoh & Omekwu 2021). However, Ima-MP, (2021) looked at the federal university libraries' reference service delivery and users' satisfaction. The findings demonstrated a significant correlation between users' satisfaction and the availability of reference services at Federal University Libraries in South-South Nigeria. Consequently, users expressed satisfaction with the reference services. In a similar vein, (Iyishu, 2021) examined how well service delivery meets users' needs in South-South university libraries in Nigeria. The findings indicate that university libraries in South-South Nigeria had considerably better reference and interlibrary loan services.

Leadership Styles and Service Delivery in University Libraries

Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership, according to (Chua et. al 2018), is predicated on the fundamental idea that all people are naturally responsible, trustworthy, and driven.

As a result, everyone can contribute during the decision-making process, ideas are freely shared, and discussion is encouraged (Fiaz et al 2017). In the public university libraries of Sindh Province, (Ahmed, et al. 2021) investigated three different leadership styles: transformational, democratic, and autocratic. The findings disclosed that the three leadership styles were implemented among university librarians, but the democratic style of leadership is more widely embraced. Similarly, Kalu & Okpokwasili (2018) found that in academic libraries, a democratic leadership style enhances employee performance. The authors stressed that academic librarians are supporters and advocates of democratic leadership because it improves personnel productivity and, as a result, boosts client retention.

Correspondingly, Usman, et al. (2018) concentrated on leadership styles as predictors of the library staff job performance in North-central Nigeria in public university libraries. The findings established that North-Central Nigeria public university librarians adopted a democratic leadership style rather than any other type of leadership. In the same vein, Akor (2014) investigated the effectiveness and leadership style of Nigeria's Benue State librarians. He discovered that the university libraries in Benue State, Nigeria, exhibited a higher degree of democratic leadership while autocratic leadership did not enhance performance. Similarly, Chukwusa's (2019) study also found that the library personnel under investigation through a democratic leadership style, demonstrated a positive work attitude.

Transformational Leadership Style

Previous studies have shown that transformational leaders are more effective for several reasons, such as their charisma, capacity to challenge their team members intellectually, and ability to meet their emotional needs (Arham et al., 2016; Buil et al., 2019). Adeniran & Chidi (2015) researched the leadership styles and university library staff job productivity. They examined leadership styles under transformational, transactional, autocratic, laissez-faire, and democratic. Hence, they claimed that transformational leadership is a style of leadership that constructively motivates subordinates to achieve goals and objectives that are clearly outlined. Rahbi, et al (2017) in their review encourage the heads of university libraries to embrace the transformational leadership style because it improves the job performance of library personnel and subsequently users' satisfaction with library services.

In Delta State, Nigeria, Orewa (2019), investigated the leadership styles of university libraries as an indicator of future job performance, they advised that professional librarians should adopt a transformational leadership style to ensure high-quality service delivery and efficient productivity. Additionally, Ukaidi (2016) studied the influence of leadership style on staff working at a university library in Delta State, Nigeria. Bureaucratic leadership, transformational leadership, laissez-faire leadership, and transactional leadership were the four leadership styles examined in the study. The findings indicate that the most embraced leadership style is the transformational leadership style followed by the bureaucratic leadership style while the less practiced is the transactional leadership style.

Transactional Leadership Style

At the National Library of Nigeria, Ikonne, Madukoma, and Akanmidu (2021) investigated how leadership style affected the services that librarians provided. They found that the institution used both transactional and transformational leadership styles which helped the staff to display a high degree of service delivery. In a similar vein, Adekoya and Inyang's (2022) findings regarding the leadership styles of libraries and the application of ICT conclude that both transformational and transactional leadership styles give a good future for libraries. Likewise, Ikonne & Unobe (2021) researched to assess the relationship between librarians' job performance and their leadership style in North-West Nigeria public university libraries. The results indicate that transactional and transformational leadership styles are more prevalent in organizational practices in North-West Nigeria public university libraries, while laissez-faire is less prevalent. According to Longe (2014), there was a noteworthy and positive influence of transactional leadership style on the performance of organization. In contrast, in their study, (Sofi & Devanadhen, 2015), argued that there was no significant impact of transactional leadership on employee performance in an organization.

Laissez-faire Leadership Style

The impact of a laissez-faire leadership style on the job performance of subordinates in academic libraries in Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria, was examined by Okpokwasili & Kalu (2021). Findings demonstrated that a laissez-faire leadership style lowers employee productivity, which has a detrimental effect on subordinates' job performance. A recent study Kolawole, Abomoge, & Kakulu (2023) confirmed that a laissez-faire leadership style significantly improved employee performance. Also, Makinde and Opeke (2018) examined the degree to which librarians' job effectiveness in Southeast Nigerian universities was impacted by their leadership style. According to the findings, a significant positive correlation exists between job effectiveness and leadership style in terms of transactional, laissez-faire, and transformational approaches.

In contrast, Uwandu (2020) investigated the effects of leadership style on the work performance of librarians in Imo State's public university libraries. The findings indicated that job performance is positively and highly correlated with an autocratic leadership style, and democratic leadership style, while negatively and lowly correlated with a laissez-faire leadership style. Likewise, Okpokwasili and Kalu (2021) studied the impact of a laissez-faire leadership style on the subordinates' job performance in academic libraries in Port-Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The findings showed that a laissez-faire leadership style has a detrimental effect on job performance of the subordinates since it lowers employee productivity.

Methodology

This study used a descriptive research design. The population used for the study was (53) library personnel who work in three selected Ondo State University libraries. The three University libraries used for this study were selected based on the

Federal, State, and Private. The library personnel in this study are professional librarians who have acquired either a Diploma, Bachelor's degree (BLIS), Master's degree (MLIS), or Doctorate in library and information science. Due to the small population, the total population was used for the investigation. According to Lawrence (2019), the use of the entire population is suitable when the population is controllable. The research instrument was a questionnaire. The content validity of the instrument was tested by submitting it to specialists in the domains of librarianship, evaluation, and measurement. Out of fifty-three (53) questionnaires administered, only four (4) were missing, and forty-nine (49) were received and found useable. This indicates that the study has a rate of 92.5% of respondents. Descriptive statistics like mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the collected data. The hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 level of significance using regression analysis. The analysis was done using SPSS version 23.

The population was chosen in the manner shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Population Table

S/N	University Libraries	Ownership	Professional Librarians
1	Albert Ilemobade Library, FUTA.	Federal	28
2	The University Library, AAUA	State	17
3	Elizade University, Ilaramokin	Private	8
4	Total		53

Data Analysis, Results, and Discussion of Findings

The study's research questions are addressed in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 1: Mean and standard Deviation of the Level of Library Service Delivery in University Libraries in Ondo State

S/N	Library Service Delivery	Mean $\bar{x}$	Standard Deviation (Std)
1	Circulation services	3.08	1.038
2	References services	2.71	1.099
3	Current awareness services	2.61	.909
4	Selective Dissemination of Information Services	2.80	1.000
5	Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) services	2.16	1.048
6	User's education services	2.57	1.137
7	Bindery Services	2.16	1.028
8	Referral services	2.39	1.077
9	Inter-library loan services	2.67	1.088
10	Online information retrieval services	2.37	1.115
	Average Weight Mean	2.55	
	Criterion Mean	2.50	

The criterion Mean of 2.5 is calculated on a scale of 4 as follows:
 $4+3+2+1=10/4=2.5$.

a. Dependent Variable: Service Delivery. $P < 0.05$

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The finding of research question two on which leadership styles are most highly valued in the Ondo State University libraries showed that transformational leadership is the most valued leadership style in the Ondo State University libraries followed by the democratic and transactional leadership styles. The least valuable among the leadership styles is the laissez-faire leadership style. The finding agrees with some other findings. Tarsik, Kasim, and Nastarudin (2014) findings revealed that the transformational leadership style is the most leadership practiced in university libraries. Likewise, Ukaidi (2016) findings indicate that the most valued leadership style by the staff working at a university library in Delta State is the transformational leadership style. The hypothesis test revealed that leadership styles have a significant impact on the services delivered by the library personnel at Ondo State University Libraries. This findings is aligned with the study by Usman et. al (2018) which showed that leadership style was positively and significantly correlate with library personnel job performance. Likewise, the findings of Tarsik, Kasim, and Nastarudin's (2014) provide credence to the idea that a leader's style significantly affects how well librarians perform on the job in North-West Nigerian public universities.

Conclusion

This research determines how leadership styles impact service delivery in Ondo State University libraries. The results established a high level of service delivery in the university libraries of Ondo State. Additionally, it confirmed that the library's service delivery is greatly impacted by the leadership styles (democratic, transactional, and transformational leadership styles), except laissez-faire leadership style. The study therefore concludes that in the University libraries, library leaders can improve service delivery by being aware of the benefits of each leadership style since they both impact the delivery of library services positively, except the laissez-faire leadership style that hardly impacts service delivery.

Recommendations

The following recommendation were made based on the findings of this study.

1. To improve library service delivery in university libraries, high-level services should be maintained, and low-level services should be improved.
2. This study recommends that more of those leadership styles that positively impact service delivery be embraced by the University libraries' administration.
3. This study also recommends that university library management should not implement a laissez-faire leadership style, since it has little to no effect on service delivery, and if implemented, it could negatively impact the services provided by library staff.



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