Indices of job stress and job satisfaction among academic librarians in selected federal universities in South West Nigeria

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Librarians around the world, like other professionals, experience stress caused by different factors.. The study examined the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction among a population of 87 librarians. Descriptive survey research method was used. Job stress levels were assessed using the Job Stress Scale (JSS) adapted from Stress Indicators Scale (2007) and job satisfaction levels were measured using the Job Satisfaction Questionnaire of Linz, (2002) and graded by Likert scale with degree of agreement range between low to high (1-5). This research was designed for the librarians employed in the libraries in South West Nigeria. Data were collected through the questionnaire designed and were subjected to statistical analysis using simple percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test statistics and Scheffe post-hoc analysis. The study revealed that the mean scores for satisfaction were low for workplace characteristics. Female librarians had significantly lower job satisfaction (mean job satisfaction score difference = 12.2; 50.5%, $p>0.05$), as compared to their male counterparts (mean job satisfaction score difference 21.0: 49.5%, $p<0.05$); and a positive correlation was found between job satisfaction and librarians' job stress ($r = 0.69$, $\alpha < 0.05$). The findings also revealed that majority of the librarians had low job satisfaction level and higher levels of job stress. These results have implications for addressing job stress and job satisfaction in academic libraries.

Keywords: Indices, Job stress, Job satisfaction, Academic librarians, Nigeria

Introduction

Human resources have been considered as the hub and backbone of organizations and they account for a large part of the organization in delivering its products and services. Thus, the understanding of employee job satisfaction and its contributing variables are important for any organization to exist and prosper[1].

Job functions are getting more complex and changing more rapidly as compared to the days of scientific management. This flexibility could only be achieved with better use of people. Hence, in the service industries, like library for example, the focus was to develop staff to be better informed, better equipped to handle problems and situations of any clientele, be it students, lecturers or researchers. Job functions of librarians are to make the parent institutions more efficient, effective and hence, improving the bottom-line including keeping current on resources and literature and select publications for the library's collection. Librarians require having knowledge of numerous information sources to select material appropriate to a user's needs; categorize, prepare and catalogue these materials. Librarians also recommend material and help individuals find information they need; analyze and organize collections by subject. They educate individuals on how to use the library systems to meet their information need. Librarians may also provide special programme or classes. Other duties include participation in grant writing and fundraising[2].

The unavoidable, imposed conditions under which work must be performed in the library create hardship and job stress for the librarians including the frequency and duration of occurrence of physical demands, environmental conditions, demands on one's senses, and mental demands. The physical demands associated with this position include lifting boxes, pushing heavy book carts, climbing ladders and spending a significant amount of time standing

and walking around the library; the environmental condition involves spending a considerable amount of time in the library where there are constant interruptions and distractions; spending long hours in intense concentration which are of both technical and an interpersonal nature[3].

Librarians are adept at listening to and understanding others from a variety of cultural backgrounds. They spend long hours on the computer system which requires a great deal of attention to detail. The librarians face mental demands stemming from the need to communicate with others on a regular and ongoing basis. Their accuracy and attention to detail are essential when classifying and organizing resources to ensure accessibility to library users[2]. Academic librarians spend a considerable amount of time working with electronic resources and are increasingly involved with database management and web page development[3].

People in the service profession are often required to spend considerable time in intense involvement with other people. Frequently, when the interaction between librarian and library users is centered on the users' current problem, solutions might not be obvious and easily obtained; the situation may become more ambiguous and frustrating. For the persons who do other people work, job stress can be emotionally draining and lead to burnout. Today, an increasing numbers of academic librarians are experiencing complicated job stress and burnout, low-productivity, fatigue, insomnia and other stress related problems due to lack of balance in personal and professional lives. For librarians, a stress free environment would result in the acceleration of performance, efficacy and job satisfaction. Meanwhile, job satisfaction is basically an individual matter and refers to what one expects from his or her job, when there is mismatch between what is expected and what is received or there is disparity, dissatisfaction occurs[4,5].

This study therefore examines, reviews and analyzes the indices of job stress and job satisfaction among academic librarians in five federal-funded universities in South West Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

In recent years, occupational or job stress, organizational commitment and job satisfaction among workers became general phenomenon which researchers now have great interest to study.

The advent of new technology and rapid technological change brings attendant problems such as information explosion, reduced funding, reduction of finance, lack of both supporting and professional staff, high job demand and work overload etc. Immediate change at executive posts among others were reported in the literature to have resulted in adding stress on the librarians which is results in lowered performance, job changes, interferences (frustration), pre term retirement, frequent illness, burnout syndrome etc. These problems have been readily identified by several scholars around the world. It is therefore, the intention of this study to further probe into these problems among academic librarians in Nigerian universities and proffer recommendations based on the findings of the study.

Literature review

Stress is often used to describe either the external stimulus from the environment or the response in the individual, subjective in nature, and can occur in anyone who feels he or she is under pressure. It is the product of an imbalance between environmental demands and individual capabilities. Job stress is seen as a physiological state of the individual which is influenced by a wide variety of environmental factors known as stressors.

According to Omolara[6] stress is a dynamic and reciprocal in relationship between the person and environment; stressors can range from catastrophic events to irritating incidents. However, stressors do not elicit a stress response in the individual until the person appraises it as exceeding the available resources. It also allows the possibility that a given level of stress leads to different effects across people and across time[7]. Coping with stress can be externalized and projected into social and environmental setting in an attempt to deny or avoid their comprehension and the essence of changed conditions[6].

Gole and Sahu[8] highlighted job insecurity, excessive competition, hazardous working conditions, and task demands, long or unusual working hours as employee stressors, while Okpara[9] identified age, autonomy, commitment, communication with peers and supervisors, education, fairness, locus of control, professionalism, recognition, and years of experience as stressors.

According to Rose[10] a job in which there is a high demand on the employee and low control or

autonomy is stressful. Spector[11] opined that stress is a function of perceived control, which consists of a person's generalised locus of control (or perceived self efficacy) and actual environmental control. When perceived control over objective external demands (or stressors) is high, the individual is not likely to interpret the situation as threatening and will not perceive (or subjectively experience) stress. When perceived control over external demands is low, however, the individual is likely to perceive (or subjectively experience) stress. Each employee is expected to react differently to the same objective stimuli or work demands. The perception of inability to cope with demands will vary from one individual to another. When the situation is perceived as threatening, and the employee feels unable to cope and there would be stress. When the situation is perceived as merely challenging, but not threatening to physical or mental wellbeing, there would be no stress and no behaviours that reflect unsuccessful coping or adaptation.

Meanwhile, Chen[12] emphasized that job stress occurs when an employee subjectively experiences an incompatibility between himself or herself and his or her work environment, and feels unable to cope, adapt or function effectively as a result of which he or she endures poor mental or physical health or engages in dysfunctional and even counterproductive behaviours. On the other hand, job satisfaction describes the feelings, attitudes or preferences of individuals regarding work.

Green and Tsitsianis[13] opined that job satisfaction includes general elements and specific elements: the whole perception of job pleasure is considered as general elements; while job security, pay, co-worker, supervision and personal growth and development are considered as specific elements. Sengin[14] identify education, experience, position in the hierarchy, autonomy, tasks repetitiveness, salaries, degree of professionalism, and type of unit as variables that influence employee job satisfaction. Finn[15] indicated that work autonomy is one of the most important factors that will affect job satisfaction. Oshagbemi[16] employed eight scales designed to measure job satisfaction, namely teaching; research; administration/ management; present pay; promotions; supervision/ supervisor behavior; behavior of co-workers and physical conditions/working conditions. Kusku[17] employed seven factors which are general satisfaction; management satisfaction; colleagues; other working

group satisfaction; job satisfaction; work environment and salary for job satisfaction dimension. Ssesanga and Garrett[18] used nine general elements of their work comprising of teaching, research, governance, remuneration, opportunities for promotion, supervision, co-worker's behavior, working environment and the job in general. Chen[12] measured the job satisfaction using six satisfaction factors, namely organization vision; respect; result feedback and motivation; management system; pay and benefits and work environment.

Ugoji and Isele[19] found stress to have the strongest relationship with job satisfaction; their study showed that high levels of work stress are associated with low levels of job satisfaction. Gole and Sahu[8] also found a strong negative correlation between stress and job satisfaction. In the view of Ladipo and Wilkinson[20], job satisfaction has been found to have significant relationship with job stress. In other studies, Chen, Yang, Shiau and Wang[21] stated that organization factors such as workload and working condition were negatively related with job satisfaction. Metle[22] also noted that a lack of satisfaction can be a source of stress, while high satisfaction can alleviate the effects of stress.

In his own study, Tzeng[23] concluded that employees should focus on factors of job satisfaction over which they have more influence such as challenging work environment, recognition of achievement, and stress levels, rather than on factors over which they have less control such as salary

All the studies reviewed, revealed that both job stress and job satisfaction were found to be interrelated and high level of job satisfaction is related to lower occupational stress, and vice versa[24].

Objectives of the study
- To identify the sources of stress among information professionals in some selected university libraries in South West Nigeria;
- To find whether stress varies with respect to variables such as gender, age, years of experience, and qualification etc.; and
- To examine the extent of the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction among academic librarians.

Research questions
In line with the above objectives, some questions were raised to find out the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction among librarians. The questions are:

1   Is there any significant difference between female and male librarians job stress?
2   Is there any significant difference between female and male librarians job satisfaction?
3   Is there any significant difference between the level of librarians job satisfaction in selected Universities in South West Nigeria?
4   Is there any significant difference between the level of librarians job stress in selected Universities in South West Nigeria?
5   Is there any significant relationship between job stress and job satisfaction?

Methodology

The study was carried out between April and July 2012, using a descriptive design and survey to obtain data from academic librarians on job stress and job satisfaction in federal university libraries in South West Nigeria. Five federal universities in South West Nigeria were selected for the study. All of the 87 librarians (44 females and 43 males) from the five selected universities constituted population of the study. The data collected were subjected to statistical analysis. The university libraries selected for the study are shown in Table 1.

From the Table 1, it is seen that the 44 female information professionals constituted 50.5% of the respondents while the 43 male information professionals constituted 49.5% of the population.

Two instruments adapted from existing literature were employed to measure the variables under investigation. The instruments included Job Stress Scale and Scale of Job Satisfaction. Job Stress Scale (JSS) was adapted from Stress Indicators Scale (2007). The Job Stress Scale reliability and validity was be analyzed with internal consistency technique by Cronbach alpha at 0.920, with item-total correlation range 0.369 to 0.708. This scale composed of twenty-four items, each answered on a five-point Likert scale. Job Satisfaction Scale is a five point scale developed by Linz[25] meant to tap job satisfaction of workers in any service organization. The items of these scales were modified and the total score for all the items is taken at the index of Job stress with Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of 0.822.

The instruments were directly administered to the target respondents by the researchers. The complete questionnaires were pooled and analysed using the SPSS package. All the 87 copies of the questionnaire administered were returned and found useful. Responses to the questionnaire were processed using percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test statistics and Scheffe post-hoc analysis.

Results

Presented here are the analyses of the data gathered for the study.

Table 2 shows the frequencies for the demographic information obtained from the respondents. It could be clearly seen that females made up 50.5% of the sample, and although there appears to be no specific age range related, the youngest and oldest categories contained the least number of participants. Master degree holders constitute larger proportion of the respondents' qualification. This is due to the fact that Master degree is mainly considered as the entry point to the profession. Bachelor degree holders and Ph.D. holders are 7 (8.0%) and 6 (6.9%) respectively. Respondents years of experience grouped in between 5 years are 41 (47.1%), 22 (25.3%) had worked between 6 to 10 years while and 24 (27.6%) others had worked for 11 years and more respectively.

Female and male librarians job stress

Table 3 above shows that the means representing the job stress of male and female librarian are 36.0 and 34.2 respectively. It is observed that the mean score is below average. However, the t-calculated value of 6.13 is greater than the critical value which is 1.68 at 0.05 level of significant. This suggests that there is a significant difference in job stress among male and female librarians despite the fact that though

Table 1—Distribution of respondents by institution library

Sl. no.	Universities	Females	Males	Total
1	Nimbe Adedipe Library, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta	11	11	22
2	Kenneth Dike Library, University of Ibadan, Ibadan	11	8	19
3	Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife	9	8	17
4	University of Lagos Library, Lagos	7	9	16
5	Federal University of Technology Library, Akure	6	7	13
	Total	44	43	87

both male and female librarians are working in the same environment, they are still subjected to different job stressor.

Female and male librarians job satisfaction

Table 4 shows means representing the job satisfactions of male and female librarian are 21.0 and 12.2 respectively. However, the t-calculated value of 2.09 is lower than the critical value of 3.18. This suggests that there is no significant difference in job

satisfaction stress among male and female. These findings corroborate with some theories that female workers are considered to bring different values and priorities than men into the job, resulting in lower expectations to employment and to be more satisfied with less[26,27].

Levels of librarians' job stress

Table 5 reveals the mean score for each librarian level in comparison with others. Though the levels are of unequal sizes, Principal Librarian group (18.90), Deputy University Librarian group (18.80) and University Librarian group (18.60) are at par with each other since they are in same range. Both Librarian II group with lower means of 16.60 and Librarian II group (17.40) show negative means scores towards job stress. It indicates that Librarian I and Librarian II groups differ from other groups in their perception of job. This study is in variance with Faragher, Cass and Cooper[28] that job stress levels were higher among new and inexperienced staff.

Levels of librarians' job satisfaction

Table 6 reveals that all the respondents have the same perception towards job satisfaction. That is, the mean perception is negative. It indicates that Librarians at all levels are not likely to differ too much in their perception of job satisfaction.

Relationship between job stress and job satisfaction

The result of the correlation analysis reveals the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction at $r = 0.6933$; $P<0.05$. There is an indication that job stress had a significant positive relationship with librarian job satisfaction.

Table 2—Demographic information of the respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	43	49.5%
Female	44	50.5%
Age (years)		
Up to 25	12	16.04%
26 – 35	16	12.64%
36– 45	35	40.22%
46 – 55	18	20.68%
56 or more	10	11.49%
Qualification		
Bachelor Degree	7	8.0%
Masters Degree	74	85.1%
PhD.	6	6.9%
Level		
Librarian II	29	33.33%
Librarian I	18	20.69%
Senior Librarian	23	26.44%
Principal Librarian	9	10.34%
Deputy University Librarian	5	5.75%
University Librarian	3	3.45%
Years of experience		
0 to 5	41	47.1%
6– 10	22	25.3%
11 or more	24	27.6%

Table 3—Comparison of job stress between female and male librarians

Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	P
Male	43	36.0	1.2	85	6.13	1.68	0.05
Female	44	34.2	0.8				

Table 4—Comparison of female and male librarians' job satisfaction

Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	P
Male	43	21.0	5.12	85	2.09	3.18	0.05
Female	44	12.2	6.83				

Table 5—Scheffe post-hoc analysis on level of librarians' job stress

Level	N	Subset for alpha = .05	
		1*	2**
Librarian II	29	16.60	
Librarian I	18	17.40	17.40
Senior Librarian	23	19.60	19.60
Principal Librarian	9	0.262	18.90
Deputy University Librarian	5		18.80
University Librarian	3		18.60
Sig.			0.172

* Mean perception = Negative
** Mean perception = Neutral

Table 6—Scheffe post-hoc analysis findings on level of librarians' job satisfaction

Level	N	Subset for alpha = .05	
		1*	2**
Librarian II	29	2.0543	
Librarian I	18	2.7840	
Senior Librarian	23	2.0125	
Principal Librarian	9	2.4567	2.4567
Deputy University Librarian	5	2.4971	2.4971
University Librarian	3	2.9739	
Sig.		0.29	0.175

* Mean perception = Negative
** Mean perception = Neutral

Table **7**—Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics on the Relationship between Job Stress and Job Satisfaction

Variables	N	X	SD	R	P	Remark
Job Stress	87	24.35	4.01	0.6933	0.05	Sig.
Job Satisfaction	87	21.73	5.17			

Discussion

The present study indicates a high level of job stress among the librarians with standard deviation 5.12 and 6.83 for males and females respectively. These findings are in agreement with Wiley[29] who reported that the consequences of stress can take form of behavioural characteristics and affects interpersonal relationships or decrease in the job satisfaction and performance. Results from the statistical analyses revealed that librarians like other professionals experience different levels of job stress and job satisfaction and there is significant relationship between job stress and librarian job satisfaction in selected university libraries. It shows the value of r as 0.6933 which means that there is a positive relationship between job stress and job satisfaction. These findings give further support to literature which demonstrates significant relationship between job stress and job satisfaction[30, 31, 32] but in variance with other studies[33-35] which did not support significant relationships between job stress and job satisfaction.

The implication of the findings indicated that job satisfaction is an important factor in academic library management. For librarian, a stress free environment would result in the acceleration of performance, efficacy and job satisfaction. Though job satisfaction is basically an individual matter and refers to what one expects from his or her job, but when there is mismatch between what is expected and what is received or when there is some disparity, dissatisfaction occurs. Job stress is inevitable, it

could possibly affect socialization and interpersonal relations at the workplace, and this could affect performance and productivity. This is in accordance with Davis and Wilson[36] that job stress and job satisfaction has either positive or negative implications on job performance while Job dissatisfaction has shown to increase the level of stress experienced[37]. Job satisfaction enhances job performance. By aiming at improving librarians' job satisfaction the library need to simultaneously address as many of these diverse stressors. The observed level of job stress and job satisfaction from the study shows that when job stress is inevitable, it affects job satisfaction at the workplace, and hence affects job performance and productivity.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers recommend that in order to reduce job stress, parent institutions must increase the level of job satisfaction so that librarians will feel satisfied when working. Job satisfaction can be increase by giving reward, recognition, better salary placement and benefit, increased or better working condition and provision of good facilities.

An academic library as a matter of fact must design strategies useful in assisting librarians to experience volitional functioning, competence, and belongingness. This is because, from observation job satisfaction plays an explanatory role in the relationships between job demands, job resources, and the core components of exhaustion and vigour also has practical implications on both the job and librarians.

Some academic libraries often experienced absenteeism of professional staffers, this is as a result of job stressors overweighing job satisfaction, and such libraries need to reduce the stress level so that job satisfaction will be high.

Job satisfaction affects social life, personality and interpersonal relationships on job and performance, it is therefore recommended that all job stressors that affect job satisfaction should be eliminated or reduced to barest minimum in order to enhance job performance.

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