

Organization Politics and Job Performance of Librarians in Ahmadu Bello University Library in Nigeria

Dr. Otobo Elvis Efe*

Dr. Deepak Kr. Srivastav**

Dr. Sahabi, Muhammad Kabir***

Zainab Yusuf****

Abstract

The study investigated the extent to which organizational politics affected job performance of librarians in Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria. The study adopted survey research design. Population of the study consisted of 162 librarians from ABU library, Zaria. There was no sampling technique involved in this study because the researcher is interested in the total population, therefore total enumeration or census method was adopted for this study. This is because the researcher considered the population as not too large to manage and that the use of the total enumeration can eliminate any potential bias that may occur if a sample is selected and allowed for the generalization of the findings from the study. The researcher employed the questionnaire as the research instrument for collecting data in this study. 162 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, out of which 132 (88,8%) were returned. The data collected was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The findings revealed that the level of librarians' job performance ABU, Zaria library was high (Average Weighted Mean = 3.30), on a scale of 4. Job performance was measured by three indicators (declarative knowledge, motivation and procedural knowledge). The finding also revealed that the organizational politics takes place among the librarians in ABU library in Zaria (Average Weighted Mean = 3.09). The study concluded that organizational politics contributed to librarians' job performance in ABU Zaria. The study recommended that the level of librarians' job performance in ABU Zaria should be sustained by library management.

Keywords: Job performance, Organizational politics, University library

Introduction:

The primary aim of all organizations is to fulfill certain goals and accomplish the mission and vision established by that organization. The achievement of these goals lies in the contributions of the human resources in the organization, who are employees. Employees in an organization play a significant role in accomplishing the goals and objectives through their level of job performance (Okolocha, Akam & Uchehara, 2021). These authors further stated that no organization can succeed without the input of its employees. Hence, every institution needs an effective and efficient employee to accomplish organizational goals and objectives and this can be achieved through the performance of employees in the job. It has become common knowledge that the importance of employees in an organization cannot be over emphasized because they are the ones who drive the productivity of the organization. They are central to the performance of an organization and no organization will have the capacity to move forward without taking a recognizing look at their input. Libraries are essential contributors to knowledge generation and serve a wide spectrum of knowledge seekers. Libraries support the curriculum and research initiative of their parent institutions. Libraries also provide a number of services that are directed towards making the users satisfied.

*Caleb University, Imota, Lagos, Nigeria, E-mail: elvisotobo1978@gmail.com

**Divisional Librarian & Head, Govt. Divisional Public Library Kota, Rajasthan

***University Library, Kaduna State University, Kaduna, E-mail: sahabikabir@gmail.com

****Federal University Gusau, Zamfara State, E-mail:mrsnamilo@gmail.com

Librarians provide a lot of services to the academic community which reflects the kind of job they carry out. They perform jobs that are technical in nature such as cataloguing and classification, acquisition and use services such as reference and response to user's queries. They also conduct educational services and selective dissemination of information to both students, teachers and general users of the library (Jerry & Ifeka, 2020). Librarians, preserve intellectual content by maintaining information in different formats. Other services that the librarian provides range from granting access to materials for physically impaired users to train them how to use the digital materials in the library through soft skills. Librarians try to meet the social and educational needs of users in their respective communities and drive community literacy campaigns through information literacy programs. Therefore, for any library to provide effective and efficient services, the level of job performance of employees who are librarians must be high.

The performance of librarians can be viewed in terms of competencies and skills that librarians should possess and demonstrate in discharging their duties. Librarian's competencies and skills will include practical skills, cognitive abilities and other general skills. The competencies and ability required are directed toward the job performed by the librarian. Therefore, the library as an organization should emphasis on job performance in order to encourage effectiveness and efficiency to fulfill obligations and tasks in the library. Many organizations including libraries anticipate meeting their stated objectives through effective performance on the job (Victoria, 2020). According to Nwokike (2018), the expectations to librarians' job performance are predicated on their work-related behaviour.

Many university libraries try to meet their stated objectives through effective performance on the job (Okolocha, Akam& Uchehara 2021).The extent to which the university library achieves its objectives depends on the job performance of librarians. Studies have shown that the performance of librarians on the job especially those in public university system has so far been poor. Ekene, Agbo and Onye kweodiri, (2016); Ikon and Itau, (2016) empirically reported that librarians in public university libraries are yet to meet the expectations of their stakeholders which amounts to the fact that they are not performing well. Librarians in public libraries are supposed to be proactive by being effective and efficient in the discharge of their duties. However, observation by this researcher in public libraries in the North-West Nigeria shows that the level of job performance seems to be poor. The poor performance of the librarian is shown from the fact that users complain that librarians are not always at their duty post. Users feel that librarians do not respond adequately to their complaints. Consequently, they abstain from using the library. Scholars such as Uzomba, Oyebola and Izuchukwu (2015) have established that the librarian's job performance could also depend on certain factors like organizational politics.

Organizational politics is a phenomenon that exists in every organization due to the cultural differences. According to Ikon and Itau (2016), organizations operate within the confines of organizational culture and organizational politics. Hence, it is viewed as the pursuit of individual interests without regard to the overall effect on the achievement of organizational goals. It consists of informal efforts to sell ideas, increase power and achieve other targeted objectives in an organization. Bell (2016) describes organizational politics as a matter of manipulating people within the organization to achieve personal goals or designing internal power plays to take over resources. It is therefore, critical to state that when the political landscape of an organization is not healthy, it therefore affects the performance of the organization especially the job output of workers. It is a common knowledge that employees do not want to work in an environment where there are various negative political behaviours and

power play. This is because the likelihood of employees leaving their job could be high if they perceive an increased level of organizational politics.

Organizational influence is viewed as elements such as actions, communications process, policies from the top level management that influence the entire organization. Organizational influences are the characteristics or attributes of an organization and the impact they have on employees of that organization. Organizational influence can take different dimensions such as an organization exerting control on employees through tangible or intangible means. Organizational influence help employees satisfaction is considered as all-round module of an organization human resource strategies.

Statement of the Problem

The need for librarians and library services to the university community is so enormous that the university cannot function effectively without it. Librarians are seen as the most important and indispensable part of the library institution because of the services required of them to provide. Continuous researches in the universities may not be possible without effective functions of libraries and librarians. Ekere (2016); Okolacha, Akam & Uchehara (2021) stated that the university libraries are supposed to serve all areas of knowledge taught in the university. Therefore, to achieve this end, librarians have veritable roles to play, because they are responsible for acquiring, describing, classifying, administering, preserving and organizing library materials by introducing effective access control devices and interpret their content through personalized services.

However, despite this important role of the library, scholars such as Onyekweodiri (2016), Ikon and Itua (2018), Owubiko (2014) cited in Okorie (2019) noted that the job performance of librarians are low, observation observed from the researcher have also revealed that the libraries in ABU Zaria are also not performing to the expected level. Evidence of this is revealed from the fact that users complain that librarians are not at their duty post as they come and also leave whenever they wish. Users saw that librarians are not responding adequately to their complaint. Hence, most of the users (student and lecturers) stay away from the library. Based on these, the understanding of underlying factors that could lead to low job performance is imperative so as to address this problem. It is on this premise that the study aims to investigate the influence of organizational politics on job performance of librarians in ABU, Zaria.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the influence of organizational politics on job performance of librarians in ABU library, Zaria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the level of job performance of librarians in ABU Library, Zaria;
2. Ascertain the organizational politics prevalent among librarians ABU Library, Zaria
3. Determine the influence of organizational politics on job performance of librarians in universities in ABU Library, Zaria

Research Questions

To achieve the identified objectives, the following research questions are answered in the study:

1. What is the level of job performance of librarians in ABU Library, Zaria?
2. What is the organizational politics prevalent among librarians in ABU Library, Zaria?

Hypothesis

The following null-hypothesis tested at 0.05 level of probability ($p < .05$)

H₀₁: Organizational politics has no significant influence on job performance of librarians in public universities in ABU library, Zaria.

Methodology

The survey research design was used in this study. The population for this study is 162 librarians ABU library, Zaria. There was no sampling technique involved in this study because the researcher is interested in the total population, therefore total enumeration or census method was adopted for this study. This is because the researcher considered the population as not too large to manage and that the use of the total enumeration can eliminate any potential bias that may occur if a sample is selected and allowed for the generalization of the findings from the study. The researcher employed the questionnaire as the research instrument for collecting data in this study. The data collected was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, percentages, mean and standard deviation, especially for the research questions. The hypothesis was analyzed using inferential statistics like linear regression analysis. This analysis was used to test the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable.

Data Analysis, Result and Discussion of Findings

Descriptive analyses were used to analyse the research questions in tabular forms while simple linear regression statistics were used to test the stated hypothesis by examining significant relationships attributed to librarians' job performance.

Out of the 259 copies of questionnaire handed out to the study participants, 162 copies of questionnaire were returned within the 7days' period. This resulted in 91.9% response rate. Hence, the returned questionnaire copies were used to provide answers to the research questions and hypothesis raised in the study.

Research Question One: What is the level of job performance of librarians in public university libraries in ABU Library, Zaria?

Table 1:Level of job performance of librarians in public university libraries

Statements Please tick (√) the option that best describes your level of job performance in the library.	Very High level (4)	High level (3)	Low level (2)	Very Low level (1)	Mean	Std.
Declarative knowledge					3.35	0.40
I work better when I have an interest in the task	109(45.6%)	116(48.6%)	14(5.8%)		3.40	0.60
I understand my responsibilities in the library	106(44.7%)	119(50.2%)	09(3.9%)	03(1.2%)	3.39	0.62
You are good at organizing information in the library	96(40.2%)	132(55.6%)	10(4.2%)		3.36	0.56
Their control over the functionality of your unit in the library	88(36.8%)	119(49.9%)	31(12.9%)	01(0.4%)	3.32	0.62
I carry out my job task in the library	93(39.0%)	129(54.4%)	13(5.4%)	03(1.2%)	3.31	0.63
Motivation					3.29	0.48
I use automated library tools for a specific purpose	97(40.9%)	129(54.4%)	11(4.7%)		3.36	0.57
I try to use strategies that have	94(39.5%)	118(49.5%)	25(10.6)	01(0.4%)	3.28	0.67

worked in the past to solve library work challenges				(%)		
I know how to use online public access catalogue	74(31.3%)	149(62.5%)	15(6.2%)		3.25	0.56
I work best when you know something about the library task	54(22.7%)	168(70.7%)	14(5.8%)	02(0.8%)	3.15	0.54
Procedural knowledge					3.26	0.37
I desire to serve the library's user community	125(52.6%)	103(43.2%)	10(4.2%)		3.48	0.58
I carry out tasks assigned in the library	113(47.5%)	108(45.5%)	16(6.6%)	01(0.4%)	3.40	0.63
I take pride in providing online reference services	100(42.1%)	120(50.5%)	15(6.2%)	03(1.2%)	3.34	0.65
I am happy with your work environment	85(35.9%)	119(50.2%)	27(11.2%)	06(2.7%)	3.19	0.74
I am motivated to attend library conferences	73(30.5%)	107(44.8%)	48(20.1%)	11(4.6%)	3.01	0.83
Librarians' performance (Average Weighted Mean = 3.30)						

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2022

Decision Rule: 1.0-1.49 = Very Low Level; 1.50-2.49 = Low Level; 2.50-3.49 = High Level; 3.50-4.0 = Very High Level.

Criteria mean of 2.5 is calculated as follows: $4+3+2+1=10/4=2.5$.

The result on Table 1 showed that, the level of librarians' job performance in ABU Library, Zaria was high(Average Weighted Mean = 3.30), on a scale of 4. Job performance was measured by three indicators (declarative knowledge, motivation and procedural knowledge). Additional details from the analysis depict that declarative knowledge ($\bar{x}=3.35$), motivation ($\bar{x}=3.29$) and procedural knowledge ($\bar{x}=3.26$) indicates high levels. The implication of this analysis is that ABU Library, Zaria performed highly in all areas of job indicators, most especially in the area of declarative knowledge. The high level of job performance of the library employees could be based on the reason that ABU Library, Zaria recorded high scores in areas such as showing interest in the task (3.58), display good information organization skills (3.36), utilize automated library tools for work (3.36), display strong desire to serve the library's user community (3.48) and carry out tasks assigned in the library (3.40).

Research Question Two: Organizational politics prevalent among librarian in public universities libraries

Table 2 level of Organizational politics

Organizational politics	Strongly Agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)	Mean	Std.
Organizational influence					3.30	0.48
Staff keep from trying to make improvements	128(53.7%)	86(36.2%)	23(9.7%)	01(0.4%)	3.43	0.68
Organizational rule modifications do not favour the entire library staff	106(44.5%)	117(49.2%)	14(5.9%)	01(0.4%)	3.38	0.61
Reward in the library is influenced by the institution	107(44.8%)	109(45.9%)	21(8.9%)	01(0.4%)	3.35	0.66
Recognitions for achievement are done on	94(39.7%)	122(51.3%)	20(8.6%)	01(0.4%)	3.30	0.64

the bases of affiliations						
Promotions in the library are often delayed by the organization	65(27.2%)	119(50.1%)	48(20.1%)	06(2.6%)	3.04	0.73
Personal influence					2.99	0.71
Policy changes only favour few library staff	84(35.2%)	94(39.5%)	56(23.7%)	04(1.6%)	3.08	0.81
Some employees avoid getting involved when problem arise	78(32.6%)	106(44.4%)	46(19.5%)	08(3.5%)	3.06	0.81
Individual social status influences ones job role in the library	52(21.8%)	109(45.9%)	63(26.5%)	14(5.8%)	2.84	0.83
Job context influence					2.98	0.71
Rewards come only to those who work hard in the library	82(34.6%)	99(41.6%)	45(19.1%)	11(4.7%)	3.06	0.85
Staff do things their way because no one challenges them	85(35.6%)	78(32.8%)	66(27.6%)	10(4.0%)	3.00	0.89
Employees build themselves up by tearing others down	57(23.9%)	117(49.0%)	57(23.9%)	08(3.2%)	2.94	0.78
Employees usually don't speak up for fear of retaliation by others	61(25.5%)	112(47.0%)	53(22.3%)	12(5.2%)	2.93	0.83
(Average Weighted Mean = 3.09)						

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2022

Decision Rule: 1.0-1.49 = Strongly Disagree; 1.50-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.49 = Agree; 3.50-4.40 = Strongly Agree.

Criteria mean of 2.5 is calculated as follows: $4+3+2+1=10/4=2.5$.

The result on research question three is presented in Table 2. The result showed that organizational politics takes place among the librarians in ABU Library, Zaria (Average Weighted Mean = 3.09). Further analysis shows that organizational influence ($\bar{x} = 3.30$), personal influence ($\bar{x} = 2.99$) and job context influence ($\bar{x} = 2.98$) are the prevalent organizational politics practiced among librarians in public university libraries in ABU Library, Zaria. It is clear from the result that, organizational influence is more prevalent in the public university libraries investigated than personal influence and job context influence. The result indicates that organizational politics is more evident in areas such as employees' attempts on the job (3.43), organizational rule biased towards the entire library staff (3.38), management influence on rewards (3.35) and recognitions for achievement on the bases of affiliations (3.30), delays in promotion (3.04), policy favouritism towards new staff (3.08) and lack of employees' involvement (3.06).

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis was carefully analyzed and tested using simple linear regression analyses and reported in Table 3.

Hypothesis: Organizational politics has no significant influence on job performance of librarians in public universities in ABU Library, Zaria

Hypothesis was tested with simple linear regression analysis. The results of the regression analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Simple linear regression analysis of organizational politics and job performance of librarians in public universities

Predictors	B	Beta (β)	T	P	R ²	Adj. R ²	F	ANOVA (Sig.)
(Constant)	2.226		21.071	.000	0.292	0.289	96.741	0.000
Organizational politics	.338	.541	9.836	.000				
Dependent Variable: librarians' job performance Predictor: (Constant), Organizational politics DF (F-Statistic) = 1, 234 DF (T-Statistic) = 233								

Source: Field Survey Results, 2022

The result of hypothesis is presented in Table 3. The result shows that organizational politics has a significant influence on librarians' job performance in public universities in ABU Library, Zaria ($t(253) = 9.836, p < 0.05$). This shows that organizational politics is a key determinant of librarians' job performance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. The $\beta = .541$ indicates that a positive relationship between organizational politics and librarians' job performance. Organizational politics accounted for 29.2% ($R^2 = 0.292$) of variation in job performance of library personnel in the university libraries. This result suggests that librarians' job performance is strongly linked to organizational politics in ABU Library, Zaria. The regression model for forecasting librarians' job performance based on organizational politics (F-test (1, 234, $p < .05$) of 96.741 is thus expressed as:

$$JP = 2.226 + .338 OP + e \dots \dots \dots \text{Model 2}$$

Where:

JP = Job performance

OP = Organizational politics

e = Error term (All uncaptured variables that can influence JP but not included in the model)

Discussion of Findings

This study examined organizational politics and job performance of librarians in ABU Library, Zaria. This section reports the findings of this study and discussed the findings in line with the previous studies. The research questions and hypothesis drawn for the study were intended at determining the influence of organizational politics on job performance of librarians in public universities in ABU Library, Zaria.

Research Question One

Research question one sought to find out the level of job performance of librarians in ABU Library, Zaria. The findings revealed that the level of job performance of librarians in ABU Library, Zaria was high on a scale of 4. This finding supports Yaya (2019) who stated that good job performance mirrors the ability to contribute through their works leading to the behavioral achievement that is in accordance with the goals of the company (university). In support of this finding, Japheth(2021) concluded that organizations or institutions need highly performing people to meet their goals, deliver the products and services they specialized in, and achieve their competitive advantage. This finding also corroborates Ishandar et al. (2019) who found out that employees' performance is determined by job stress, motivation and communication factors. Also in agreement with this finding, Linda (2020) revealed that majority of the librarians perform their jobs to a high extent; the relationship between the autocratic leadership style and job performance of librarians is high, positive and significant; the relationship between the democratic leadership style and job performance of librarians was also high, positive and significant. However, present finding disagreed with Ndenje-Sichalwe (2011) who revealed that, the level of librarian services were rated as low, librarians were not sufficiently prepared and the non-appearance of particular spending plans apportioned to library.

Research Question Two

Research question two investigated the organizational politics prevalent among librarians in public university libraries in ABU Library, Zaria. The findings revealed that organizational influence, personal influence and job context influence were the prevalent organizational politics practiced among librarians in public university libraries in ABU Library, Zaria. This finding agrees with the study of Hochwarter, (2018); Miller, Rutherford, & Kolodinsky, (2019) which reported that organizational political skill influences job performance. Scholars like Ferris et al (2016) found that unfair activities could occur in a climate of organizational politics and how employees took negative attitudes on voluntary efforts. Also in support with the finding of this study was Rushipe (2019) who investigated the causes and the effects of politics within organization. Strategies found effective in reducing organizational politics include but are not limited to: involving employees in decision making, fostering teamwork, building trust and social support, hiring politically under-skilled employees, and basing personnel and program decisions on objective criteria. Similarly, the finding of this study corroborates Okeoghene (2018) who revealed that unclear organizational policies (42%), lack of supervisor support (41%), denial of promotion and entitlements (39%) and lack of career opportunities (34%) were some of the challenges affecting librarians' commitment in university libraries.

The finding also corroborates Hassan, Vina and Ithnin (2017); Rodrigues (2016) who examined the relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational politics and supervisor-rated task performance and deviance, and mediation effects by authenticity at work and affective commitment. The results indicated that workers tend to react to workplace politics with deviant behaviour and worse task performance. This situation was also attested to by Ishaq (2018), who argued that favouritism, pay and promotion and scarcity of resources antecedents of organizational politics create a politics tendency in employees and that will result in employee turnover intention. The study was done in private colleges in the Multan city of Pakistan. Similarly, the finding of this study disagrees with that of the University of Lagos Gull and Zaidi (2012) which indicated a higher politics perception among employees and resulted in a lower job satisfaction level among the employees. This finding also confirms the report of Jacobson and Viswesvaran (2017); Mutambara et al (2014) who took a slightly different angle of organizational politics, using exploratory factor analysis. The authors found that, organizational motivators, organizational de-motivators, and labour turnover were common factors of organizational politics.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis examined the organizational politics and job performance of librarians in ABU Library, Zaria. The result showed that, organizational politics has a significant influence on librarians' job performance in public universities in ABU Library, Zaria. In support of this study, the findings of Olorunleke (2015) carried out on organizational politics and job performance with a sample size of 152 employees revealed that organizational politics is negatively related to job performance and also negatively related to achievement of harmony among the functional departments of an organization. Similarly, a research effort by Hassan et al (2017) on predictive effect of perceived organizational politics on employees' job performance, and the role of personality (extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness) in moderating the relationship concluded that perceived organizational politics was negatively related to job performance. This finding is supportive of the current study that revealed that organizational politics has a significant influence on librarians' job performance. In line with this study, the findings of a research work by Kaya et al (2016) that examined the perceptions about organizational politics held by members of different organizations and how these affect their perceptions of organizational justice and decisions relating to employee

turnover, the finding showed that organizational politics had a significant effect on perceived organizational justice and intention to leave. The study of Abbas and Awan (2017) in Pakistan revealed that organizational politics have a significant impact on employee performance. This study also supports Sowmya and Panchanatham (2012) who showed that work place politics badly affects the performance of teaching faculty.

This finding also corroborates Samad and Amri (2011) who examined the relationship between organizational politics and job performance and discovered the influence of organizational politics on job performance. Consequently, the study examined which of the organizational politics aspect has significant impact on job performance. It was found that two components of organizational politics mainly going along to get ahead and pay and promotion policies had significant influence on job performance. Going along to get ahead aspect of organizational politics appeared to be the most significant and important influence on job performance. Aftab, Mughal and Arif (2013) also indicated the employees performance may come from positive or negative way when they perceived organizational politics.

Conclusion

The research was directed to verify the level of job performance of librarians. The research established that indicators of organizational politics influence job performance of librarians in ABU Library, Zaria. The study found that the level of job performance of librarians in ABU Library, Zaria was high on a scale of 4. The result showed that, organizational politics has a significant influence on librarians' job performance in ABU Library, Zaria. This leads to the conclusion that the library management should continue to adopt less organizational politics so as to keep on sustaining the job performance of librarians.

Recommendations

The results of this study have implications for professional librarians, university management. LIS schools, National University Commission (NUC) as well as the government. The following recommendations were made to address these challenges based on the findings of the study:

1. Since the findings showed that the level of librarians' job performance in ABU Library, Zaria was high, hence, these areas should be sustained the job performance of the library personnel.
2. The result showed that organizational politics takes place among the librarians in ABU Library, Zaria. These results recommend that ABU Library, Zaria can improve organizational politics practiced in ABU Library, Zaria in the study area by practicing the positive step by carrying every person along by not segregating.

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