

## **Relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities**

David T. Aju, *PhD*  
Department of Library and Information Science  
Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria

### **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to correlate subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library educators in Nigerian universities, determine present level of subject specialist knowledge of library educators, and ascertain the extent of job satisfaction of library educators in Nigerian universities. Research questions and one hypothesis guided the study, correlation design was used among thirteen federal and seven state universities with population of two hundred and thirty-five library educators as population and sample size. Data collection instrument was structured questionnaire, Pearson correlation coefficient was used to answer research questions, t-test was used to test the hypothesis for significance at 0.05 level, using multiple regression analysis, result of t-test value revealed that there was significant relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction among educators. Result on present level of subject specialist knowledge revealed that library educators in Nigerian universities specialize in different subject specialist knowledge to a great extent, except Federal University of Technology Minna, Federal University of Technology Minna specialized in different subject specialist knowledge to a very great extent. Based on the findings, the study recommended that Nigerian universities should encourage indices that contributed to strong relationship between subject knowledge and job satisfaction of library educators, Nigerian universities should encourage educators specialize in different subject knowledge by providing appropriate incentives. The study concluded that universities need to take issues of staff development as their priority in order to overcome brain-drain challenge, enhance job satisfaction as well make educators relevant in Nigerian university system.

**Keywords:** Job satisfaction, Library and information science educators, Subject specialist knowledge, Nigerian universities

### **Introduction**

The work performed by library and information science educators in Nigerian universities is tasking, which in turn needs an updating programme for them to be effective and appropriate. Library and information science educators are involved in a number of activities such as teaching, research, uploading of students' results, supervision of students' projects among other activities.

These activities are significant in the sense that they are geared towards contributing to the students' acquisition of knowledge who in turn contribute to the national development of Nigeria by participating in political, economic, as well as educational activities in the country. Given the nature of work performed by library educators in Nigerian universities

towards national development, it is observed that the educators need motivational incentives to raise the level of their job satisfaction and job performance. Motivational incentives such as improved work environment, enhanced salary, regular promotion, continuing education programmes with emphasis on subject specialist knowledge, managerial expertise, information and technology application as well as public relations and communication skills. In this paper, library and information science educators are lecturers teaching library and information science courses in library and information science departments or units in universities.

It is expected that through continuing education programmes, with emphasis on subject specialist knowledge,

library educators could always be updated in order to make their relevance and efficiency felt in their duties. This calls for training programmes for lecturers to remain relevant in their respective departments in Nigerian universities. Continuing education, according to Page and Thomas in Aju (2015), is full-time or part-time training programme for young people or adults who for obvious reasons have not completed their formal education and may want to continue or for employees in organizations who may want to advance their knowledge in a particular field while on the job. For example, a librarian who already possessed a degree (BLS or BSc.) could through a continuing education programme obtain a higher degree such as masters or doctoral in his discipline in order to be more efficient and productive. The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2013) defined continuing education as different kinds of in-service training courses and seminars related to different occupations designed for all classes of workers, arranged in a continuing basis so that all workers might attain greater proficiency in their work. The aim of continuing education, according to the Policy, was to provide functional and remedial education to people who prematurely dropped out of the formal school system. It also provides further for different categories of completers of the formal education system in order to improve their basic knowledge and skills.

According to Stone in Aju (2018), the programme of emphasis in continuing education include subject specialist knowledge, managerial expertise, information and communication technologies and public relations and communication skills. It is expected that through continuing education with emphasis on any of these programmes, library and information science educators could be fully equipped to cope with changes and challenges in the profession as well as have the necessary skills to

teach in the library and information science department in Nigerian universities. However, in a situation where library and information educators do not have opportunities for a training programmes in any of the areas of emphasis or formal degree programme, their initial acquired knowledge will certainly stem down. If this happens, it could result in professional obsolescence, poor quality service delivery, drop in productivity and dissatisfaction with the work.

Subject specialist, according to Womboh (1999), refers to the possession of expert knowledge of a specific discipline of a subject area, or of a group of related disciplines. A specialist in an area is referred to as subject specialist. The specialist has the subject background and is charged with the responsibility of developing resources and services in the subject area.

The American Library Association (ALA) Glossary (2015) defined subject specialist knowledge as library staff with superior knowledge of a subject or discipline with responsibilities for the selection and evaluation of library materials in the subject area and sometimes with the added responsibilities of information services in the subject area and the bibliographic organization of the materials. In work environment such as medicine, engineering and teaching, subject specialist is a status where a worker specializes in a particular area of the field. For instance, medical doctors could specialize in dental medicine, similarly, library and information science educators could specialize in a particular area of librarianship such as information and communication technologies with emphasis on multimedia technology, web design, internet connectivity, CDS/ISIS package.

Since we are living in an age of specialization, there is high expectation from the specialist; this expectation leads to increased accountability on the jobs by

individuals with specialist knowledge. It is therefore expected that one with subject specialist knowledge is well equipped with rudimentary, technical and theoretical knowledge in the chosen field and the specialist is seen as an authority and he could solve complex and technical problems and can as well think independently.

Based on this understanding, a library educator who has participated in training programme in a particular subject area (subject specialist knowledge) could teach that subject better among other library educators in the field. It is also evident in librarianship that subject specialists have better perspective of administrative machinery of their departments, leadership skills, delegating authority, information processing (collection, organization and dissemination). This brings to bear on subject and language expertise as well as familiarity with scholarly communication leading to the educator's efficiency, job satisfaction and high level of performance.

It is extremely difficult to define job satisfaction of a worker in the true sense of it. However, Spektor in Hassand (2018), defined job satisfaction as an effective or emotional response towards various aspects of an employee's work. The author emphasized that likely causes of job satisfaction include: job status, supervision, co-worker relationship, job content, remuneration, extrinsic rewards, promotion and physical condition of the work environment, as well as organizational structure. However, Adeyemo (2006) advanced a working definition of job satisfaction of a worker as pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experience. Adeyemo further explained that job satisfaction is a result of employee's perception of how well their job provides those things that are viewed as important.

Job satisfaction for organizational workers is multifaceted and so are its

definitions. Morrison (2013) suggested that job satisfaction is related to employee's opportunities for interaction with others on the job; that is, co-worker relationship has significant impact on a worker's level of job satisfaction. Hence cordial relationship among co-workers and supervisors are important judge and Klinger (2007), Luthans (2009), Paul (2011) in their studies provided different definitions of job satisfaction of workers in organizational settings.

In this paper, job satisfaction or employee satisfaction is a measure of workers' contentedness with their job, whether or not they like the job or individual aspects or facets of jobs, such as nature of work or supervision.

A look at the variables of the study indicates that library educators need subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction to enable them function properly in Nigerian universities as each of the variables is related to the output of the library educators. For now, the library educator is at a cross road hence the need to conduct the study.

### **Statement of the problem**

Globally, workers expect their work environment and activities to be pleasurable and enjoyable. However, in a situation where the desire or expectations of the workers is not achieved, such workers are said to be dissatisfied with their job which may result in truancy, redundancy and a show of carefree attitude to work. In Nigerian universities, library educators seem to experience job dissatisfaction based on this researcher's observation and empirical literature. A careful observation of library educators in Nigerian universities also reveals that it is common to hear library educators complain and antagonize themselves and students on academic and non-academic problems. Ordinarily, these problems if they were informed should not be an issue of conflict. Ordinarily, issues of examination and grading pattern,

supervision and other social problems would have been addressed through subject specialist knowledge among other training programmes in Nigerian universities.

From the available empirical literature, library and information science educators seem not to be satisfied with their job despite the regular payment of their salaries and promotion. Library educators express worry over the nature of work, work environment and lack of human resource development such as attending training programmes to obtain subject specialist knowledge among other benefits. As a result of this, many of the library educators have left universities for other lucrative jobs in Nigeria and abroad. This is evident in the shortage of educators in library science departments in Nigerian universities. The few on the job are not given their best because they are dissatisfied with the nature of work and the work environment. If these identified challenges are not brought under control in Nigerian universities, the educators will continue to be dissatisfied, they will not teach well, library and information science students will be disadvantaged above all, the standard of education in the discipline will fall and the society at large will only have fake librarians who will not be productive. The rationale for this paper is to correlate subject specialist knowledge with job satisfaction of library educators in Nigerian universities.

### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of the study was to find out the relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities. The specific purposes were to:

1. Investigate the relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities.

2. Determine the present level of subject specialist knowledge of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities.
3. Ascertain the extent of job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities.

### **Research questions**

Three research questions were raised to guide this paper:

1. What is the relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities?
2. What is the present level of subject specialist knowledge of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities?
3. What is the extent of job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigeria universities?

### **Hypothesis**

A null hypothesis was postulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

**Ho1:** There is no significant relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities.

### **Methods**

The paper used correlation survey design. Correlational design according to Whawo (1999), describe the extent to which a relationship exists between two or more variables. The extent of the relationship is expressed as a correlation coefficient. The study was conducted in Nigeria in sixteen (16) federal and state owned universities with a population of two hundred and thirty five (235) library educators. The population size was manageable, therefore,

there was no sampling. Out of 235 copies of questionnaire administered, 187 were returned representing 68% return rate. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The researcher and research assistants collected the data. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer research question one while research question 2 and 3 were answered using descriptive statistics such as mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation. The null hypothesis formulated for the study was tested for significance at 0.05 level using multiple regression analysis.

### Findings

The results of this study are presented according to the research questions and hypothesis.

**Research question 1:** What is the relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities?

The data in Table 1 are used to answer this research question.

Table 1 shows Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient of the relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction. The result on the table revealed that Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient of the relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction is 0.693. This coefficient reflects a strong positive correlation between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities.

**Research question 2:** What is the present level of subject specialist knowledge of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities?

The data in Table 2 are used to answer this research question.

Table 2 shows mean and standard deviation of the extent of specialization in different continuing education programmes across various Nigerian universities. The result on the table revealed that all the library and information science educators in various universities, except Federal University of Technology, Minna, specialized in different continuing education programmes to a great extent. This is because each of the institutions has the mean ranging between 2.61 and 3.23 and this range lies between 2.50 and 3.49; this is the scale corresponding to great extent. However, the library and information science educators in Federal University of Technology, Minna specialized in different continuing education programmes to a very great extent. This is because Federal University of Technology (FUT), Minna has the mean of 3.45 and this mean lies between 3.50 and 4.00; that is, the scale corresponding to very great extent.

**Research question 3:** What is the extent of job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities?

The data in Table 3 are used to answer this research question.

Table 3 shows the mean and standard deviation of the extent of job satisfaction across various universities. The result on the table revealed that all the library and information science educators in various universities exhibit job satisfaction to a great extent; this is because each of the universities has the mean ranging between 2.61 and 3.23 and this range lies between 2.50 and 3.49; that is, the scale corresponding to great extent.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities.

The data in Table 4 are used to test the hypothesis.

Table 4 shows *t*-test for testing the significant relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction. The result on the table indicated that the *t*-value is 4.175 and it is significant at 0.000. However, this value of *t* is equally significant at 0.050; that is (*P* = 0.000;

0.000<0.050). Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected; hence, there is significant relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities.

**Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient of the relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction (N = 187)**

Variables	Job satisfaction	Subject specialist knowledge	Remarks
Job satisfaction	1	.693	
Subject knowledge	.693	1	

**Table 2: Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation of level of subject specialist knowledge of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities**

Institutions	N	Subject specialist knowledge		Managerial expertise		ICT application		PR communication skills		Cont. edu. programme		Decision
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	
Ilorin	15	3.39	0.36	3.21	0.40	3.22	0.45	2.99	0.61	3.20	0.32	GE
Ibadan	9	3.39	0.64	3.33	0.46	3.22	0.51	3.30	0.50	3.32	0.40	GE
AAU	8	3.48	0.26	3.36	0.37	3.64	0.26	3.38	0.28	3.46	0.24	GE
FUT Minna	7	3.67	0.27	3.29	0.31	3.70	0.35	3.55	0.37	3.54	0.19	VGE
UniUyo	8	3.40	0.24	3.14	0.32	3.14	0.19	3.73	0.25	3.30	0.19	GE
BSU	10	3.29	0.49	3.21	0.41	3.09	0.98	3.47	0.48	2.26	0.24	GE
FUT Yola	14	3.29	0.47	3.31	0.47	3.34	0.32	2.89	0.80	2.16	0.31	GE
Kogi	6	2.80	0.64	2.26	0.55	2.67	0.34	3.00	0.49	2.70	0.30	GE
DESU	15	3.19	0.36	3.16	0.31	3.15	0.13	3.47	0.45	3.23	0.21	GE
UniMaid	21	3.27	0.48	3.21	0.46	3.12	0.64	3.06	0.64	3.15	0.40	GE
ATBU	17	3.49	0.46	3.34	0.34	3.45	0.53	3.51	0.35	3.44	0.30	GE
BUK	20	3.16	0.53	2.96	0.63	3.11	0.43	3.21	0.46	2.13	0.41	GE
ABU	13	3.48	0.32	3.36	0.31	3.50	0.39	3.63	0.33	3.48	0.24	GE
UNN	6	3.42	0.34	3.24	0.28	3.19	0.40	3.81	0.25	3.38	0.14	GE
ABSU	9	3.49	0.43	3.25	0.48	2.09	0.86	3.41	0.43	3.26	0.25	GE
UniZik	9	3.40	0.30	3.17	0.40	3.35	0.53	3.24	0.61	3.26	0.38	GE

NB: GE=Great Extent; VGE=Very Great Extent; =  $\bar{X}$  Mean; SD=Standard Deviation

**Table 3: Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation of the extent of job satisfaction across various universities**

Institutions	N	Subject specialist knowledge		Managerial expertise		ICT application		PR communication skills		Cont. edu. programme		Decision
		$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	
Ilorin	15	2.74	0.58	2.35	0.51	2.67	0.59	3.28	0.61	2.83	0.50	GE
Ibadan	9	2.80	0.45	2.13	0.54	2.17	0.49	3.08	0.47	2.61	0.32	GE
AAU	8	2.96	0.50	2.84	0.59	2.95	0.64	3.34	0.37	3.07	0.39	GE
FUT Minna	7	2.86	0.40	2.71	0.40	2.86	0.48	3.62	0.39	3.10	0.28	GE
UniUyo	8	2.38	0.15	3.16	0.23	3.52	0.17	3.55	0.31	3.16	0.07	GE
BSU	10	2.68	0.15	3.16	0.23	3.52	0.17	3.35	0.31	3.16	0.07	GE
FUT Yola	14	2.77	0.42	2.42	0.37	2.99	0.47	3.33	0.33	2.94	0.19	GE
Kogi	6	2.50	0.52	2.36	0.56	2.33	0.30	2.75	0.56	2.52	0.25	GE
DESU	15	2.63	0.35	3.12	0.32	3.42	0.56	3.25	0.23	3.14	0.18	GE
UniMaid	21	2.61	0.29	2.35	0.57	2.63	0.59	3.32	0.39	2.81	0.33	GE
ATBU	17	2.78	0.41	2.58	0.62	2.64	0.64	3.26	0.47	2.88	0.31	GE
BUK	20	2.73	0.47	2.57	0.65	2.76	0.75	3.16	0.44	2.86	0.39	GE
ABU	13	3.26	0.46	3.00	0.41	3.23	0.41	3.35	0.45	3.23	0.24	GE
UNN	6	2.56	0.49	2.81	0.61	3.29	0.72	3.32	0.37	3.05	0.16	GE
ABSU	9	2.81	0.47	2.84	0.44	2.97	0.51	3.54	0.24	3.12	0.25	GE
UniZik	9	2.80	0.59	2.46	0.52	2.73	0.57	3.47	0.21	2.95	0.27	GE

NB: GE=Great Extent; VGE=Very Great Extent;  $\bar{X}$  Mean; SD=Standard Deviation

**Table 4: *t*-test for testing the significant relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library and information science educators**

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	<i>T</i>	Sig.	Remark
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
Constant	2.183	.182		11.976	.000	
Subject Specialist Knowledge	.226	.054	.693	4.175	.000	S

### Implications for library and information science education

The result of the study reflected a strong positive correlation between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library and information science educators in Nigerian universities. The correlation coefficient stand at 0.693 which indicates that there is a strong positive relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction. The finding is in line with Tutuncu and Kozak (2006), who held that there is a relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of workers which is paramount in an organizational environment. Womboh (1999) also posited

that librarians with subject specialist knowledge possess expert knowledge in the chosen area in librarianship, such a librarian could also acquire high level of managerial, and technical expertise to deliver quality service in the organization. By this result, it implies that library educators with subject specialist knowledge stands to teach practical and theoretical aspects of their chosen area very effectively as they benefit from training programmes which also means that they have satisfaction with their job. In other ways, the job satisfaction of library educators is strongly positively related to subject specialist knowledge. This relationship could be attributed to

universities management's policies, leadership style and vision as well as policies on staff motivation. The strong positive relationship could also be attributed to the library educator's willingness to take advantage of the opportunities in training programmes of their universities. Finally the relationship may as well impact positively on the student's academic performance because they have well informed library educators who like their job and they are satisfied with it.

### Conclusion

This study has investigated the relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library educators in Nigerian universities. In doing that: the finding of the study reflected a strong positive correlation between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library educators in Nigerian universities; the present level of subject specialist knowledge of library educators was determine, the study revealed that all library educators except Federal University, Minna specialized in various training programmes to a great extent Minna library educator's level of subject specialist knowledge was to a very great extent; the result of the study further revealed that library educators in Nigerian universities exhibit some level of job satisfaction. The null hypothesis was rejected hence, there is significant relationship between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library educators.

The following recommendations are made based on the results of the study:

1. The National Universities Commission (NUC) should encouraged and maintain the indices that contributed to a strong positive correlation between subject specialist knowledge and job satisfaction of library and information

science educators in Nigerian universities.

2. The management of universities in Nigeria should provide all the appropriate incentives that could guarantee and sustain the library educator's job satisfaction.
3. Universities in Nigeria should encourage library educators to attend programmes to specialize in different subject areas within and outside Nigeria to acquire new skills and knowledge to enhance the performance and productivity for development. This can be achieved by providing financial support to educators to attend conferences, workshops, seminars etc.
4. Library educators should take advantage of available opportunities to attend conferences to acquire knowledge and skills in order to be relevant.

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#### **About the author**

David T. Aju is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Library and Information Science, Benue State University, Makurdi, Nigeria. He holds Diploma from Benue State University, BLIS from University of Maiduguri, MLIS from University of Ibadan and PhD from University of Nigeria, Nsukka. His areas of interest lie in reference service, bibliographies, indexing and abstracting service. He can be contacted via: E-mail: [ajudave@yahoo.com](mailto:ajudave@yahoo.com); Cell: +2348135383344