

Attitude of library personnel towards preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated the attitude of library personnel towards preservation practices of academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design. The population comprised 387 librarians and paraprofessionals in seventeen academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria. Total enumeration method was used. A structured and validated questionnaire was used for data collection. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the constructs ranged from 0.77 to 0.84. A return rate of 81.4% was achieved. Descriptive and inferential (simple and multiple regression) statistics were used for data analysis. The finding indicated attitude of library personnel had a significant influence on preservation of information resources in the libraries ($Adj.R^2 = 0.076$, $F(1, 314) = 26.825$, $p < 0.05$). Attitude of library personnel indicators: positive attitude ($\beta = 0.222$, $t(312) = 3.535$, $p < 0.05$) and negative attitude ($\beta = 0.094$, $t(312) = 1.516$, $p < 0.05$) positively and significantly influenced preservation practices of information resources. The study concluded that attitude of library personnel have affect preservation practices in academic libraries. The study recommended that the management of academic libraries in Niger State should create awareness through training for librarians to foster positive attitudes towards the preservation of information resources. Library management should have disaster preparedness management plans and preservation policies to secure the library resources against deterioration.

Keywords: Academic libraries, attitude, library personnel, preservation practices

Introduction

Libraries have contributions to make to the educational and cultural life of the countries in which they are located. Library remains the most dependable source of information. This is because it is most comprehensive and the cheapest traditional source of information. It contains information in a wide variety of formats and access to the information is relatively cheap and, in some cases, completely free. Academic libraries are set up with the goal of acquiring, processing, storing, preserving and disseminating information materials in any format to assist teaching, learning, research. Oluwaseun, Ottong and Ottong (2017) referred to academic libraries as repositories of the wisdom of great thinkers of the past and present, therefore, a library must ensure that its resources in all formats, are preserved in an accessible form for as long

as possible. The library collects and collates materials published and unpublished, print and non-print locally and globally in all fields of knowledge besides those offered in the academics.

Information resources preserved in various libraries play an important role in the process of intellectual development, learning and research which expands users' perspectives in terms of learning, self-development and evaluation. These information materials which carry recorded human knowledge expressed the intellectual and cultural life of a given time and place needs to be preserved and conserved for future uses (Odutola and Alegbeleye 2019).

Preservation is "all the managerial and financial consideration including storage, and accommodation provision, staffing levels, policies, techniques and methods involved in preserving library and

archival materials and the information contained in them” (Tyler, Tyler and Ligibel 2018). In Nigeria, as in many other countries, books and book-related materials such as serials, maps and compact discs are considered the main information carrier. Osunride and Adetunla (2017) describes preservation and conservation as an umbrella term for an array of activities, principles, practices, and organizations that ensure the usability, longevity, and accessibility of recorded knowledge. These activities include; general collections repair, reformatting (microfilming, photocopying, and digitization), environmental monitoring and control, care and handling of materials, disaster preparedness and recovery, binding and preservation education and training. In preservation practices, consideration is given to every element that promotes the protection of the materials in the libraries.

Attitude is a crucial factor in the perception and actions of librarians, as it influences their commitment to preservation practices. It can be positive or negative, depending on the individual's feelings and beliefs about their environment (Cabrera and Estacio, 2022). Attitudes can be divided into affective, cognitive, and behavioral components, with affective components relating to feelings and emotions associated with a belief, cognitive components categorizing objects, persons, or events, and behavioral components referring to tendencies a librarian has towards certain actions.

Librarian in the academic libraries should possess a positive attitude towards library resources and services to stimulate interest for effective use and patronage among users. Positive attitudes are fundamental in implementing new preservation practices, as they help meet the educational, recreational, research, and other needs of university library clients. A positive attitude leads to a sense of love and

belonging for the preservation of information resources under their care, prolonging their lifespan (Albarracin and Shavitt, 2018). Staff attitude is the behavior displayed by library personnel in responding to their jobs, ensuring the safety and longevity of resources. The right attitude of all library personnel depends on attributes such as honesty, discipline, integrity, commitment, punctuality, regularity, consistency, diligence, and transparency. Allport (2015) emphasise that attitudes can be categorized into explicit and implicit attitudes. Negative attitudes involve librarians' attitudes towards preservation practices, which can result in negligence or lack of concern for the preservation of information resources. To ensure successful preservation practices, library personnel in academic libraries should possess a positive attitude to preserve information resources for future generations.

Statement of the problem

Library personnel play a crucial role in academic libraries, storing knowledge and advancing the mission of the parent organization. However, some library staff have negative attitudes is hindering the preservation practices and causing frustration. Academic libraries have accumulated vast amounts of deteriorated materials, such as books and documents. Inadequate preservation practices among library personnel have led to the degradation of information resources, reducing libraries' effectiveness in supporting academic pursuits.

The high incidence of deterioration and poor preservation practices are depleting information resources and reducing libraries' effectiveness in supporting academic pursuits. Library collections, especially paper-based, are acquired without adequate resources, including human, financial, and attitude. Library management in Niger State

often fails to realize the importance of preservation, as damaged, lost, stolen, or missing books significantly hinder the library's ability to provide resources for students and staff.

Previous research on preservation practices in Niger State has focused on a few academic libraries, but this study aims to investigate the influence of the attitude of library personnel toward preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria.

Research questions

The following research questions are posed for the study:

1. What are the preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria?
2. What is the attitude of library personnel to preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria?

Literature review

Tyler, *et al.*, (2018) gave a more detailed definition of preservation: "all the managerial and financial consideration including storage, and accommodation provision, staffing levels, policies, techniques and methods involved in preserving library and archive materials and the information contained in them." Preservation practices are crucial in Nigerian university libraries, as they ensure the availability of books and other information carriers. These practices include managerial and financial considerations, storage, accommodation provision, staffing levels, policies, and techniques. Libraries must be prepared for potential hazards such as fires, earthquakes, computer viruses, and political insurrections. They must also protect against everyday threats like mildew, pests, rodents, mold, light, dust, hazardous

chemicals, and improper humidity and temperature controls.

Idahosa (2022) defined attitude as an individual's perception and reactions to a task that is expected to be carried out or executed in a library, group, institution, school setting, or organization. Lecturers' attitude in this context is their perception or reactions towards collaborating with the librarian to ensure that library collection are adequately preserved to meet the information needs of lecturers, researchers, and students. Fazio (2007) defines attitude "as a mental and neutral state of readiness, organized through experience exerting a direct influence upon an individual's response to all objects or situations with which it is associated. Idahosa and Eireyi-Fidelis (2023) found that lecturers showed a negative attitude in giving librarians enough input about library collection in their areas. Staff attitude refers to an individual's overall proclivity and feelings, prejudices or bias preconceived thoughts, ideas, worries, and convictions about a certain topic.

Ramzan Asif and Ahmad (2021) librarians' attitudes towards application of information technology in preservation of information resources in academic libraries in Pakistan. The findings revealed overall that respondents showed slightly positive attitudes towards information technology on preservation of information resources. However, several librarians were confused over the ownership of information technology applications in libraries. A significant relationship was determined between librarians' information technology attitudes and availability and usage of information technology in preservation of information resources in libraries, expenditure on information technology, librarians' expertise in information technology, their awareness about new technologies, experience in computer usage,

information technology training, academic qualifications, and experience as librarians.

Rathinam, Rathinam and Jesudoss (2019) on their studies of attitude of College Librarians on Preservation of Library Documents with Special Reference to the Aided Arts and Science Colleges Affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University, Tamil Nadu. The study found that 92% of the college librarians surveyed believed that preservation of library documents is necessary. The study revealed that the age of the documents and bad shelving were ranked as the top two factors causing deterioration of printed documents in college libraries. The findings indicated that college librarians adopted various preservation procedures and techniques to safeguard library documents. These included simple repair, keeping journals in boxes, working on binding of books and journals, rebinding of books, shelving documents air-free, cleaning and dusting of

documents, and occasional use of insecticides and pest control. The study identified inadequate funding, lack of competent manpower, and inadequate infrastructure as the main constraints on effective preservation practices in college libraries. Sudhier and Seena (2018) studied attitude and use of cloud computing technologies among the library professionals in the Kerala University Library India. The study revealed that over one-third of the studied library professionals did not have much idea about cloud computing technology.

Methods

The study adopted a survey research design. The population of the study consisted of three hundred and eighty-seven (387) professional and paraprofessionals in the sixteen academic libraries in Niger State as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1 Population distribution of library personnel in academic libraries in Niger State

Num.	Tertiary institutions in Niger State	Librarians	Paraprofessionals	Total
1.	Federal University of technology, Minna.	28	71	99
2.	Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai	14	41	55
3	AL Amin University, Minna	1	1	2
4	Federal Polytechnic, Bida	16	30	46
5.	Niger State Polytechnic, Zungeru.	4	19	23
6.	Federal College of Education Kontagora	12	35	47
7.	Niger State College of Education, Minna.	12	17	29
8.	Niger State College of Agriculture, Mokwa	4	9	13

Fati Abubakar, G. O. Alegbeleye and R. O. Owolabi: Attitude of library personnel towards preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria

9	Fati Lami Abubakar College for Legal and General Studies, Minna.	4	11	15
10.	Niger State School of Nursing, Bida	3	10	13
11.	Niger State School of Midwifery, Minna	2	8	10
12.	Niger State School of Health Technology, Minna	4	9	13
13	Niger State School of Health technology, Tungan-Magajiya	2	4	6
14	New Gate University of Health and Technology, Minna	2	6	8
15	Federal College of Freshwater Fisheries Technology, Baga	1	4	5
16	National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research, New Busa	1	2	3
Total		110	277	387

Source: Library departments of the tertiary institutions (2024)

Owing to the small number of library personnel population in Niger State, no sample size was used as total enumeration technique was adopted to study the library personnel. The research instrument used for this study was a self-structured questionnaire. The research instrument was presented to the supervisor and other lecturers in the department to ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument and to ensure it measures what it intends to measure. A pretest was conducted among two academic libraries in Nassarawa State with a bid to determine the reliability of the instrument. The result of the reliability test shows that the instrument was reliable with a Cronbach's alpha score of above 0.70 (70%) which is generally accepted. Three hundred and eighty-seven (387) copies of questionnaire were handed out to the respondents and three hundred

and fifteen (207) copies were returned, making a good usable response rate. Data analysis was done using frequency distribution, percentage, mean, standard deviation, simple linear regression as well as multiple linear regression.

Results

The findings of the research study are presented in this section. Three hundred and eighty-seven (387) copies of the questionnaire were distributed among the library personnel and three hundred and fifteen (315) were retrieved giving a response rate of 81.4%. Descriptive analyses (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviations) were used to analyse the demographic information, preservation practices, attitude and commitment of library personnel in tabular forms. Simple and multiple linear regression statistics were

used to test all the stated hypotheses by determining significant relationships attributed to preservation practices of information resources in academic libraries which include those of the Universities, Colleges of Educations, Polytechnics and other higher institutions in Niger State, Nigeria. Finally, the findings of the study

were discussed based on related scholarly literatures on the same subject matter.

The background information of library personnel include name of institution, qualification, rank, gender, age and years in service. The demographic analyses are contained in Table 2

Table 2: Demographic information

Demographic variables	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Name of institution		
Al Amin University, Minna	2	0.6
College of Agriculture, Mokwa	11	3.5
College of Education, Minna	26	8.3
Federal College of Freshwater Fisheries and Technology, New Bussa	4	1.3
Fati Lami Abubakar College for Legal and General Studies, Minna	13	4.1
College of Advanced studies, Zungeru	4	1.3
Federal College of Education, Kontagora	42	13.3
Federal Polytechnic, Bida	32	10.2
Federal University of Technology, Minna	79	25.1
Niger State School of Health and Technology, Minna	11	3.5
Niger State School of Health and Technology, Tungan-Magajiya	5	1.6
Niger State Polytechnic, Zungeru	21	6.7
School of Nursing, Bida	12	3.8
School of Midwifery, Minna	9	2.9
Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai	36	11.4
Newgate College of Health and Technology, Minna	6	1.9
National Institute for Freshwater Fisheries Research, NewBussa	2	0.6
Total	315	100
Qualification		
	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Diploma	66	21.0
Bachelor's/HND	162	51.4
Master's degree	58	18.4
Ph.D.	29	9.2
Total	315	100
Rank		
	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Library officer	45	14.3
Senior library officer	48	15.2
Assistant librarian	63	20.0
Librarian II	59	18.7

Librarian I	43	13.7
Senior librarian	20	6.3
Principal librarian	20	6.3
Deputy librarian	11	3.5
University librarian	6	1.9
Total	315	100
Gender	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Male	200	63.5
Female	115	36.5
Age	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Below 40 years	86	27.3
40 – 49 years	145	46.0
50 – 59 years	73	23.2
60 years and above	11	3.5
Total	315	100
Years in Service	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
1 – 10 years	52	16.5
11 – 20 years	142	45.1
21 – 30 years	98	31.1
31 years and above	23	7.3
Total	315	100

Table 2 reveals the demographic information of the respondents. The result shows that 17 higher institutions in Niger State participated in this study. Table 2 also indicates that 51.4% of the respondents were Bachelor degree holders, while 27.6% of the respondents had their postgraduate degree. This implies that graduates participated most in this study and this may be pointing to the fact that librarians in Niger State are acquiring degrees to enhance their career. It can also be inferred that any training on preservation practices would not be an effort wasted because of the educational level of the respondents.

The table shows that various ranks in the libraries are represented in this study. This study was dominated by male participants 63.5%, while females had 36.5% representation. This suggests that there are more male librarians than females in Niger State academic libraries. The table also shows the frequency distribution of the

respondents' age which indicates that 46.0% were within the age range of 40 – 49 years, 27.3% were below 40 years, 23.2% were within the age range of 50 – 59 years and 3.5% were above 60 years. From the result, it could be concluded that the age range of library personnel in Niger State is the age during which the workers concerned would be vigorously seeking for information to achieve their organisational objectives. Finally, table reveals that 7.26% of the librarians have had between 11 to 30 years working experience, 16.5% have had 1 to 10 years working experience, while 7.3% had over 31 years work experience.

The data shown in Tables 3 – 4 are collated to enable the researcher provide answers to the research questions raised in the study.

Research question one: What are the existing methods of preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Methods of preservation practices

Preservation Practices	Strongly agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)	Mean	Std.
Proper storage					2.87	0.782
Books in my library are stored under adequate temperature conditions	147 (46.7%)	147 (46.7%)	9 (2.9%)	12 (3.8%)	3.36	0.720
The relative humidity under which books are stored in my library is adequate	90 (28.6%)	187 (59.4%)	24 (7.6%)	14 (4.4%)	3.12	0.726
My library has adequate air-conditioners to ensure stable condition of temperature and humidity	99 (31.4%)	92 (29.2%)	74 (23.5%)	50 (15.9%)	3.03	0.947
My library uses light bulbs as light sources	66 (21.9%)	129 (41.0%)	106 (33.7%)	14 (4.4%)	2.97	0.688
There is good air circulation in my library	72 (22.9%)	120 (38.1%)	80 (25.4%)	43 (13.7%)	2.91	0.747
My library uses fluorescent light as light source	51 (16.2%)	120 (38.1%)	115 (36.5%)	29 (9.2%)	2.84	0.749
The light levels in my library are adequate	49 (15.6%)	185 (58.7%)	63 (20.0%)	18 (5.7%)	2.84	0.774
My library does not experience fluctuations in light and humidity levels	54 (17.1%)	211 (67.0%)	35 (11.1%)	15 (4.8%)	2.78	0.824
My library controls the ultra-violet rays,	66 (21.0%)	102 (32.4%)	106 (33.7%)	41 (13.0%)	2.72	0.754
My library does not use wooden shelves	61 (19.4%)	103 (32.7%)	106 (33.7%)	45 (14.3%)	2.65	0.762
Books in my library are not jam packed on the shelves	51 (16.2%)	185 (58.7%)	57 (18.1%)	22 (7.0%)	2.61	0.865
My library maintains micro-climate for special materials	44 (14.0%)	111 (35.2%)	134 (42.5%)	26 (8.3%)	2.55	0.833
Handling of library materials					2.85	0.953
My library practices Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for pest control	116 (36.8%)	92 (29.2%)	53 (16.8%)	54 (17.1%)	3.23	0.961
My library disposes of waste materials properly in the library	100 (31.7%)	107 (34.0%)	55 (17.5%)	53 (16.8%)	3.13	0.917
My library does not	95	90	72	58	2.91	1.033

Fati Abubakar, G. O. Alegbeleye and R. O. Owolabi: Attitude of library personnel towards preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria

permit eating in the library	(30.2%)	(28.6%)	(22.9%)	(18.4%)		
My library sets traps for pests in the library	98 (31.1%)	85 (27.0%)	51 (16.2%)	81 (25.7%)	2.77	1.232
Books and journals in my library are carefully handled	57 (18.1%)	101 (32.1%)	112 (35.6%)	45 (14.3%)	2.56	0.738
My library has strict rules governing handling of library materials	60 (19.0%)	97 (30.8%)	105 (33.3%)	53 (16.8%)	2.52	0.835
Disaster preparedness					2.99	0.974
My library has fire periodic drills	123 (39.0%)	80 (25.4%)	56 (17.8%)	56 (17.8%)	3.23	1.023
My library has smoke detectors	98 (31.1%)	94 (29.8%)	73 (23.2%)	50 (15.9%)	3.03	0.940
My library has fire detectors	96 (30.5%)	102 (32.4%)	63 (20.0%)	54 (17.1%)	3.03	0.954
My library has fire suppression systems	98 (31.1%)	94 (29.8%)	73 (23.2%)	50 (15.9%)	3.03	0.940
My library has training programmes to forestall disasters	80 (25.4%)	124 (39.4%)	66 (21.0%)	45 (14.3%)	3.03	0.762
My library has a disaster control team	97 (30.8%)	89 (28.3%)	77 (24.4%)	52 (16.5%)	2.97	0.979
My library has security guards	89 (28.3%)	98 (31.1%)	79 (25.1%)	49 (15.6%)	2.95	0.914
My library has smoke suppression systems	101 (32.1%)	88 (27.9%)	61 (19.4%)	65 (20.6%)	2.93	1.107
My library has a disaster management plan	101 (32.1%)	88 (27.9%)	61 (19.4%)	65 (20.6%)	2.93	1.107
My library has CCTV cameras in sensitive parts of the library	92 (29.2%)	98 (31.1%)	66 (21.0%)	59 (18.7%)	2.92	1.017
My library uses key-control system for security of the library	102 (32.4%)	81 (25.7%)	70 (22.2%)	62 (19.7%)	2.92	1.100
Access to sensitive materials such as thesis/dissertations is protected	76 (24.1%)	117 (37.1%)	72 (22.9%)	50 (15.9%)	2.89	0.847
Digital preservation					2.76	0.922
My library has a digital preservation policy	82 (26.0%)	106 (33.7%)	76 (24.1%)	51 (16.2%)	2.89	0.902
My library has regular backup practices	84 (26.7%)	101 (32.1%)	80 (25.4%)	50 (15.9%)	2.89	0.909
File formats used for	82	93	82	58	2.76	0.998

our digital collections are widely supported	(26.0%)	(29.5%)	(26.0%)	(18.4%)		
One of the preservation strategies of my library is refreshing of digital materials	76 (24.1%)	98 (31.1%)	87 (27.6%)	54 (17.1%)	2.74	0.933
One of the preservation strategies of my library is migration of digital information	76 (24.1%)	86 (27.3%)	102 (32.4%)	51 (16.2%)	2.72	0.916
My library has trained staff in digital preservation	70 (22.2%)	90 (28.6%)	104 (33.0%)	51 (16.2%)	2.66	0.882
Digital materials in my library are generally securely protected	70 (22.2%)	92 (29.2%)	98 (31.1%)	55 (17.5%)	2.65	0.915
Grand mean					2.87	0.908

Decision rule: 1.0-1.74 = Strongly disagree; 1.75-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.24 = Agree; 3.25-3.99 = Strongly agree

Table 3 shows the descriptive analysis of the methods of preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State. The result shows a grand mean of ($\bar{x} = 2.87$, $SD = 0.908$) on a scale of 4-point Likert-type scale. This implies that the librarians in Niger State practice preservation methods. However, there is still room for improvement on the methods of preservation as the threshold has not been reached. The table further shows that disaster preparedness had the highest mean of $\bar{x} = 2.99$, while digital preservation had the lowest mean of $\bar{x} = 2.76$. In corroboration to this, Ishola, (2017) on his study on preservation practices and disaster management of frequently-use collections in libraries of three university libraries found that there is no written preservation and conservation policy in the university libraries studied, and even in cases where a preservation policy exists, it is often unwritten and not adhered to. Similarly, Catherine (2017) examined the preservation of information sources in polytechnic libraries in southeastern states of Nigeria. The study found out that the problem of preservation of information sources in the polytechnic libraries are dust and disintegration of books and that the library did not adopt the use of modern technology.

Research question two: What is the attitude of library personnel to preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria?

The data displayed in Table 4 show a grand mean of $\bar{x} = 3.19$, $SD = 0.730$ on a Likert-type scale of 4point. Two indices were used to measure the attitude of librarians and the result revealed that positive attitude had the higher mean of ($\bar{x} = 3.24$, $SD = 0.686$) on a 4-point Likert-type scale, while negative attitude had the lower mean ($\bar{x} = 3.14$, $SD = 0.774$) on a 4-point Likert-type scale. The implication is that greater number of library personnel in academic libraries in Niger State have positive attitude to preservation practices. However, some challenges were identified that hinders the positive attitude of librarians towards using ICT to preserve and deliver quality services to patrons were declining financial resources, inadequate ICT

facilities and incessant innovations in ICT. That respondents generally agreed that staff in university libraries in Ogun State had a positive attitude ($\bar{x}=2.89$).

Table 4: Attitude of library personnel to preservation practices

Attitude	Strongly agree (4)	Agree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)	Mean	Std.
Positive attitude					3.24	0.686
I support preservation practices of information resource because it prolongs the life span of materials.	120 (38.1%)	178 (56.5%)	8 (2.5%)	9 (2.9%)	3.30	0.658
I am able to use technology in digitize hard copy library collections to prolong its existence	126 (40.0%)	164 (52.1%)	18 (5.7%)	7 (2.2%)	3.30	0.677
I notice that older materials in the library are the most vulnerable to deterioration	123 (39.0%)	158 (50.2%)	18 (5.7%)	16 (5.1%)	3.23	0.774
I feel that I get more satisfied in my preservation practices of library materials because of the use of technology	93 (29.5%)	196 (62.2%)	18 (5.7%)	8 (2.5%)	3.19	0.648
I feel very happy that my library management is interested in preservation	97 (30.8%)	191 (60.6%)	17 (5.4%)	10 (3.2%)	3.19	0.674
Negative attitude					3.14	0.774
Crimes committed (stealing of library books and mutilation) in the library bother me	158 (50.2%)	115 (36.5%)	33 (10.5%)	9 (2.9%)	3.34	0.779
I get worried about the environmental protection of library materials in my library	140 (44.4%)	144 (45.7%)	16 (5.1%)	15 (4.8%)	3.30	0.774
I get bothered when disasters occur in my library	97 (30.8%)	191 (60.6%)	17 (5.4%)	10 (3.2%)	3.19	0.674
I sense preservation is not a priority to the library management	102 (32.4%)	124 (39.4%)	69 (21.9%)	20 (6.3%)	2.98	0.894
I am worried about the deterioration of library resources in my library	62 (19.7%)	161 (51.1%)	83 (26.3%)	9 (2.9%)	2.88	0.749
Grand mean					3.19	0.730

Decision rule: 1.0-1.74 = Strongly disagree; 1.75-2.49 = Disagree; 2.50-3.24 = Agree; 3.25-3.99 = Strongly agree

Discussion

The study surveyed the influence of attitude and commitment of library personnel on preservation practices of information resources in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria. Four research questions and five hypotheses were developed for the study with the intention to determine how attitude and commitment of library personnel will influence preservation

practices of information resources in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria.

Research question one sought to discover the existing methods of preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria. The study reveals that the preservation practices of information resources in academic libraries in Niger State is significantly high. The study also found that proper handling of

books, environmental and humidity control, photocopying, digitization, microfilming and implementation of digital preservation strategy are the various methods of preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State. In line with this finding is that of Mubofu, Mambo and Samzug (2022) who revealed effective preservation methods for information resources such as photocopying, binding, digitization, migration, and emergency preparedness plans in public university libraries in Tanzania. This finding also agrees with the study of Ogar (2020) who identified proper environmental control and monitor, proper housekeeping practices, security of the information resources, proper storage of information resources as the best effective measures of preservation practices. The finding of this study also agrees with the finding of Rathinam, Rathinam and Jesudoss (2019) who found that college librarians in Aided Arts and Science Colleges Affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University, Tamil Nadu, adopted various preservation procedures and techniques to safeguard library documents. This finding also aligns with those of Dushu, Okwu and Haliru (2022) and Akor and Udensi (2013) on the preservation methods required for records and information resources in an organization. This finding corroborates the views of Ozioko (2017) that various types of preservation and observation practices exist in university libraries in South-East, Nigeria. This study is somewhat different from the finding of Abubakar (2016) who reported that digitization was not a practice adopted to preserve information resources in twelve academic libraries in Niger State.

Research question two identified the attitude of library personnel to preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria. The study revealed a positive attitude towards preservation practices. This finding agrees with the study of Ramzan and

Ahmad (2021) who established that librarians showed a positive attitude towards preservation of information resources in academic libraries in Pakistan. This study also confirms earlier findings of Wongboonsin et al. (2018), Nilgün (2017) and Joiner (2016) who demonstrated in their various studies that employees displayed positive attitude to preservation practices. This finding also supports the finding of Ejedafiru and Lucky (2013) who found that library staff in Delta State University Library had positive attitude towards the use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the preservation of information resources.

Conclusion

The aim of information resources preservation practices is to maintain and preserve information resources so that these can be available for use. Preservation practices of information resources are an important aspect of library and information management. Academic libraries in Niger State, have no guidelines on how to preserve library information resources and this has led to the high extent of degradation of information resources. The libraries centered their attention mainly on acquiring, cataloguing and binding, shelving and making them available with scant attention to their preservation. The role of preservation practices will help to protect millions of publications from deterioration in the academic libraries in Niger State as any loss to such materials is in some cases simply irreplaceable. Therefore, preserving this intellectual and cultural heritage becomes not only the academic commitment but also the moral responsibility of the librarian. Based on the findings of this study, this study concludes that attitude of library personnel have a combined significant influence on preservation

practices in academic libraries in Niger State.

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Academic libraries should consider various methods that could be applied to promote preservation practices of information resources in their holdings.
2. Academic libraries should enhance librarians' orientation programmes through creating awareness, training and seminars or workshops. This will help librarians develop even higher positive attitude to preservation practices of information resources.

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Fati Abubakar, G. O. Alegbeleye and R. O. Owolabi: Attitude of library personnel towards preservation practices in academic libraries in Niger State, Nigeria

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