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LIBRARIANS' ATTITUDE AS CORRELATE OF USE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN SOUTH-EAST, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined Librarians' attitude as correlate of use of digital technologies in University Libraries in South-East, Nigeria. A research question guided the study, and a hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 significance level. The population of the study was 189 librarians in state and federal university libraries. The total enumeration sampling technique consisting of the census of the librarians in Federal and State university libraries in south-east, Nigeria was used. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection and was titled: Librarians' attitude as correlate of use of digital technologies in University Libraries in South-East, Nigeria. In order to establish the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha and Kuder Richardson were used to analyse the data collected from 33 librarians from Kashim Ibrahim Library, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and T-test were used to analyse the research question and test the hypothesis. The findings of the study revealed that there were significant but low positive relationships that exist between librarians' attitude and use of digital technologies. The researcher recommended that librarians should improve their communication and interpersonal relation skills as an initial step toward improving the librarians' attitude and eventual use of digital technology.

Keywords: Librarians, Attitude, Use, Use of Digital Technology and University Libraries.

Introduction

The world has become a global village and this has affected the way and manner things are done. The is a time of quick variation when methods and tools of instructions are incredibly changing fast. This has put the 21st century librarian in a serious spot of learning continuously as the library, which is a growing organism is influenced by the use of digital technologies. Digital technologies are being used in all areas of human endeavour, and the use of it in information and knowledge delivery is increasing. For example, the interaction between the librarians and users is often facilitated by the internet. Sulun (2018) noted that digital revolution has necessitated the use of digital technology

for continuity in information delivery between the librarian and users as this can be strengthened in an online environment. This change is particularly important when it comes to university libraries, which have been recognized as the engine room for knowledge creation.

Different librarians may react differently to these changes in performing daily tasks. Some might welcome these changes, while others might resist them. Librarian's resistance to the changes brought about by digital technologies could be in the aspect of positive or negative attitude of librarians which could correlate with their use of these technologies for improved service delivery.

Performing tasks especially with digital technology in organizations such as the university library could be influenced by certain underlying psychological constructs such as the attitude of the librarians. Everyone has an attitude towards an idea or object. Attitude is a concept that connotes the perception or feeling about something. According to Abraham and Ozioko (2015), attitude refers to the way people think and feel about something: the way that an individual behaves to somebody or something that shows how a being thinks and feel. Furthermore, Ramzan cited in Okeoghene (2020) states that attitude is a mental and neutral state of readiness through experience exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon individual's response to all objects or situations with which it is associated. A positive attitude has a tendency to lead to purposive use or participation in a process while a negative attitude leads to non-callants and poor interest about the use or participation in a process. Some individuals' attitudes propel them along, helping them to deal with new challenges, overcome obstacles and accomplish their objectives. Others have attitudes that are anchors, slowing them down or stopping them accepting the innovation and changes in their life and workplaces. Smith, Cputi and Rawstone as cited in Igbeneghu, (2023) defined computer attitude as a person's general evaluation or feeling of favourableness toward computer technologies and specific computer-related activities. Librarians in university library are supposed to have the right kind of attitude to enable them use digital technologies in the library for effective service delivery. A librarian's attitude towards the use of digital technology could have a great impact on librarian's intention towards the use or reuse of digital technology. A librarian's computer attitude reflects his disposition towards computers with respect to learning or using them.

Attitudes toward the use of information systems refer to the user's acceptance or rejection towards the use of information system. It is influenced by the user's level of trust. If a user has a high level of trust in information systems, he or she will enthusiastically accept the system. TAM defines attitude toward using as a person's attitude toward the users' acceptance or rejection as a factor influencing how they use technology at work (Islami, Asda, and Baumassepe, 2021).

Otieno, Otike and Rotich (2015) discovered that library staff attitude had great influence on use of library services by the users. Librarians are essential for library use and therefore were depended upon by the users. Librarians' attitudes do affect

service delivery to the library users and therefore the library staff forms a major factor in library operations.

A study conducted by Ramzan, Asif and Ahmad (2021) on librarians' attitudes towards application of information technology in academic libraries and interrelationship between their attitudes and different factors of their professional and personal traits. The findings revealed that respondents showed slightly positive attitudes towards information technology. 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 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. No significant relationship was found between librarians' information technology attitudes and library budget, size of libraries, type of libraries, location and librarians' gender. One of the outcomes of this study is that the information technology attitudes of librarians have been found to be positively associated with the libraries' information technology availability level and librarians' expertise in information technology. Therefore, a significant effort is needed to enhance the librarians' positivity towards application of information technology in libraries. This requires librarians' exposure to, and experience of latest technologies. Librarians' role in information technology-related decision making needs to be enhanced.

An innovation creates a new achievable goal because it provides opportunities to do something previously unattainable, or at least to improve upon the processes or products. Therefore, librarians with positive attitudes tend to be motivated to capitalize on opportunities. There is little doubt that digital technology provides improved opportunities for accessing information, but in view of these opportunities requires positive attitudes, new knowledge and skills in computer usage. From observation, librarians' attitude and their perceptions towards digital technology seem to affect the adoption and usage of new technologies in libraries, and ultimately the services offered to the users (Ramzan, Asif and Ahmad, 2021).

University libraries are libraries that are situated in the University for teaching, learning and research. This library is meant to satisfy the information needs of the entire university community. They are significant part of the university education institution (Lisedunetwork, 2023). The university libraries provide a wide range of resources, services, and facilities to support the academic programmes and research activities of the university. In time past, majority of the university libraries make use of available information resources in print format such as textbooks, newspapers, monographs, magazines just to mention a few, however with the advent of digital technologies, many libraries have expanded their library collection to include library software packages, hardware, e-books, e-journals in order to meet the information needs of their users. The use of Information

and Communication Technology (ICT) in information work in the library by librarians has become indispensable in this digital age where globalization of education is made possible through digital technology, (Lisedunetwork, 2023).

Use is used to depict the act or practice of employing something. Thus, the use of digital technology refers to the application and utilization of electronic devices, software, and systems to process, transmit, store, and manipulate information. It encompasses a wide range of activities from communication and entertainment to business (Merriam-Webster, 2023). According to Westerman, Bonnet and McAfee (2014), the strategic use of digital tools and technologies involves driving innovation, efficiency, and competitive advantage within business operations, marketing, and customer engagement, Newport (2016). The use of digital technologies in the universities in south-east Nigeria has been steadily increasing in recent years, although the use of it may vary across different universities. Technological infrastructure such as the availability and accessibility of internet connectivity and digital devices play a crucial role in the use of digital technology. Over the years, the expansion of internet infrastructure and the increasing affordability of smart phones and tablets have improved access to digital technology. Despite the progress made, challenges seem to still exist, even with the growing recognition of the importance of digital technology in universities, the use of digital technology by librarians in universities in South-East, Nigeria is expected to expand and be effectively put into use to make the necessary impact in service delivery in libraries.

Vaitsekhovska, Ivaniuk, Soroko, Gritsenchuk and Kravchyna (2020) posit that, the use of digital technology offered to librarians are aimed at building the digital environment, developing the digital competence of the librarians. For this to be evident in south-eastern university libraries in Nigeria, it is expected that university libraries will increasingly incorporate digital technology due to improved access to technology and recognition of its ability to improve information dissemination for teaching, learning, and research. However, despite the increased access, there are still challenges to the use of digital technology. Overcoming these challenges could lead to a more favourable environment for embracing attitude as important correlates of librarians' use and adoption of digital technology.

The use of digital technology affords librarians the opportunity to have access to global information resources, especially the internet for their daily work in the library. Librarians make use of digital technology for many purposes in their day-to-day activities such as the use of various library software and their modules for selecting, acquiring, processing and dissemination of information. Digital technologies have seemly become widely accepted by librarians and have increased tremendously in volume around the globe but the question still remains on how librarians have developed the necessary self-efficacies and attitude that will help them adopt and use it in the library for effective service delivery (Oyedapo and Ojo, 2013).

Digital technology refers to digital devices, systems, and resources that help create, store, and manage data. It also

means any software, hardware or network solutions that enable, extended and supports teaching, learning and research (Study Smarter, 2023; IGI Global, 2023). An important aspect of digital technology is information technology, which refers to the use of computers to process data and information. Nazim, Munshi, and Ashar (2022) posit that most university libraries in developed world use digital technology to manage operations, processes and disseminate information, as a result, timely and accurate information for effective user communication is obtained. Similarly, integration of emerging digital technology in academic libraries in south-east, Nigeria is becoming prevalent. The fast-changing digital technology is highly influencing the methods of operation of libraries by enhancing effective information access and use and providing users unprecedented immediate access to up-to-date information. The advancement in digital technology is expected to increase the adoption and use of such technology by librarians in university libraries. Today, without incorporating digital technology in university libraries, no university library can expect to excel in their librarian's information work. Advent of digital technology in university libraries could improve service delivery when the librarians adopt and use it. In fact, to remain competitive, university libraries are to be emphasizing on greater use of digital technology by librarians for effective service delivery.

Librarians are professionals that are behind the scene in the library carrying out the task of selection, acquisition, processing, storage and dissemination of information in the right form and format and at the right time. They are crop of professionals that are trained to carry out core duties of a library, beyond the day-to-day routines of library officers and library attendants (Ezeani, Eke and Ugwu, 2012). A librarian is in charge of or works professionally in a library and is responsible for its management and services. The librarian takes care of the library and its resources. The typical job of a librarian includes managing collection development and acquisitions, cataloguing, collections management, circulation, and providing a range of services, such as reference, information, instruction, and training services. Librarians are trained in library and information science and are engaged in providing library services, usually holding a degree in Library and Information Science (MasterDegreeOnline, 2024).

Moreso, it has been observed by Adetayo and Williams-ilemobola (2021) that today's librarians in southeast seem to be using innovative digital technology extensively in their everyday lives, primarily for socializing and entertainment which might have made them to spend much of their time using interactive multimedia, social media and so on but, the use of digital technology in university libraries for effective service delivery seem to be relatively low. As digital technology becomes ever-present in the librarian's daily life, it is important for library professionals to use these technologies to enhance their services so that information can be accessed at any time and place. In this context, understanding the variables such as attitude could affect librarians' intentions to use digital technology in service delivery.

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Performing tasks especially with computers in organizations such as the university library is influenced by certain underlying psychological constructs such as the attitude of the individual to the tasks, motivation, expectations; belief on one's ability. Everyone has an attitude towards an idea or object.

Furthermore, negative attitudes towards digital tools could make it even harder for librarians to feel comfortable with new platforms and technology. To address these challenges, the study on how librarians' attitude correlates with their willingness to use digital technology in university libraries in the south -eastern region is eminent.

The use of digital technology in university libraries is now a widespread practice around the world. It has become an essential tool for providing efficient and effective library services to students, lecturers, and researchers. However, for this to work, librarians need to have the necessary computer skills and a positive attitude towards technology. Without these, it would be challenging university libraries to function properly in today's globalized world. Digital technology has made it possible for users to access library resources from remote locations, making information resources more accessible to everyone. This study aims to investigate librarians' attitude as correlates of use of digital technology in university libraries in south-east, Nigerian.

Statement of problem

Many experts believe that university libraries can't meet the information needs of their users without incorporating digital technologies in there day to day activities. Presently, the university library is advancing as new technologies are been introduced in selection, acquisition, processing, storage and dissemination of information for effective teaching, learning and research. Digital technologies are of great importance to the university library as it enhances the day-to-day service delivery especially in an automated university library. It is now a peculiar tool used in university libraries to deliver effective and efficient library services to students, lecturers and researchers. Digital technologies in the 21st century has enhanced service delivery such as; selection, acquisition, processing, storage and dissemination of information. These technologies have enhanced the making of information closer to users as never before.

Furthermore, librarians are frequently seen using interactive multimedia and social media, but the use of digital technology which could improve service delivery and make researchers, students and teachers have access to the processed materials, know current arrivals through short online advertisements; book promo, book trailer (for video summaries) and book blurb (this include brief summary of the book content) which could attract users to come and make use of library resources in university libraries seem to be limited. From observation, librarians are seemingly not making full use of library management software, open-source materials, and digital hardware, despite significant investments by university management to encourage their use and improve service delivery. Is it possible

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that this is due to librarians' negative attitudes towards technology?

A strong sense of positive attitude of librarians might affect the extent as well as the way digital technology can be used in daily activities of librarians in the library. If librarians have negative feelings or beliefs, they can become a bottleneck in innovating the libraries and consequently slowing down the progress of the parent institutions. Low use of digital technology could be traced to negative attitude. It is against this background that the study examines librarian's attitude as correlate of use of digital technology.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine Librarians' attitude as correlate of use of digital technologies in University Libraries in South-East Nigeria.

Specifically, the study seeks to determine:

1. The relationship between librarians' attitude and use of digital technologies in University Libraries in south-east, Nigeria.

This study investigated librarians' and attitude as correlate of use of digital technology in university libraries in south-east, Nigeria. The findings of the study when published will be useful to the university management, library management, librarians and future researchers.

Scope of the Study

This study will focus on librarians' attitude as correlate of use of digital technologies in universities in south- east, Nigeria. The study explored the relationship between librarians' attitude and use of digital technologies in University Libraries,

The delimitation of this study is based on the Federal and State university libraries in south-east geopolitical zone in Nigeria. Librarians in universities in south-east was used for this study.

Research Question

The research question that this study addressed is:

1. What is the relationship between librarians' attitude and use of digital technologies in University Libraries in south-east, Nigeria?

Null Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated to test the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between librarians' attitude and use of digital technologies in University Libraries in south- east Nigeria.

Research Method

The correlational research design was adopted for this study. The population of this study comprised of 189 librarians from Federal and State university libraries in south-east, Nigeria. The total enumeration sampling technique consisting of the census of all the librarians in Federal and State university libraries in south - east, Nigeria was used. The instrument used for data collection is structured questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha and Kuder Richardson to analyse the data collected from 33 librarians from Kashim Ibrahim Library, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Data obtained from the study were analysed using inferential statistics. The research question was analysed using Pearsons Product Movement Correlation

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Coefficient (PPMC) and hypothesis was tested using t-test. T-test was used to measure the correlational significant relationships among variables. The decision rule for interpretation is, if the p-value is less than 0.05, it is judged as significant, and if the p-value is greater than 0.05, it is judged as not significant (Consonni and Bertazzi, 2017).

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between librarians' attitude and use of digital technologies in University Libraries in south-east, Nigeria?

Table 1: Pearson's **Correlation r on the relationship between librarians' attitude and use of digital technologies in University Libraries in south-east, Nigeria**

Variable	*N*	Technology Use Pearson *r*	Remark
Attitude	189	.200	Low positive relationship

Table 1: shows a positive relationship (r=.200) existing between librarians' attitude and use of digital technologies in University Libraries in south-east, Nigeria. This indicates that as librarians' attitudes become more positive, the likelihood or extent of use of digital technologies by librarians tends to increase, but the relationship is relatively weak. This suggests that a more positive attitude is associated with use of digital technologies by librarians in university libraries in south east, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 1

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between librarians' attitude and use of digital technologies in University Libraries in south- east, Nigeria.

Table 2: T-test correlation on the relationship between librarians 'attitude and use of digital technologies in University Libraries in south- east Nigeria.

Variable	*N*	Technology Use Pearson *r*	*p*-value	Remark
Attitude	189	.200	.006	Significant

Table 2 shows the result of correlation which indicates that there was a significant weak positive relationship between librarians' attitude and use of digital technology in university libraries in south-east, Nigeria, r=.200, p-value of .006. The correlation is statistically significant. This means that the relationship is not likely to have occurred by chance, and we can conclude that there is a real relationship between attitude and use in this sample. Therefore, the null hypothesis on no significant relationship between librarians' attitude and use of digital technologies in university libraries was rejected. This implication of this is that a significant

relationship exists between librarians' attitude and use of digital technologies in University Libraries in south- east, Nigeria.

Discussions of Findings

The relationship between librarians' attitude and use of digital technologies according to this study is a positively low relationship. The study's result showed a low positive relationship between librarians' attitude and use of digital technology. This means that the positive attitude of librarians can go a long way in making sure that the librarians' use the available digital technologies at the right time and in the right form and format. Although the correlation is weak, it does suggest that librarians in university libraries, with more positive attitudes toward digital technology are somewhat more likely to use it. If a librarian working in areas such as cataloguing with a software package or user engagement, this finding suggests that improving librarians' attitudes might increase their use, but other factors should also be considered that may be more influential. These findings support studies by Awujoola and Phillip (2020). Awujoola and Phillip (2020) found out that the relationship between the Librarians' attitude and use of library resources and services was significant. The study concludes that librarians' attitude and ICT competence influence use of library resources and services by undergraduates. It is therefore recommended that librarians should expand their ICT competence level for the use of library resources and services. This implies that the positive and strong attitude of librarians has an influence of the use of digital technologies, as such, it is significant.

Conclusion

A library is regarded as the centre where resources for teaching, learning and research are accessed via digital technologies; hence, librarians occupy a central position in the library system. In order to justify this, they have to have positive attitude that can enhance the effective and efficient use of digital technologies that have been provided by the university library. This can be made possible by implementing strategies to improve librarians' attitudes by demonstrating the benefits and ease of use of a digital technology.

Recommendations

1. The librarians should improve their communication and interpersonal relation skills as an initial step toward improving the librarians' attitude and eventual use of digital technology.
2. The university management and library management should team up to improve librarians' attitudes towards the use of digital technology. This can be achieved by implementing strategies to improve librarians' attitudes. For instance, by demonstrating the benefits and ease of use of a digital technology could enhance librarians' perceptions, leading to higher usage.

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