PROFESSIONAL SELF-ESTEEM AND JOB SATISFACTION AS COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE FOR PROFESSIONAL LIBRARIANS IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN KWARA STATE

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Abstract

Job satisfaction stands as a hallmark among labour professionals, affected by diverse factors, including an individual's self-esteem. This study delves into the correlation between professional self-esteem and job contentment, considering them as competitive edges for professional librarians in private universities. Employing qualitative research methods, the study aimed to gain deeper insights into pivotal themes, reinforcing the theoretical framework within scholarly communication. Through purposive sampling, nine professional librarians from private university libraries in Kwara state—Al-Hikman University, Thomas Adewumi University, Summit University Offa, Crown Hill University, and Landmark University, Omu Aran—participated in semi-structured interviews, with seven agreeing to partake and contribute. Thematic analysis of the interview transcripts revealed that a majority of participants highlighted a high level of job satisfaction within this cohort. Additionally, many emphasised the significant impact of self-esteem on the job satisfaction of librarians in these settings. To support librarians' well-being, the study recommends providing ongoing encouragement and training to sustain and enhance their self-esteem.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Professional, Self-esteem, Competitive advantage, Librarians

Introduction

University libraries are the lifeblood of any higher institution as none can thrive without them. These libraries are purposefully designed to support the university's activities in teaching, learning, and research. However, individuals known as librarians are tasked with the operations of these libraries, and it's crucial that they are in the right frame of mind to ensure the thorough completion of their tasks. Therefore, job satisfaction stands as a vital necessity for any successful organisation. If professionals in university libraries find satisfaction in their roles, they will effectively contribute to educational objectives and national goals. Job satisfaction encompasses a pleasurable emotional state derived from an evaluation of one's job, an emotional response to it, and an attitude towards it. This satisfaction can be influenced by

various factors, including the quality of one's relationship with their supervisor, the physical work environment, the level of fulfillment in their tasks, and more.

Ezeji (2016) defines job satisfaction as the extent to which personnel feel rewarded both materially and psychologically while carrying out assigned tasks. It encompasses a pleasurable emotional state resulting from appraising one's job as contributing to or enabling the achievement of organisational goals. Job satisfaction emerges from dedicated work within a library setting. Somvir and Kaushik (2012) describe job satisfaction as an emotional response to a job situation, intangible but inferred, encapsulating individuals' perceptions of various aspects of their work. Job satisfaction represents intricate psychosomatic responses to one's job. Furthermore, according to Yaya (2016), job satisfaction denotes the level of positive attitude an employee demonstrates while fulfilling their duties in libraries, as well as the extent to which their basic needs are met by their employers.

According to Afshar & Doosti (2016), job satisfaction encompasses how individuals perceive events, rewards, people, relationships, and their mental happiness in the workplace. Despite external influences, it remains an internal experience, tied to an employee's emotions and implying a sense of fulfilment. Researchers define job satisfaction as the result of meeting one's expectations. Consequently, factors such as job security, staff esteem, consistent salary, career advancement, a positive work environment, and promotional prospects contribute significantly to providing employees, including librarians, a competitive edge in their roles. Recognising librarians' job satisfaction as equally vital, David & Damilola (2017) underscore its significance similar to any other professional's.

Yaya, Opeke, and Onuoha (2016) highlighted that job satisfaction significantly enhances worker efficiency across various organisations, especially within academic libraries, as contented and productive workers tend to be satisfied with their jobs. There's an assumption that professional self-esteem contributes to enhancing an individual's job satisfaction. Professional librarians, being service-oriented personnel, aim to deliver optimal services to their organisation or library through meticulous planning, processes, and methodologies. Additionally, poor job satisfaction may stem from inadequate self-esteem. According to Oyovwe-Tinuoye (2020), self-esteem refers to an individual's overall emotional assessment of their own worth. It embodies self-judgment, a mindset towards oneself, and the accumulation of self-confidence and self-respect towards specific tasks.

During the mid-1960s, sociologist Morris Rosenberg introduced the concept of self-esteem as a sense of self-worth and devised the widely utilised Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (RSES) for its assessment (Gray-Little, Williams, & Hancock, 1997). Additionally, self-esteem stands as a strong predictor of job satisfaction (Fitzmaurice, 2012). Judge, Locke, and Durham (1997) similarly suggested that self-esteem reflects the core evaluation an individual places upon themselves, representing their overall personal value in a library job context. Furthermore, Sciangula and Morry (2009) highlighted that individuals with high self-esteem generally perceive themselves as worthwhile and respectable, acknowledging their imperfections. Those who perceive themselves as commendable and valuable in a broader sense are more inclined to view themselves as worthy and valuable within specific settings, such as the workplace.

Pierce and Gardner (2004) noted that individuals with low self-esteem frequently perceive themselves as deficient, unworthy, and inadequate, allowing their perceived weaknesses to dominate their self-perception, leading to lower productivity in private libraries. Nwosu, Ugwoegbu, and Okeke (2013) identified self-esteem and motivation levels as predictors of professional and paraprofessional librarian task performance in Nigerian universities within the South-East. They found a correlation between self-esteem, motivation, and the task performance of professionals and paraprofessionals in Nigerian university libraries, indicating that professionals tend to have higher self-esteem compared to paraprofessionals, who exhibit lower self-esteem. Thus, a high level of self-esteem is crucial for librarians to experience fulfillment and satisfaction. Intuitively, it is presumed that librarians satisfied with their jobs are more likely to demonstrate traits associated with high self-esteem in the library. Building on this premise, this study examines professional self-esteem and job satisfaction as a competitive advantage for professional librarians in private universities in Kwara state.

Statement of the Problem

Self-esteem stands as a significant factor influencing job satisfaction among personnel within organisations, particularly in libraries. However, the perceived ability to perform assigned tasks holds considerable sway over the final outcomes. Professional librarians with high self-perceived ability are more likely to exhibit heightened productivity, resulting in job satisfaction. Smith and Mackie (2007) define self-esteem as an individual's positive or negative evaluation of themselves—how they perceive themselves. They argue that self-esteem encompasses assurance in one's cognitive abilities, the capacity to navigate life's challenges, and confidence in their right to achieve success and happiness. It embodies a sense of worthiness, deservingness, and entitlement to express needs and desires and reap the rewards of one's efforts.

The lack of job satisfaction often correlates with decreased productivity and potentially subpar outcomes. Over time, there has been a noted decline in the productivity of employees in numerous libraries, particularly private ones, attributed to inadequate salary packages, security concerns, and an unsuitable working environment. This study aims to explore whether self-esteem also contributes significantly to job satisfaction in private libraries, given its potential impact on productivity. Against this backdrop, the research examines the role of professional self-esteem and job satisfaction as competitive advantages for professional librarians within private universities in Kwara state.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine professional self-esteem and job satisfaction as competitive advantage for professional librarians in private universities in Kwara state. Specific objectives are to:

i.   Assess the degree of job satisfaction as a competitive advantage among professional librarians in private university libraries in Kwara state.
ii.   Evaluate the level of self-esteem as a competitive advantage for professional librarians in private university libraries in Kwara state.

iii.   Investigate the impact of self-esteem and job satisfaction as competitive advantages among professional librarians in private university libraries in Kwara state.

Literature Review

Job satisfaction significantly influences employee effectiveness within any organization, especially in libraries (Perera, Khatibi, Navaratna, & Chinna, 2014). This has prompted enduring interest from researchers in the field since its inception in the 1900s (Noor, Khanl, & Naseem, 2015). Singh and Jain (2013, p.105) define employee job satisfaction as the collection of positive and/or negative feelings towards one's job. Adeeko, Aboyade, and Oyewole (2017) stress the need for an improved working environment in Nigerian university libraries to enhance job performance at all levels.

Librarians' job satisfaction influences career progression, work motivation, and leadership approaches. According to Burd (2003), librarians in organizations that value open communication, participatory management, opportunities for achievement, high self-esteem, and trust-based relationships exhibit higher satisfaction, commitment, and lower turnover rates. Oluchi and Ozioko's (2014) study on job satisfaction among librarians in Niger State, Nigeria, indicated a high level of satisfaction, where sickness wasn't a reason for termination, and satisfaction didn't lead to tardiness or neglect of duties. Khan and Ahmed's (2013) research on library professionals in the public university of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, revealed dissatisfaction with supervision, benefits, and advancement, suggesting a need for structural and policy improvements.

Doris, Tolulope, and Mayedun's (2016) examination of self-concept, role clarity, and job satisfaction among library personnel in selected university libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria, revealed that a strong self-concept and role clarity significantly influence job satisfaction. Similarly, Samuel, Onuoha, and Ojo (2014) found general job satisfaction among library personnel in private universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. Self-esteem, defined by Smith and Mackie (2007) as one's positive or negative assessment of oneself, reflects confidence in handling life challenges and the belief in deserving happiness and success.

Tella and Ayeni (2006) noted that self-efficacy compels librarians to keep trying to accomplish their goals and make good decisions that translate into meaningful achievements; they choose to carry out more difficult tasks and are more creative. Nwofor and Nweke (2000) asserted that when an individual's self-esteem is high, he/she tends to be motivated and performs his/her job or task better. Schwarzer and Schmitz (2005) examined the success of women in non-traditional business and found that self-efficacy has a predictive power in assessing performance. Nwosu, Ugwoegbu and Okeke (2013) surveyed self-esteem and perceived levels of motivation as correlates of professional and paraprofessional librarians" task performance in universities of South-East, Nigeria. It revealed that at the 0.05 level of significance and 497 degrees of freedom, the calculated U 2.93 is greater than the critical 1.96. There is, therefore, significant disparity in the mean scores of professional and para-professional librarians on their self-esteem.

Mocheche, Bosire and Raburu (2017) examined the influence of self-esteem on job satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Kenya. Their finding reveals that self-esteem was a significant predictor of teachers' level of job satisfaction (F (1, 160) = 6.543 p = .011, R2 = .025). In addition, Eithne, Katie and Daniel (2014) investigated teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, self-esteem, and job stress as determinants of job satisfaction. Their finding reveals that the predictor variables (self-esteem and job stress) accounted for 22% of the variance of the teachers' job satisfaction. Mozumdar (2014) examined the role of self-esteem and optimism in job satisfaction among teachers of Private Universities in Bangladesh. The finding established that self-esteem positively correlated with job satisfaction.

Ghafari and Samii (2013) investigated the relationship between job satisfaction and self-esteem in teachers in Aliabad University. The study shows a significant relationship between job satisfaction and self-esteem of teachers. Ahmed (2012) examined the role of self-esteem and optimism in job satisfaction among teachers of private universities in Bangladesh. The finding revealed that self-esteem is significantly positively correlated with job satisfaction. Opayemi and Akinbode (2016) investigated the influence of self-esteem and job satisfaction on job involvement among secondary school teachers in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study revealed that self-esteem has a significant influence on teachers" job involvement.

Methodology

The qualitative research method was chosen to investigate the competitive advantage of professional self-esteem and job satisfaction among librarians in private universities in Kwara State. This approach aims to offer deeper insights into the central themes of the study, thereby fortifying its theoretical framework within scholarly communication. Employing a case study design allows for an in-depth exploration of this phenomenon within a specific group (Yin, 2009). The study utilized purposive sampling, selecting participants who were professional librarians from the five private universities in Kwara State: Al-Hikman University, Thomas Adewumi University, Summit University Offa, Crown Hill University, and Landmark University, Omu Aran.

Table 1: Names of Private Universities in Kwara state

S/N	Names of University	Population	Sample Size
	Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin	2	2
	Thomas Adewumi University	1	1
	Landmark University, Omu-aran	3	3
	Crown Hill University Ilorin	1	1
	Summit University Offa	2	2
	Total	**9**	**9**

Source: Academic Unit (2023)

The inclusion criteria encompassed individuals holding the status of professional librarian in private universities within Kwara State. The total number of participants was nine (9). Semi-structured interviews were employed to gather data at the

participants' convenience. Seven (7) out of the nine (9) agreed to participate and were available to answer interview questions. The interviews were conducted via the Zoom application, recorded, and subsequently transcribed using Microsoft Word. The transcripts were then coded using Microsoft Excel. To uphold credibility and trustworthiness, ensuring the validity and reliability of qualitative data, the codes were shared with participants to verify accuracy, prevent misinterpretations, or misunderstandings in the transcribed content (Birt et al., 2016). Thematic analysis was conducted to analyze the finalized interview transcripts.

Results

The collected data comprised qualitative information, prompting the utilization of thematic analysis during the analysis phase. Transcriptions were completed using Microsoft Excel, with each sheet dedicated to the responses of individual participants. As there were seven (7) participants, this resulted in the creation of seven (7) separate sheets within the Microsoft Excel coding document.

Level of Job Satisfaction as Competitive Advantage for Professional Librarians

The study revealed that more than half of participants denote that their level of job satisfaction are higher than the other colleagues because of the pressure of working in private universities libraries.

Participant 2: "Working in private university libraries make one to be working round the clock and propound level of job satisfaction to be higher. I can tell you for the fact that job satisfaction in private university library is very higher and it makes one to have better advantages over other librarians in other libraries".

Participant 1: "The level of satisfaction here in our library is very high and it gives us confidence to work hard. To me, am confidence with the rate of work here because the management usually given us conducive and enabling environment to work in order to come with better on service delivery."

Participant 5: "The satisfaction among librarians in private university libraries is very high because self-concept, role clarity influence job satisfaction of librarians."

Participant 4: "I want to categorically deduce to you that self-esteem and job stress accounted for high level of satisfaction among us here because, the nature of owner of library accounted us to work hard and this give use better way to service of our library"

The study finding revealed that majority of participants noted that level of job satisfaction among librarians in private university libraries are higher. This is because, self-esteem of librarians toward their profession are actually higher in their chosen profession

Level of Self-esteem as a Competitive Advantage of Professional Librarians in Private University Libraries

The study highlighted that a majority of participants indicated a very high level of self-esteem among professional librarians working in private university libraries. This suggests that these librarians firmly believe in maintaining a high level of discipline within their chosen careers.

Participant 1: I can categorically tell you that we libraries in private are always conscious of duties in order to retain the job. Thus, self-esteem is watch dog in our place work unlike professional counter parts in federal and state university libraries.

Participant 2: Self-esteem of librarians in our library is very high because of enabling environment and nature of job in private university. Overtime in private university libraries, librarians usually under pressure to perform and thus increase their sense of responsibilities to duties and put us in better position in place of work.

Participant 5: In private university libraries especially Landmark University, Omu-aran librarians develop self-esteem to work effectively. This is emanated from nature of job assigned to us by the management. Hence, self-esteem really influences our job.

Participant 6: In life, the way we look at things are different but as librarian self-confidence like self- esteem are very important to one in order to perform very well. What I mean here is that the way one is looking at self-esteem determines the job satisfaction one may likely enjoy from the place of work

The study findings revealed that a majority of participants expressed the view that self-esteem significantly influences the job satisfaction of librarians in private university libraries. This suggests that the comfort and confidence levels of librarians play a determining role in the job satisfaction they experience.

Effect of Self-esteem and Job Satisfaction as a Competitive Advantage of Professional Librarians

The study findings indicated that over half of the participants believed that self-esteem and job satisfaction provide librarians in private university libraries with advantages over their counterparts in different workplaces, such as public university libraries. This perception is attributed to the heightened seriousness and pressure imposed by private university owners on their staff. Consequently, the self-esteem and job satisfaction experienced by librarians in private university libraries position them side by side, and sometimes even better, than their colleagues in different work environments.

Participant 3: Let's me tell for the fact that we librarians use to show self-comportment to in order to better of other colleague in public sectors. Otherwise, the owner may relief from our position. We mostly show high degree of esteem and abide by the environment we found ourselves in order to have better advantages over our colleague in the profession.

Participant 4: Private universities are owners need results, profits, fame and centre of attraction among the populace and therefore, to achieve these features, staff with good instincts that is ready to work and satisfy with the assign duties are employed to carry out universities mission and goals. However, this can be measured with staff of good self-concepts and character to deliver at optimally for organization success. What am saying in essence is that with self-esteem is significantly enable libraries to have competitive advantages

Participant 5: Self- esteem is a trait that drives the vision and mission of any organization success. No meaningful goals can be achieved in an organization like ours that is private university libraries without a good conduct and composure from the staff. With self-trait and enabling environment, staff tends to have better advantage over their peers and this may likely influence better outcome

Participants 6: Situation from of working places and the management make staff to adjust to certain traits or way of beheviour and this encourage staff to development good character such as self- esteem, self-discipline and self-behavoural patterns which can lead to staff have a better advantage to work over colleague in the public institutions. This implies that most of private university libraries are demanding and thus make staff develop certain confidence to comparative advantage over colleagues. The study findings suggest that the possession of self-esteem and job satisfaction among librarians in private universities leads to a comparative advantage over their colleagues in similar private institutions."

Discussion of Findings

The study's findings revealed that a majority of participants noted a high level of job satisfaction among professional librarians in private university libraries. This was attributed to the high self-esteem exhibited by these professionals due to the nature of their working environment. These findings align with Doris, Tolulope, and Mayedun's (2016) study, which highlighted the influence of high self-concept and role clarity on job satisfaction among library personnel.

Moreover, the study found that most participants observed a significant influence of self-esteem on job satisfaction among librarians in private university libraries. This suggests that the manner in which librarians comport themselves in these settings determines the level of job satisfaction they derive. These findings resonate with Oluchi and Ozioko's (2014) research, indicating an excellent level of job satisfaction among librarians.

Additionally, the study revealed that more than half of the participants believed that self-esteem and job satisfaction provide librarians in private university libraries with advantages over their peers in other types of workplaces, such as public university libraries. This perception stemmed from the increased seriousness and pressure exerted by private university owners on their staff. Consequently, the self-esteem and job satisfaction experienced by librarians in private university libraries position them at par, or even better, than their counterparts in different work environments.

Conclusion

The study highlighted the crucial significance of professional self-esteem and job satisfaction among librarians in private university libraries, indicating their pivotal role in establishing competitive advantages over colleagues in public institutions. This conclusion stems from the study's findings, showcasing the high level of job satisfaction among librarians in private university libraries.

Recommendations

1. Encourage and provide training programs aimed at sustaining the self-esteem of librarians in private university libraries.
2. Offer motivation and support to professional librarians in private university libraries to prevent discouragement.
3. Ensure private university owners provide their staff with remuneration comparable to that offered in public institutions.
4. Address workload stress by employing additional personnel within the management to handle multitasking responsibilities effectively."

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