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## Job Satisfaction among Librarians in Special Libraries in Enugu State, South East Nigeria

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### **Abstract**

*The study investigates job satisfaction among librarians in special libraries in Enugu State South East Nigeria using six factors: Physical work environment, personal growth, organisational culture, social prestige, remuneration, salary and nature of work. Sixty (60) librarians from special libraries in hospitals and research institutes in Enugu State were sampled for the study. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages. The findings show that out of the six factors of job satisfaction investigated, the librarians expressed a high level of satisfaction with personal growth, organisational culture, social status and nature of the work. In comparison, satisfaction with physical environment and remuneration/salary was low. The study recommended that the employers of librarians in special libraries should pay more attention to identifying the needs of librarians in their establishments. It is important that improvements are made on the aspects of job satisfaction that scored low such as physical work environment, ICT facilities and remuneration/salary so as to motivate the librarians to put in their best into their work.*

**Keywords:** Librarians' job satisfaction, job satisfaction-libraries, special libraries, library staff

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## **Introduction**

Undoubtedly, librarians in special libraries work in very special circumstances. This can be appreciated from the point of view that special libraries are established in specialized environments and exist to meet the specialized needs of the parent institution. As noted by Mahoney (2005) in many cases the librarian (s) is not considered core staff, and more often than not he/she is a solo librarian, meaning that the individual is the only library professional on the staff roll. It is also not unlikely that the librarian reports to others who are not librarians and who may not be in a position to appreciate the nature of the job. Additionally, the librarian(s) may have little or no professional interaction with colleagues in other organisations, and to that extent prone to experiencing feelings of isolation (Mahoney, 2005). All this can affect job satisfaction. No doubt the success of any library can only be measured by the extent that it is able to satisfy the needs of library users. However, satisfying the needs of users depends not only on the resources and facilities owned by a library but chiefly on the librarian(s) whose responsibility it is to make the resources and facilities accessible to users. Catt and Milner cited in Butt, Bhutto and Abbas (2012) observed that employees with high job satisfaction exhibit organisational citizenship behaviors that ultimately have positive effects on productivity of the entire organisation.

So, irrespective of the type of library, it is important that the job satisfaction of personnel should be investigated. Job satisfaction is a widely researched topic in disciplines such as industrial organisational/psychology, social psychology, organisational behavior, personnel and human resource management (Smith and Stone cited in Castro, 2008), and increasingly librarians are also focusing some research attention on job satisfaction of library personnel (Murray, 1999). However, much of the literature in existence emanate from the developed countries. Notwithstanding, there is an appreciable number of studies on the topic originating from developing countries such as Nigeria but the existing studies are rather lopsided in favour of librarians in academic libraries to the detriment of those in special or other types of libraries. Therefore, this study represents an attempt to close the gap.

### **Objectives of the study**

The general objective of the study is to investigate job satisfaction among special librarians in Nigeria. Specifically the study will do the following:

1. Find out the librarians' opinion about physical work environment and ICT infrastructures
2. Find out the librarians' opinion about personal growth
3. Examine the level of the librarians' satisfaction with their social prestige
4. Find out the level of the librarians' satisfaction with their remuneration and salary
5. Ascertain how the librarians feel about the nature of the work

### **Literature Review**

Although job satisfaction is a widely researched topic, the concept does not lend itself to a universal definition. Singh, Chauhan, Agrawal and Kapoor (2011) posited that each researcher depending on their understanding comes up with operational definitions and measurements to explain the concept. Be that as it may, job satisfaction studies point to the fact that it centres on the emotional response/reaction of workers to a job based on an evaluation and comparison of actual outcomes with what the worker expects or feels he/she deserves (Castro, 2010). According to Castro (2010) "the individual's perception is influenced by his/her unique circumstances such as needs, values and expectations." Spector cited in Castro (2010) in his definition of the concept says it is "simply how people feel about the different aspects of their jobs. It is the extent to which people like or dislike their jobs." In the opinion of Sultan and Begum (2012) job satisfaction is the absence of pain, oppressiveness, intolerance and indeed enjoyment of work and/or working condition. On the other hand, Robbins and Judge (2007) see it as "a positive feeling about one's job resulting from its characteristics". These characteristics relate to individual or demographic factors such as gender, age educational background and organisational factors such as appreciation, communication, co-workers, fringe benefits, job conditions, nature of the work itself, organisation itself, organisation's policies and procedures, pay, promotion opportunities, recognition, security and supervision (Lawler, cited in Castro, 2010). In essence, workers experience job satisfaction when the working environment engenders

and creates a positive feeling in them that enables them to meet their own need(s).

A good number of studies have been carried out on the subject of job satisfaction of librarians. In Nigeria, Owolabi and Salaam (2010) studied job satisfaction and organisational commitment of academic librarians. In a similar study, Adio and Popoola (2010) focused on job satisfaction and career commitment of librarians in federal university libraries. The study found that job satisfaction has significant influence on career commitment of librarians. The study further found that demographic variables and job satisfaction accounted for 20 percent in variability of career commitment of the respondents. On the other hand, Amune, (2013) investigated job motivation as a predictor of job satisfaction of library staff in Ambrose Ali University, Ekpoma. The findings showed that there is no significant difference between the satisfaction derived by professional and non-professional library staff. It also showed that staff derived most satisfaction from salary, library policies and administration, advancement as well as personal growth. Ikonne and Onuoha (2015) investigated the factors that influence job satisfaction of librarians in federal and state university libraries in Southern Nigeria. They found that job security, satisfactory relationship with supervisor, satisfactory interaction with colleagues and information users were significant factors that influenced the respondents' job satisfaction while satisfaction with salary and fringe benefits, working conditions as well as opportunities to conduct research rated low. [Oyovwe, Omeluzor](#) and [Akpojotor](#) (2016) focused their attention on five factors that influence job satisfaction of academic librarians in university libraries in Edo and Delta states, Nigeria. These were work environment, remuneration, fairness, promotion and training. The result revealed that all the variables significantly influenced the librarians' job satisfaction and served as stimulus for employee's productivity and delivery of quality services to clientele. However, Tella, Ayeni and Popoola (2007) deferred slightly in that they studied the work motivation, job satisfaction and organisational commitment of library personnel in academic and research libraries. The findings of the study revealed that a correlation existed between perceived motivation, job satisfaction and commitment; however, correlation between motivation and commitment was negative. The study also showed that differences existed in the job satisfaction of all library personnel in academic and research libraries.

Elsewhere, Togia, Koustelios, and Tsigilis (2004) examined job satisfaction among academic librarians in Greece and found that the librarians were more satisfied with factors such as supervision, working conditions, the job itself and least satisfied with promotion and payment. In a similar study in Quebec, Canada, Sierpe (1999) reported that librarians were mostly satisfied with their job but showed dissatisfaction with salaries and promotion opportunities. A librarian who does not get an adequate pay package may have to battle with problems of inability to sustain a manageable standard of living which in turn affects his/her job satisfaction.

Furthermore, Ranaween and Bodhinayaka (2018) investigated job satisfaction of library staff: in university libraries in Sri Lanka. The study revealed that the university library employees were moderately satisfied with their jobs, and in general and co-workers, salary and benefits, physical working condition, career development opportunities, work itself, appreciation and feedback identified as the main factors of job satisfaction.

Hyder and Batool (2013) carried out a comparative study of job satisfaction among public and private university/degree awarding institution libraries of Lahore. The study found that environmental factors like a noise-free environment, physical facilities and Information and Communication Technology facilities/infrastructure, office furniture and condition, as well as opportunities for personal growth contributed significantly to or determined the level of satisfaction of librarians in the institutions. Sultana and Begun (2012) measured the job satisfaction of female library professionals working in the health libraries in Dhaka city. They found that job facets had reasonable influence on job satisfaction of librarians. These job facets may include independence, variety, social status, supervision with respect to human relations, supervision- technical aspects, moral values, authority, ability utilisation, library policies and practices, advancement, creativity, co-workers, recognition and achievement.

In a study on job satisfaction of academic library cataloguers, Leysen and Boydston (2009) examined different aspects of satisfaction such as opportunities to learn new skills, good relationships with coworkers, involvement in decision making and certain packages for benefits. They found

these to affect workers' job satisfaction in one way or another. In another study, Pervin, (2012) looked into the relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment of female college librarians. The study revealed that among nine aspects of job satisfaction, three ranked higher than others: co-workers, supervision and nature of work.

### **Methodology**

The study was a descriptive survey. The population of the study was made up of librarians working in special libraries in Enugu State, Nigeria. Sixty librarians in these special libraries were randomly sampled. A questionnaire originally developed and used by Hyder and Batool (2013) was adapted, slightly modified and used for data collection. The questionnaire was in five sections and featured statements on job satisfaction based on the following aspects: physical work environment; personal growth; organisational culture; social prestige; remuneration and salary and nature of the work. All the statements under the variables were positively worded. In essence, a high score on an item does not necessarily indicate agreement. A four point scale was used to measure the responses: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. However, for data analysis, Strongly Agree and Agree were collapsed into Agree while Disagree and Strongly Disagree were equally collapsed into Disagree. Data was analyzed using frequencies and percentages and presented in tables for clarity.

### **Analysis of findings**

As stated above, the collected data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages and presented in tables in line with the research objectives.

**Research Objective 1:** Find out the librarians' opinion about physical work environment and ICT

**Table 1: Librarians' opinion about physical work environment and ICT in their libraries**

S/N	Items	Agree	Disagree	Total (%)
1	I work in a noise-free environment.	45 (75%)	15 (25%)	60(100%)
2	The size of my office provides me enough space to work comfortably.	25 (42%)	35 (58%)	60(100%)
3	The furniture is comfortable and its design provides natural body posture to avoid discomfort.	36 (60%)	24 (40%)	60(100%)
4	My office is equipped with modern ICT tools.	27 (45%)	33 (55%)	60(100%)
5	My library utilizes e-resources in serving the users.	22 (37%)	38 (63%)	60(100%)
6	I am satisfied with the internet connectivity.	19 (32%)	41 (68%)	60(100%)
7	The telephone service is reliable in my library.	10 (17%)	50 (83%)	60(100%)
8	The institution/library provides the opportunities to exercise the emerging ICT skills.	30 (50%)	30(50%)	60(100%)

Table 1 above shows the librarians' opinions about the physical work environment and ICT infrastructures in their offices. A close look at the table shows that the most agreement is with working in a noise-free environment (75%). This is followed by the opinion that the furniture is comfortable (60%). On the other hand, the most disagreement is with telephone service (83%) followed by internet connectivity (68%) and availability of e-resources for work (63%). On the whole, this aspect has higher disagreement than agreement indicating that the satisfaction is low. Other results can be seen in the table.

**Research Objective 2:** Find out the librarians' opinion about personal growth

**Table 2: Librarians' opinion about personal growth**

S/N	Items	Agree	Disagree	Total (%)
1	The institution/library provides me the opportunities and facilitates for further professional education.	43(72%)	17(28%)	60(100%)
2	The institution/library often conducts short training courses.	29(48%)	31(52%)	60(100%)
3	The institution/library often conducts workshops on career advancement for its professionals.	30(50%)	30(50%)	60(100%)
4	The institution/library offers me the opportunity to attend conferences, workshops and seminars	39(65%)	21(35%)	60(100%)

Table 2 above shows the opinions of the librarians on personal growth in their institutions/libraries. The majority of respondents (72%) agree that their institutions/libraries provide opportunities and facilities for further professional education. This is closely followed by 65% that agreed that their institution/library offers them opportunity to attend workshops and seminars. On the other hand, the most disagreement is with the opinion that their institutions/libraries often conduct short training courses (52%). On the whole the results show that there is more agreement than disagreement on this aspect inferring that respondents are satisfied with this aspect. Other result can be seen from the table.

**Research Objective 3:** Examine the level of the librarians' satisfaction with their social prestige



**Table 3: Librarians’ opinion about social prestige Response**

S/N	Items	Agree	Disagree	Total	%
1	I am satisfied with the social status of the librarian in general.	35(58%)	25(42%)	60	100%
2	I am satisfied with the social status of the librarian in my institution.	36(60%)	24(40%)	60	100%
3	I think that working as a librarian in a government sector has better social status than private sector.	43(72%)	17(28%)	60	100%
4	I suggest my friends/relatives to choose this profession.	42(70%)	18(30%)	60	100%
5	I am satisfied while working with the current institution.	37(62%)	23(38%)	60	100%
6	Job pride is the most important factor for job satisfaction.	47(78%)	13(22%)	60	100%

Table 3 above shows the librarians' level of satisfaction with social prestige in their organisations. The table shows that the most agreement is that job pride is the most important factor for job satisfaction (78%). It is important to note however, that the librarians are of the view that librarians working in government sector have better social status than those in the private sector (72%) signifying that they are not very satisfied with this item. A close look at the table shows that librarians expressed agreement with all other items on this aspect suggesting that they are satisfied with it. More information can be seen in the table.

**Research Objective 4: Find out the level of the librarians' satisfaction with their remuneration and salary**

**Table 4: Librarians’ satisfaction with remuneration and salary Response**

S/N	Items	Agree	Disagree	Total (%)
1	I am satisfied with my current salary package.	25(42%)	35(58%)	60(100%)
2	I get the annual increment well on time.	32(53%)	28(47%)	60(100%)
3	I am satisfied with the annual increments of my salary.	25(42%)	35(58%)	60(100%)
4	The institution has a clear policy about the library professional's promotion.	33(55%)	27(45%)	60(100%)
5	I am satisfied with the promotion structure of my institution.	30(50%)	30(50%)	60(100%)
6	I got due promotions timely.	21(35%)	39(65%)	60(100%)

Table 4 above shows the level of agreement on satisfaction with remuneration and salary. Results show that the respondents expressed the most satisfaction with the opinion that their institution/library has a clear policy on library professionals' promotion (55%). This is followed by satisfaction with the promotion structure of their institution (50%). However, this aspect recorded



the most disagreement from the opinion that promotions are timely (65%) followed closely by disagreement with current salary (58%). It is clear from the result that the respondents disagree more than they agree with the items in this aspect. This suggests that dissatisfaction with this aspect is high.

**Research Objective 5:** Ascertain the librarians' opinion about the nature of the work

**Table 5: Librarians' opinions about the nature of the work Response**

S/N	Items	Agree	Disagree	Total	%
1	I do a variety of professional tasks.	47(78%)	13(22%)	60	100%
2	I am free to try out my own ideas at work in the library.	45(75%)	15(25%)	60	100%
3	My job is repetitive and boring.	14(48%)	46(52%)	60	100%
4	My duties are clearly defined.	47(78%)	13(22%)	60	100%

Table 5 above presents results on the librarians' feelings and opinions about the nature of the work. Three items on this aspect received the most agreement: variety of professional tasks (78%); freedom to try out one's ideas (75%) and clarity of duties (78%). The only item on this aspect with disagreement is the opinion that job is repetitive and boring (52%). The result here suggests that the respondents are satisfied with this aspect.

## Discussion

Major findings on physical work environment and ICT infrastructure showed that although most of the librarians agreed that they worked in a noise-free environment; had comfortable furnishing and ICT facilities, many more disagreed with more items on this aspect. In their study also Hyder and Batool (2013) found that factors such as a noise-free environment, physical facilities and Information and communication technology facilities/infrastructure, office furniture and condition contributed to or determined the level of satisfaction of librarians.

Further findings indicated that many of the institutions and libraries where the librarians work provided opportunities for personal growth through further education, workshops and conferences and other related avenues. The librarians expressed satisfaction on this aspect. Leysen and Boydston (2009), Ashraf et.al. (2009) and Hyder and Batool (2013) all revealed that issues of professional development and opportunities of acquisition of new skills

affected workers' job satisfaction. Workers would be more satisfied and tend to put in their best when they are given adequate opportunities to develop themselves.

On salary and remuneration, it was found that even though many librarians worked in institutions with clear policies on promotion and remuneration, most of them were not satisfied with their current salary level. Ikonne and Onuoha (2015) in their study also found that while job security, satisfactory relationship with supervisor, satisfactory interaction with colleagues and information users were significant factors that influenced the respondents' job satisfaction, salary and fringe benefits, working conditions and opportunities to conduct research rated low. This is however different from the findings of Amune, (2013) which revealed that staff derived the most satisfaction from salary alongside other related job facets. From the results it can be inferred that the librarians are not satisfied with this aspect. The researchers are of the view that the reason for the conflicting finding in this study could be because many of the respondents work in privately owned institutions. It is worthy of note that in Nigeria, the salary structure of government employees is clear as it is based on cadre. This is the same within the similar establishments irrespective of the location. But this is not the case with workers in non government establishments where the management or board is solely responsible for determining staff salaries.

Finally, on the nature of their work generally, findings showed that most of the librarians did varieties of professional tasks, not repetitive and boring jobs and were allowed to try out their own ideas in their institutions/libraries. Thus, the librarians expressed satisfaction on this aspect. Pervin, (2012) in his study also found that out of nine aspects of job satisfaction, three ranked higher than others: co-workers, supervision and nature of work.

### **Conclusion**

This study focused on the job satisfaction of librarians in special libraries with particular focus on Enugu, Enugu State Nigeria. It is instructive to note again that job satisfaction of personnel has a significant influence on employee productivity as reported in the literature. A careful look at the results of the current study show that although the librarians expressed satisfaction with some of the items within the five aspects of job satisfaction investigated,

personal growth, social prestige and nature of work appear to give the most satisfaction. The librarians expressed dissatisfaction with physical work environment and ICT infrastructure and remuneration and salary. It is also instructive that remuneration and salary (pay) was found to give the least satisfaction as revealed in some of the reviewed literature.

In view of the findings, it is therefore recommended that the employers of librarians in special libraries should pay more attention to identifying the needs of librarians in their establishments. More especially, it is important that improvements are made on those aspects that scored low such as physical work environment and ICT facilities and remuneration/salary so as to motivate the librarians to put in their best into their work.

The limitation of the study arises from the fact that the population of the study is small. As a result it is recommended that this study be extended to a wider population. Moreover, being a survey study, the data collected was self-reported with inherent shortcomings. To that extent, it is not unlikely that for purposes of self preservation, some of the respondents may have responded favourably to certain items even though in reality they may feel differently. On the whole, this study can serve as a base study for further research in this area of librarianship.

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