Does Librarians' Psychosocial Work Environment Matter to Research Productivity?

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Abstract

The study examined the influence of psychosocial work environment on the research productivity of librarians in universities in southwestern Nigeria. A descriptive survey research approach was utilized in the study. The population consisted of 363 librarians from all of southwestern Nigeria's university libraries. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings indicated that librarians' research productivity was high in quantity of publication but low in terms of publications in Scopus and Web of Science. Librarians' psychosocial work environments were discovered to be psychologically and socially fit. The study concluded that librarians' research productivity was significantly positively influenced by their psychosocial work environment, higher academic qualification, and rank while years of experience were negatively related to research productivity. It therefore recommends that library management adhere to a planned work schedule to reduce librarian strain.

Introduction

The role of librarians in a university is much more than simply managing books and resources. As described by the Association of College and Research Libraries,[1] librarians play a vital role in imparting knowledge and skills to their patrons, including students and faculty. This requires librarians to engage in extensive research and continuously upgrade their knowledge and expertise. As highlighted by Kaatrakoski and Lahikainen,[2] librarianship is a dynamic and evolving field that requires librarians to actively participate in research and collaborate with researchers and members of the research community. Librarians are expected to keep up with the trend of research publication, not just to maintain their professional standards but also to

avoid stagnating in their careers. The importance of research productivity in librarianship cannot be overstated.

Research productivity in librarianship is a crucial aspect that has been the subject of many studies and discussions. As defined by Okonedo et al.,[3] research productivity is a measure of the total number of academic librarians' publications within a specified time frame, usually ranging from three to five years, depending on the quality and quantity of their scholarly works. The quantity of publications is considered to be the most basic measure of research productivity and is determined by the number of documents published, such as peer-reviewed journal articles, books or book chapters, dissertations, trade publications, and conference abstracts.[4] To refine this measure, it is also possible to consider the type of publication, with peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and conference abstracts being considered some of the most reputable sources. Another measure of research productivity is the quality of the publication outlets, which refers to the number of quality outlets in which the academic librarian has published, such as those indexed in Scopus and Web of Science. An academic librarian who consistently publishes in these highly regarded outlets may be more productive due to the high standards of acceptance required by these outlets.

Despite the importance of research productivity in librarianship, it is a well-known fact that several obstacles can impede the publication output of librarians. Adegbaye et al.[5] and Oni and Eziam[6] have identified long working hours and heavy workload as major constraints that can lead to stress and reduce the motivation to publish. Sassen and Wahl[7] also pointed out that time constraints and lack of training can be significant barriers to librarians' research productivity. To address these challenges and improve the research productivity of librarians, it is essential to create a supportive and conducive work environment. This environment, known as the psychosocial work environment, should ease the mental strain and provide assistance in navigating the research process. By overcoming these obstacles, librarians can increase their research productivity and make a significant impact in their field.

The psychosocial work environment refers to both the psychological and social aspects of the work environment, and it has a significant impact on the well-being and productivity of librarians. The psychological work environment encompasses the elements of the workplace that influence an employee's feelings and mental state. According to Khuong and Yen,[8] a persistently demanding and pressure-filled work environment can result in physical, behavioral, and mental problems, making it challenging for employees, in this case librarians, to be productive, especially in their research activities and publication output. It is crucial for libraries and institutions to create a supportive and positive psychosocial work environment that

promotes the mental and emotional well-being of librarians, enabling them to achieve their full potential and increase their research productivity.

In many developed countries, academic librarians are expected to engage in research and publishing as part of their professional duties. However, it is important to recognize that the academic and professional landscape can differ significantly across different countries. In Nigeria, academic librarians face unique challenges, including demanding work schedules and heavy workloads, that make it difficult to balance their core duties with research activities.[9] Additionally, the lack of resources, support, and training provided by institutions can further impede librarians' ability to conduct research and engage in professional development activities. It is not a matter of reducing work standards for librarians in Nigeria, but rather finding ways to support and enable them to engage in research and professional development activities while still fulfilling their core duties. By doing so, librarians can contribute to the growth and development of librarianship as a profession and advance in their careers.

The work environment plays a critical role in shaping the research productivity of librarians. While the psychological work environment encompasses the aspects of the workplace that affect how workers feel, the social work environment deals with relationships and communication styles within the job setting. Adverse working conditions such as long working hours, heavy workload, and poor work relationships can negatively impact librarians' motivation to publish and participate in research activities. On the other hand, a positive psychosocial work environment characterized by enjoyable interactions, teamwork, and support can enhance librarians' ability to perform their research and demonstrate their expertise.

The importance of a conducive psychosocial work environment has been emphasized by several researchers, including Khuong and Yen[10] and Morley et al.[11] Sunusi[12] also pointed out that a good work environment can create a binding work relationship between individuals in the workplace. In light of these findings, this study aims to investigate the impact of psychosocial work environment on the research productivity of librarians in universities in southwestern Nigeria while also considering other demographics that may have impact. As stated by Baro and Ebhomeya,[13] the combination of professional duties with academic work rigors such as publishing in journals is a major hindrance to career advancement in librarianship, making it crucial to examine the influence of psychosocial work environment on research productivity in this field.

Objective of the Study

The broad objective of this study was to examine the influence of psychosocial work environment on the research productivity of librarians in universities in southwestern Nigeria.

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. determine the level of research productivity of librarians in universities in southwestern Nigeria;
2. assess the fitness of the psychosocial work environment of librarians for research in universities in southwestern Nigeria;
3. ascertain the influence of the psychosocial work environment on research productivity of librarians in universities in southwestern Nigeria.

Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H0[1] Psychosocial work environment does not have a significant influence on the research productivity of librarians in universities in southwestern Nigeria.

H0[2] Higher academic qualification, rank, and years of experience does not have a significant influence on the research productivity of librarians in universities in southwestern Nigeria.

Literature Review

Overview of Research Productivity

The concept of research productivity is intricate due to its multidimensional nature and the impact of the specific research environment. According to Adetayo,[14] research productivity is a combination of the terms "research" and "productivity." Research is a systematic and methodical examination of phenomena aimed at uncovering new information, while productivity refers to the effectiveness of one's actions or ability to accomplish tasks. The definition of productivity, however, can be subject to interpretation and situational factors.

Research productivity encompasses an individual's total output in the form of various scholarly outputs such as journal publications, book chapters, articles, patents, conference proceedings, and more. This output, in turn, contributes to the creation and dissemination of knowledge, particularly through the publication of research in top journals and presentations at

conferences.[15] Okonedo et al.[16] also consider research productivity to be the entire number of research produced by librarians in universities, with a focus on refereed journal articles, books, monographs, book chapters, and conference papers.[17] Thus, research productivity is seen as a crucial indicator of an individual's research impact and contribution to their field.

Measuring research productivity is a crucial task for universities in evaluating the performance of academic staff and improving productivity.[18] This measurement reflects the crucial indicators of a faculty member or academic staff's productivity, as well as the productivity of an individual or group of authors.[19] Over the years, various metrics have been used to determine research productivity, including research quantity and quality. Research output, which is based on the number of publications by an author or group of authors, is considered the most basic metric related to publication data.[20] This metric can be further refined to include specific types of publication such as peer-reviewed journal articles, books, dissertations, trade publications, and conference abstracts. The significance of research output in determining research productivity cannot be overstated as it is the final product of research activity and is used as the primary parameter for judging the productivity of researchers.[21] Additionally, research output is also an important factor in promotion, merit, and tenure determinations.[22]

Quality is another crucial metric in determining research productivity. In the context of this study, quality is measured by the degree to which an author publishes in outlets indexed in popular databases such as Scopus and Web of Science. Nigerian Universities primarily advocate the use of these two databases as they believe that publications indexed in these databases have undergone a rigorous peer-review process, unlike local journals that do not have a global reputation.

Web of Science (WoS) is a widely used interdisciplinary resource for accessing scientific, technical, and biomedical literature, among other subjects. The Journal Citation Report, despite its limitations, uses the WoS database, which includes WoS journals as citers, and it is where the impact factor is published. On the other hand, Scopus, which started in 2004 as an Elsevier initiative, is now widely regarded as the largest interdisciplinary database and has effectively ended WoS's dominance.[23] Scopus offers alternatives to impact factor measurements by incorporating bibliographic references.

Psychosocial Work Environment: Understanding the Concept

The psychosocial work environment encompasses both the psychological and social aspects of the workplace. It encompasses the various factors that influence an employee's behavior, emotions, attitudes, and motivations. The psychological work environment can be

described as the set of characteristics of the work environment that have an impact on an employee's mental state. It includes elements such as affective factors, for example, emotions, moods, and psychological symptoms, cognitions such as attitudes and perception, and behaviors such as effectiveness and motivation. These elements interact and can either positively or negatively influence an employee's work experience. Work stimulation, which refers to the aspects of the work environment that can positively affect an employee's psychological state, is therefore an important aspect of the psychosocial work environment.

Work stimulation, as a crucial aspect of the psychological work environment, refers to the extent to which work tasks provide opportunities for learning, personal growth, and enjoyment. According to Eklöf,[24] when employees are given the chance to use their knowledge and creativity in a dynamic and evolving workplace, they can experience a sense of stimulation and fulfilment. Another important aspect of work stimulation is the provision of incentives and rewards. Deci et al.[25] emphasized that a major motivation for employees to stay in their jobs is the prospect of financial rewards. The authors also noted that while some individuals may find their jobs to be intrinsically rewarding and enjoyable, the majority would not continue to work if their salary payments were stopped. Hence, incentives and rewards play a significant role in creating a psychologically stimulating work environment.

Workload, another critical aspect of the psychological work environment, refers to the amount of work that an individual is required to perform within a specific time frame. The workload is dependent on various factors such as the resources and specifications of the work.[26] When there is a mismatch between the available resources and the required work, it can lead to an imbalance, causing an unhealthy and overwhelming workload. To maintain a healthy psychosocial work environment, it is essential for employers to closely monitor the workload levels and address any imbalances that may arise. By doing so, they can ensure that their employees are not subjected to excessive workloads that may negatively impact their mental and physical well-being.

To attain research success within academic environments, librarians require a flexible and reasonable work schedule that aligns with that of their teaching counterparts. Adebayo et al.[27] acknowledged that librarians in academic libraries face numerous work-related challenges, such as overwhelming workloads, responsibilities not commensurate with support systems, and challenging patrons. The authors emphasized that excessive workloads are a primary cause of employee burnout, which can hinder a librarian's ability to produce the necessary publications to meet their promotion requirements. Working under tight deadlines and undue pressures can

lead to burnout and fatigue.[28] Hence, it is essential for librarians to have a manageable workload to prevent burnout and maintain their productivity levels.

The social work environment is an essential aspect of the psychosocial work environment that deals with relationships in job settings. It encompasses various elements, including communication styles, the relationship between superiors and subordinates, the relationship among co-workers, and teamwork. Personal respect in the workplace is crucial in establishing a suitable social work environment. This includes eliminating discrimination and segregation based on age, gender, or racial background, sexual harassment, and the role of personal politics in forming workplace relationships. The level of connectedness to others is crucial in the workplace, as humans crave positive relationships and a sense of belonging.[29] The authors argue that people want to be cared for and care for others, and these needs can be fulfilled through enjoyable interactions with managers, team leaders, and colleagues. To boost productivity, managers should act as facilitators to address barriers in the social work environment and foster a positive work environment.[30]

Work Environment and Research Productivity

The work environment plays a crucial role in shaping the daily activities of librarians and affects their productivity. Nguyen[31] pointed out that the relationship between environmental factors, motivational research factors, and behavioral research factors can impact the research productivity of academics. The department climate, specifically work-life balance, has also been found to have a significant impact on faculty research productivity. As per Sheridan et al.,[32] a positive department climate that provides more time for research and interdepartmental work has been linked to increased productivity for both women and men. Mike[33] emphasized that a favorable work environment leads to better results, while Naseem et al.[34] emphasized that providing a suitable physical work environment not only contributes to the employees' dignity at work but also boosts their productivity.

While several studies have explored the impact of the work environment on the research of lecturers, there has been limited research on the connection between the work environment and research productivity of librarians. Most studies focused on the work environment of librarians have aimed to evaluate other dependent variables. Anasi[35] conducted a study on the impact of perceived work connections, workload, and physical work environment on job satisfaction among librarians in South-West Nigeria. The study used a descriptive survey approach and found a significant linear relationship between work connections, workload, work environment, and job happiness. However, the results indicated that while workload was not a

significant predictor of job satisfaction, both work connections and work environment had a statistically significant influence on job satisfaction.

In a similar study, Onuoha et al.[36] explored the association between the work environment and job satisfaction among librarians in private universities in Nigeria's Southeast and Southwest. Despite low ratings for noise levels and power supply, the data revealed that the work environment in private university libraries in the study region was considered excellent. The study also found that the librarians were satisfied with their work, despite negative evaluations of the reward systems. The results showed that the work environment had a significant impact on job satisfaction. Efe and Sahabi[37] conducted a study to examine the impact of the work environment on the job performance of librarians at the Ahmadu Bello University Library in Zaria. The study employed a survey research design and found that the library had plenty of light and a psychologically healthy work environment. The results showed that the work environment had a significant impact on the job performance of librarians in university libraries.

In Nigeria, librarians play a crucial role in conducting research that demands a high level of cognitive processing. To be productive, it is imperative that they work in a psychosocial work environment that promotes focus and concentration. Despite this importance, there is a scarcity of research that links the psychosocial work environment to the research productivity of librarians, a gap that the current research aims to fill.

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design collects standardized data from large numbers of people and makes generalization.

Population and Sample Size

The whole study population consisted of librarians from universities in southwestern Nigeria. According to preliminary data, there are 363 librarians spread throughout 32 universities. The total enumeration technique was utilized in the study to include all 363 librarians.

Research Instrument and Reliability

An adapted questionnaire is the instrument used for data collection in this study. The from psychosocial work environment scale was adapted from Kuczynski et al.[38] The responses format for these items consisted of a 4-point Likert scale of (Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2 and Strongly Disagree = 1). To examine the instrument's reliability, a pre-test was conducted on librarians at Landmark University, Omu Aran, Kwara State University, Malete, and the University of Ilorin in Kwara State by administering 30 copies of the questionnaire at the three campuses. Cronbach alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the data-driven item collection. This showed the coefficient values of the items that comprise the variables under consideration. Furthermore, the psychometric properties of the measurement scale resulted in reliability ratings of 0.752 and 0.800 for psychosocial work environment and research productivity respectively, which is a good value as stated by Streiner.[39]

Table 1. Psychometric Properties of Measurement Scale

Variables			Researcher Reliability Score
Psychosocial Work Environment	Psychological	Work intensity	0.854
		Task clarity	0.729
		Decision latitude	0.604
		Work continuity	0.869
		No emotional challenges	0.713
		Others	0.770
	Social	Social Relations with colleagues	0.848
		Social Relations with supervisors	0.848
Research Productivity	Output		0.800

Method of Data Collection

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the head of the Department of Library and Information Science at Adeleke University in Ede, introducing the survey and the researcher to each member of the university's administration. The letter explained the aim of the survey and asked for the librarians' assistance in filling out and returning the questionnaire as soon as possible, while maintaining responders' identity and data confidentiality. Participation in the survey was also fully voluntary. Research assistants were recruited and trained to assist the researcher with questionnaire administration, monitoring, and collection. To guarantee proper

questionnaire completion, the researcher spent time educating the research assistants about the purpose of the study and how they might help the respondents fill out the questionnaire. The questionnaire was physically delivered to the respondents' offices. Respondents were told that any information they submitted would be kept completely secret and would only be used for academic research purposes. Such information was also not made available to a third party. Before collecting and compiling the completed copies for analysis, the respondents were given time to complete the questionnaire.

Method of Data Analysis

The data acquired for this study was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. To provide demographic information about the respondents and to answer the study questions, descriptive statistical methods such as frequency distribution, percentages, mean, and standard deviation scores were employed. Inferential statistical approaches such as linear regression were employed to test the proposed hypothesis that investigate the relationship between the psychosocial work environment and the research productivity of librarians in universities in southwestern Nigeria.

Ethical Consideration

Before collecting and analyzing data, all Adeleke University postgraduate students were required to first get authorization to do research from the Adeleke University Research Ethical Committee (AUHREC) and pass the examination. The researcher must adhere to ethical guidelines. Permission was acquired from the library administrations of the institutions participating in this study before sending the instrument to respondents and producing information/data. The researcher urged respondents to engage in the survey in a way that conformed to ethical norms. Participants were informed and guaranteed that their personal information would be kept totally secret. Participants' confidentiality and anonymity were secured by not requesting information such as names; hence, confidentiality was kept and maintained throughout the study. Furthermore, the participants' personal information was utilized solely for this research.

Operational Definition of Terms

Psychosocial Work Environment: This refers to the psychological and social characteristics of university libraries as perceived by librarians.

Research Productivity: This refers to the number of publications of librarians, and publications in Scopus/WoS.

Results

This section presents the findings from data gathering and analysis in response to six research questions and one hypothesis. Of the 363 questionnaires issued to librarians, 312 were returned and verified as authentic for study. This equates to an 85.9 percent response rate.

Table 2. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Socio-Demographic Characteristics	Categories	Frequencies (n = 312)	Percentages
Highest Academic Qualification	Master's Degree	225	72.1
	M.Phil	34	10.9
	PhD	53	17.0
Gender	Female	169	54.2
	Male	143	45.8
Age Group	60–64	6	1.9
	55–59	23	7.4
	50–54	55	17.6
	45–49	50	16.0
	40–44	70	22.4
	35–39	57	18.3
	30–34	35	11.2
	25–29	12	3.8
	20–24	4	1.3
Rank	Librarian II	88	28.2
	Librarian I	64	20.5
	Senior Librarian	74	23.7
	Principal Librarian	69	22.1
	Deputy University Librarian	17	5.4
Work Experience	31–40 years	14	4.5
	21–30 years	35	11.2
	11–20 years	139	44.6
	1–10 years	124	39.7

The academic qualification of respondents revealed that the majority are female (54.2%) with master's degrees (72.1%). Furthermore, the majority of respondents (70%) are between the ages of 40 and 44 and have worked for 11 to 20 years (44.6%). The rank of librarians is standardized in Nigeria with Librarian II being the lowest rank and University Librarian being the

highest rank. According to the responders' rank breakdown, Librarian II make up the majority (28.2 %), followed by Senior Librarians (23.7%).

Table 3. Research Productivity of Librarians in Universities in Southwest Nigeria

Quantity	Number of Publication		
Textbook	304		
Coauthored Textbook	252		
Chapters in edited books	258		
Journal Articles	1,146		
Conference Proceedings	316		
Total	**2,276**		
Scopus/WoS			
Textbook	162		
Coauthored Textbook	162		
Chapters in edited books	159		
Journal Articles	491		
Conference Proceedings	186		
Total	**1,160**		
		Mean	**Std. Dev**
Quantity		2.80	1.304
Scopus and Web of Science		1.96	1.244

Decision Rule: 1.00–1.49 (Very Low), 1.50–2.49 (Low), 2.5–3.49 (High), 3.5–4.00 (Very High)

The study findings, as shown in Table 3, illustrate a clear disparity between the quantity of publications made by librarians and the quality of these publications as measured by their indexing in Scopus or Web of Science. While librarians had a mean of 2.80 publications in terms of quantity, the mean of their publications in Scopus/WoS was much lower, at 1.96. This result indicates that librarians may prioritize quantity over quality, likely due to the emphasis placed on quantity in the Nigerian education system.

Journal articles were the most common publication type among librarians, with 1,146 published in the past three years. Conference proceedings followed with 316 publications, while textbooks, book chapters, and co-authored textbooks showed a similar pattern, with 304, 258, and 252 occurrences, respectively. However, the findings revealed that librarians do not publish much in terms of co-authored textbooks compared to other publication types.

The study also found that only 491 journal articles were indexed in Scopus or Web of Science, signifying that librarians focus more on publishing rather than ensuring the quality of their work. Other publication types, such as conference proceedings, textbooks, book chapters, and co-authored textbooks, had a higher than average indexing in Scopus/WoS. These findings

emphasize the importance of prioritizing quality and international recognition in the publication efforts of librarians.

Table 4. Fitness of Psychosocial Work Environment

S/N	Psychological Work Environment	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Mean	StdDev
i).	There is no extension of work hours at my workplace	70 (22.4%)	85 (27.2%)	114 (36.5%)	43 (13.8%)	2.58	0.985
ii).	Suitable ratio amount of work and time allocated to work	75 (24.0%)	151 (48.4%)	64 (20.5%)	22 (7.1%)	2.89	0.848
iii).	I experience regular rest breaks at work	76 (24.4%)	130 (41.7%)	88 (28.2%)	18 (5.8%)	2.85	0.857
iv).	There is sufficient time for the completion of core tasks	95 (30.4%)	149 (47.8%)	51 (16.3%)	17 (5.4%)	3.03	0.829
v).	Working hours of employees do not change due to absenteeism of colleagues	89 (28.5%)	128 (41.0%)	71 (22.8%)	24 (7.7%)	2.90	0.902
vi).	My responsibilities at work are clearly assigned	123 (39.4%)	141 (45.2%)	36 (11.5%)	12 (3.8%)	3.20	0.790
vii).	Those responsible for work activity are assigned the necessary authority to issue directives	113 (36.2%)	161 (51.6%)	34 (10.9%)	4 (1.3%)	3.23	0.687
viii).	The way in which a task is carried out (e.g., method, procedure, sequence) can be chosen by the employees themselves	75 (24.0%)	136 (43.6%)	78 (25.0%)	23 (7.4%)	2.84	0.874
ix).	The content and scope of assigned tasks can be influenced by me	77 (24.7%)	140 (44.9%)	77 (24.7%)	18 (5.8%)	2.88	0.845
x).	I determine the speed with which I perform assigned tasks	87 (27.9%)	127 (40.7%)	76 (24.4%)	22 (7.1%)	2.89	0.892
xi).	My duties at work are not interrupted by people	78 (25.0%)	125 (40.1%)	75 (24.0%)	34 (10.9%)	2.79	0.941
xii).	My duties at work are not interrupted due to technological challenges	79 (25.3%)	100 (32.1%)	104 (33.3%)	29 (9.3%)	2.73	0.944
xiii).	Only one task is performed at work at a time	72 (23.1%)	83 (26.6%)	118 (37.8%)	39 (12.5%)	2.60	0.977
xiv).	Employees do not encounter the difficult	70 (22.4%)	83 (26.6%)	110 (35.3%)	49 (15.7%)	2.56	1.006

						Mean	SD
	critical life of other people during work (e.g., illness, life crises, accident, death of clients)						
xv).	No aggression/violence at work	99 (31.7%)	136 (43.6%)	54 (17.3%)	23 (7.4%)	3.00	0.888
xvi).	Employees need not strongly suppress their feelings during work	84 (26.9%)	126 (40.4%)	66 (21.2%)	36 (11.5%)	2.83	0.957
xvii).	My workload is fair	89 (28.5%)	159 (51.0%)	48 (15.4%)	16 (5.1%)	3.03	0.803
xviii).	There is job security at workplace	116 (37.2%)	142 (45.5%)	37 (11.9%)	17 (5.4%)	3.14	0.831
xix).	Present designation corresponds with current salary	102 (32.7%)	121 (38.8%)	67 (21.5%)	22 (7.1%)	2.97	0.909
xx).	Sponsorship is given by the institution to conferences	72 (23.1%)	128 (41.0%)	88 (28.2%)	24 (7.7%)	2.79	0.884
xxi).	My promotions are not delayed	93 (29.8%)	121 (38.8%)	76 (24.4%)	22 (7.1%)	2.91	0.905
xxii).	I get salary increment as at when due	95 (30.4%)	146 (46.8%)	57 (18.3%)	14 (4.5%)	3.03	0.817
	Grand Mean		**2.89**				
	Social Work Environment						
xxiii).	Colleagues at work exchange and complement each other with regard to joint tasks	132 (42.3%)	151 (48.4%)	20 (6.4%)	9 (2.9%)	3.30	0.717
xxiv).	Mutual support of the colleagues in research activities	121 (38.8%)	150 (48.1%)	35 (11.2%)	6 (1.9%)	3.24	0.723
xxv).	Conflict are resolved professional at work	119 (38.1%)	155 (49.7%)	33 (10.6%)	5 (1.6%)	3.24	0.703
xxvi).	Employees perceive the work of their colleagues as important, recognize it and express this through their behavior	111 (35.6%)	164 (52.6%)	28 (9.0%)	9 (2.9%)	3.21	0.721
xxvii).	Supervisors perceive and acknowledge my work performance	105 (33.7%)	176 (56.4%)	25 (8.0%)	6 (1.9%)	3.22	0.669
xxviii).	Supervisors provide	103	173	27	9	3.19	0.706

						Mean	SD
	professionally helpful feedback on the job tasks	(33.0%)	(55.4%)	(8.7%)	(2.9%)		
xxix).	Supervisors perceive my work as important, recognize it and express this through their behavior	134 (42.9%)	154 (49.4%)	19 (6.1%)	5 (1.6%)	3.34	0.665
xxx).	Supervisor supports me in solving problem situations	115 (36.9%)	166 (53.2%)	20 (6.4%)	11 (3.5%)	3.23	0.722
	Grand Mean		3.25				

Decision Rule: 1.00–1.49 (Very Low), 1.50–2.49 (Low), 2.5–3.49 (High), 3.5–4.00 (Very High)

The results of the study regarding the psychosocial work environment of librarians in southwestern Nigeria paint a positive picture. The findings from Table 4 suggest that the psychosocial work environment is conducive to research productivity, with the social work environment emerging as the strongest aspect of the environment. With a grand mean of 3.25, the survey indicated that supervisors in these libraries value and recognize their subordinates' work and express this through their behavior (mean = 3.34), while subordinates also value and recognize their colleagues' work, fostering a supportive work culture (mean = 3.21). This highlights the importance of a healthy relationship between superiors and subordinates, which can greatly enhance work productivity. Furthermore, librarians in southwestern Nigeria were found to engage in complementary and supportive exchanges and collaboration with their colleagues in regard to joint tasks (mean = 3.30) and research activities (mean = 3.24), demonstrating a strong social work environment. These findings suggest that the social work environment in southwestern Nigeria's university libraries is favorable, which can contribute to librarians' research productivity.

The survey results show that conflicts are resolved professionally and effectively (mean = 3.24), with supervisors playing an active role in problem-solving (mean = 3.23) and recognizing their subordinates' contributions to the work (mean = 3.22). This fosters a supportive and collaborative work environment, where colleagues complement each other (mean = 3.30) and offer mutual support (mean = 3.24). The psychological work environment also revealed key elements necessary for a healthy and productive workplace. Those in charge of work activities are given the authority they need to direct their subordinates (mean = 3.23), and responsibilities are clearly assigned (mean = 3.20). Librarians are given salary increases (mean = 3.03) and promotions are not delayed (mean = 2.91), which further motivates them to perform their best.

Despite some areas that could still be improved, such as providing the opportunity for employees to extend work hours and avoiding critical life events in the workplace, the results indicate a generally fit psychosocial work environment for librarians in southwestern Nigeria. This contributes to their overall well-being and ultimately benefits their performance and the productivity of the organization.

Table 5. Psychosocial Work Environment and Research Productivity

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.430[a]	.185	.174	3.06367
a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Experience, Psychosocial Work Environment, Highest Academic Qualification, Rank				

ANOVA[b]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	640.198	4	160.050	17.052	.000[a]
	Residual	2815.815	307	9.386		
	Total	3456.013	311			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Experience, Psychosocial Work Environment, Highest Academic Qualification, Rank						
b. Dependent Variable: Research Productivity						

Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.267	1.431		1.584	.114
	Psychosocial Work Environment	.045	.009	.248	4.700	.000
	Highest Academic Qualification	.794	.252	.180	3.152	.002
	Rank	.358	.165	.135	2.168	.031
	Work Experience	-.739	.242	-.178	-3.057	.002
a. Dependent Variable: Research Productivity						

The results of the hypothesis test in Table 5 revealed that the model as a whole was significant in predicting research productivity ($F_{(4,300)} = 17.052$, $p < .05$). The adjusted R-

squared value of .174 indicated that the model explained approximately 17.4% of the variance in research productivity, after controlling for the effects of the covariates included in the model.

When examining the coefficients for each predictor variable, Psychosocial Work Environment was found to have a significant positive effect on research productivity (β = .248, p < .05). This suggests that researchers who have a positive perception of their psychosocial work environment may be more productive than those who do not. Similarly, the results showed that Higher Academic Qualification was positively related to research productivity (β = .180, p < .05). This finding suggests that researchers with higher levels of academic qualifications are more productive than those with lower qualifications.

Rank was found to have a significant positive effect on research productivity (β = .135, p < .05). This implies that higher-ranking researchers are more productive than those in lower-ranking positions. Additionally, the results showed that Work Experience was negatively related to research productivity (β = -.178, p < .05), indicating that researchers with more years of experience may be less productive than those with less experience. The findings suggest that factors such as psychosocial work environment, academic qualifications, rank, and work experience are important predictors of research productivity. These results have implications for academic institutions, as they suggest that efforts to improve the psychosocial work environment and provide opportunities for professional development may enhance research productivity.

Discussion

The value of research publications in the academic world cannot be overstated. They serve as a testament to an individual's competence and are considered a crucial indicator of academic staff achievement.[40,41] This current study on the research productivity of librarians in southwestern Nigerian universities revealed that these professionals have been highly productive in terms of quantity. This is a positive result for the library profession in Nigeria, as the quantity of publications is the primary consideration when evaluating performance. Furthermore, the quantity of research output is a significant factor in determining the ranking and grades of institutions. Although the research productivity of librarians in southwestern Nigeria has improved, it still lags behind that of developed nations across the globe.[42]

The study on the research productivity of librarians in southwestern Nigeria revealed that journal articles were the most frequently published type of work. This is in line with previous research, which found that librarians tend to publish more journal articles than any other type of publication.[43, 44] However, the study also indicated a lack of collaboration among librarians in the

region when it comes to co-authored textbooks, which were found to be the least published type of work. This is despite the fact that past research has shown that researchers who collaborate more tend to be more productive.[45] Moreover, the findings showed that librarians in southwestern Nigeria were less productive in terms of publishing in Scopus and Web of Science indexed outlets, which suggests that quantity was given priority over quality by these professionals. This finding supports the idea that just a few librarians publish more in quality journals indexed in Scopus, which are highly visible within the scholarly community.[46]

The findings of the study indicate that librarians in southwestern Nigeria are working in a favorable psychosocial environment. This aligns with previous research by Jhamb and Meera,[47] who found that the majority of library professionals had a positive attitude toward their work environment. Despite the decline in financial support for libraries in recent years,[48] this result suggests that management is still committed to providing a supportive work environment for librarians. The social aspect of the work environment was found to be particularly favorable, with librarians having ample opportunities for formal interaction with their colleagues.[49] The psychological work environment was also deemed appropriate, with librarians reporting low levels of stress.[50, 51] This supports the idea that libraries are places of refuge where professionals can carry out their work in a safe, supportive, and stress-free environment.

The results of this study highlight the significant impact that a positive psychosocial work environment can have on the research productivity of librarians at southwestern Nigerian universities. Despite the challenges facing the country as a whole, librarians have a strong emotional connection to their profession and work environment, as demonstrated by Pandita and Dominic.[52] This finding is consistent with previous research that has highlighted the importance of a positive work environment such as Vuong et al.,[53] Desselle et al.,[54] and Kim and Choi.[55] The research also reports that higher academic qualification was positively related to research productivity. This suggests that researchers with higher levels of academic qualifications tend to be more productive than those with lower qualifications. Rank was found to have a significant positive effect on research productivity, implying that higher-ranking researchers tend to be more productive than those in lower-ranking positions. This finding is consistent with previous research that has shown a positive association between rank and research productivity.[56] Finally, the research indicates that work experience was negatively related to research productivity. This finding contradicts previous research that has demonstrated a positive association between work experience and research productivity.[57] However, one possible explanation is that experienced librarians may have more administrative or managerial responsibilities, which can take away from their time and energy for research.

Additionally, experienced librarians may feel less pressure to publish compared to their early career counterparts, as they may have already established themselves in their field.

This study's geographical limitations should be acknowledged, as it was conducted solely in the southwest region of Nigeria due to financial constraints. Expanding the study to include other regions and countries would increase the validity and generalizability of its findings. Nevertheless, the researcher was able to draw upon relevant literature from other countries to provide a broader context for the study. Future research should aim to fill in any remaining gaps by investigating other regions and accounting for potential confounding factors, such as researcher competence. The study's limitations in this regard should also be noted, as the effect of a researcher's capability on their productivity was not considered. It is possible that more competent researchers may be more productive and successful in publishing their work.

Conclusion

The results of this study shed light on the significant positive impact of a favorable psychosocial work environment on the research productivity of librarians in southwestern Nigeria. It also showed that higher academic qualification and rank was positively related to research productivity while years of experience were negatively related to research productivity. The findings reveal that while the librarians have a high level of research productivity in terms of output, their publications are not concentrated in Scopus and Web of Science. The study found that the work environment of librarians is emotionally and socially supportive, with librarians displaying a deep emotional attachment to their work.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that library management take steps to maintain and improve the favorable psychosocial work environment for librarians. This can be done by implementing a structured work schedule to reduce stress and creating procedures to manage critical life events of staff. Additionally, more stringent promotion criteria should be put in place for academic librarians, incentivizing them to publish in high-quality outlets like Scopus and Web of Science. The university management should also provide the necessary support, including grants, for papers published in these journals.

However, the study relied on self-reported data from librarians, which could be subject to social desirability bias or other response biases. Additionally, the study did not verify the accuracy of the data provided by the librarians, which could affect the reliability of the findings. Future studies could address the limitations by using an objective measure of research productivity. In conclusion, this study highlights the crucial role that a positive psychosocial work

environment plays in boosting research productivity among librarians. By understanding the impact of work environment on productivity, library management can take proactive steps to support the growth and development of librarians, leading to a more productive and engaged workforce.

Contribution to Knowledge

The study has significantly expanded the knowledge base in the field of librarianship, especially in Nigeria where there has been growing concern about the quality of education. Our research has shed light on the scholarly activities of librarians in Nigeria's southwestern region and has revealed a strong link between their psychosocial work environment and research productivity. The findings suggest that Nigerian librarians are deeply committed to their careers and have a strong desire to publish, even though they may not prioritize publishing in Scopus and Web of Science indexed outlets.

The study also found that higher academic qualifications and higher rank are positively associated with research productivity, whereas work experience has a negative correlation. These results are highly relevant to the professional development and career advancement strategies for librarians, and they also offer insights into factors that may impact research productivity in other fields. Furthermore, the research challenges previous studies that have shown a positive association between work experience and research productivity, providing possible explanations for the discrepancy. This research has made a significant contribution to the literature on research productivity, emphasizing the crucial role of the psychosocial work environment in shaping librarians' productivity. It was found that efforts have been made over the years to improve the work environment in libraries, which has practical implications for library management.

In conclusion, the study highlights the importance of maintaining and enhancing the psychosocial work environment to support librarians' research productivity. We hope that our findings will inspire ongoing efforts to improve the work environment in libraries, thereby enhancing the productivity of librarians in Nigeria and beyond.

Implication of the Study

The deductions made from the study indicated that psychosocial work environment are significant constructs that can influence the research productivity of librarians in universities in southwestern Nigeria. Therefore, the study's outcome has implications for policy and practice.

Policy Implications

The findings of the study have far-reaching implications for the librarian community, university management, and policymakers. To begin with, librarian management should prioritize creating a supportive and stress-free work environment. This could involve implementing a structured work schedule, minimizing librarian exposure to critical life events, and establishing support structures to manage these events. University management should also consider revising the criteria for librarian promotions to place greater emphasis on high-quality publications in reputable journals like Scopus and Web of Science. Financial support and grants for librarians to publish in such journals would encourage them to focus on quality over quantity.

Policymakers have a crucial role to play in improving research productivity in Nigeria. To address the low quality of research output in the country, they can enact policies that enforce compliance with high-quality publication standards and increase support for librarians to publish in reputable journals. Furthermore, policymakers can also focus on improving the psychosocial work environment by identifying additional measures to boost research productivity.

The study's finding that higher academic qualifications are positively related to research productivity suggests that libraries could provide support and incentives for librarians to pursue advanced degrees, such as tuition reimbursement or time off for studies. Moreover, the study highlights the need to balance administrative or managerial responsibilities with research opportunities. Libraries could consider providing administrative support to promote research productivity.

This study provides valuable insights that can inform policy decisions and improve the state of librarianship in Nigeria. By prioritizing a supportive psychosocial work environment, reputable publications, and advanced degrees, policymakers can foster a culture of high-quality research output in the country's libraries.

Librarianship Practice Implications

The study highlights the importance of fostering a supportive and conducive work environment for librarians, not just in terms of the quality of library services they provide but also in terms of their own personal and professional growth. This can be achieved through the establishment of effective work-life balance policies, programs for stress and emotional management, and recognition of librarians' dual responsibilities as both service providers and scholars. The library profession should take the lead in promoting such initiatives and not leave it solely to the university administration to implement them. This can help librarians not only

perform their duties better but also advance their own scholarly pursuits, ultimately elevating the level of library services and contributing to the broader academic community.

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