

Institutional Support as a Determinant of Career Development of Female Librarians in Federal Universities in Southwestern Nigeria

Ogundipe, T. C.

Nigeria French Language Village, Badagry,

Lagos State, Nigeria

titilayoogundipe7@gmail.com

Aminat Omolola Adisa

Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies,

Faculty of Education,

University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study examines institutional support and career patterns as determinants of the career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. The descriptive survey was adopted for the study. The population comprises all female librarians in seven universities in Southwestern Nigeria. The total enumeration method was used to sample all female librarians, and a self-designed questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and multiple regression analysis. The results showed career development of female librarians, who engage in networking activities, pursue professional development, seek mentorship or guidance and satisfaction with the level of recognition among others. Institutional support for the career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria is significant. Female librarians in Southwestern Nigeria engage in more networking, pursue professional development and seek mentorship. University library management in Southwestern Nigeria should provide opportunities for leadership roles, clear and transparent promotion criteria for their career development and set out clear policies for promotion.

Keywords: *Institutional support, career development, female librarians and leadership roles*

INTRODUCTION

The university library is a vital part of higher education institutions, offering a variety of resources and services to support academic programmes and research. Career



development for female librarians is crucial for efficient service delivery. While many women pursue non-corporate careers, those in the corporate world face challenges in career development.

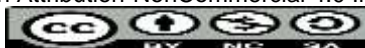
The career development of female librarians has become imperative in the library for the efficient and effective production of information. However, librarians at federal universities may experience delays in career development as a result of a lack of institutional support from the parent institution. The librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria are no exception to this phenomenon. This research aims to investigate institutional support as a determinant of career development for female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria.

A university library is a library that is part of a higher education institution. The library provides a range of resources, services and facilities to support the academic programs and research activities. The library is one of the important units in a university; its aims and objectives are to manage scientific information and support the implementation in the university. However, a functional library serves as the life support or nerve centre of any university system. It is known that for a library to remain great, efficient and effective, qualified and devoted librarians are needed to handle the library's objectives. Some librarians are not comfortable with the low position of libraries and librarians within parent institutions. University librarians in Nigeria experience a lack of appreciation and recognition of library services by the parent institution. This is a mistaken belief or ignorance of the duties of librarians. A well-articulated and comprehensive career development for librarians is needed for sustainability and endurance in the profession.

Traditionally, Nigerians view women as inferior to men and devoted to housework. In Nigerian traditional gender ideology, a male is the head and breadwinner, and a female is the homemaker. This gender ideology has been challenged in Nigeria's history, the cultural shifts resulting from broad social, cultural, economic and political reforms (Davis, 2014). Most of these reforms have been associated with a focus on enabling women to develop their careers outside the home.

As part of these political efforts, the government developed laws to protect women's rights, ensure freedom of speech and provide access to education and employment. This led to an increase in female participation in official works; the employment rate for females in Nigeria is higher. In Nigeria, the cultural shifts and unequal family responsibilities lead to inequality at work. In Nigeria, female career development has been at odds with the chances of a happy family life. A female who has a focus or is career-oriented is often mocked as a strong woman and criticised for being non-feminine, selfish and shifting their duties to their family.

A career woman is recognised only if she can successfully combine her career with her family duties; something that men do not need to worry about because they can

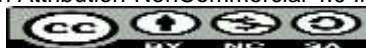


focus primarily on their careers. However, if the reverse is the case, a man who puts his wife's career above his and devotes himself to house duties would be perceived as having little success; incapable masculine and social pressures will lead to absence, marital conflict and even divorce. Females are expected to support their spouse's career, not the other way around. This means that traditional gender roles are still solidly in place in Nigerian society and culture.

Universities and libraries in Southwestern Nigeria stand at the top in terms of academic standards. The service of a professional librarian is needed. If it is possible to go through the history of some libraries in southwestern Nigeria, it will be discovered that there were more female librarians than males. There should be a consideration that the effort of female librarians cannot be overemphasised, and they are working hard to meet the goal and objectives of the library. Despite that, female librarians are indispensable to the development of their parent institution because they take their work seriously. However, a dedicated female librarian is very pertinent for the service delivery in the area of user education, documentation and reference services.

Institutional support is the assistance provided to the library and its personnel by their parent body or employers outside of their core terms of the agreement to improve their well-being, which can influence their commitment to the organisation and have positive effects on the development of the library and its collection to meet the information demand of their patrons. However, female librarians rely heavily on institutional support in the form of infrastructure, staff training, timely promotion, favourable institutional policy, and the like to deliver the best services to their library patrons and the larger community. In addition, institutional support refers to employees' perception concerning the extent to which the institution attaches value to them or contributes to and cares about their well-being or needs. Institutional support is an important element in librarians' job performance and well-being. However, adequate provisions for female librarians, physical or accommodation, health and well-being, career goals, supervisor support in the form of guidance and recommendations for additional training where necessary, and fair treatment in terms of reward for extra-role performance and others would increase female librarians' obligation to help the institution reach its goals and objectives.

In Nigeria, female librarians are facing limited access to institutional support for research funding. Librarians' research is often undervalued and unsupported, and they do not enjoy comparable support as compared to other male librarians in the same library. Additionally, the quality of a research publication is to be published in a reputable and prestigious international database. Research that is published in a reputable body or indexed in prestigious indexing bodies is considered to have higher scientific quality and greater chances of visibility as compared to non-indexed journals. Based on this, female librarians need to write and do research to assist their promotion. Article process charges



are used to cover the attendant costs of producing journals, peer review, hosting the journal online, archiving and many other related functions. The ability to pay may be considered in the decision to publish in certain journals. In that case, female librarians need institutional support from the parent bodies to publish their research work in reputable international databases. In addition, librarians with institutional support perform significantly better in research and publish more publications. Reward is another support for female librarians in the library. The reward will boost her morale and induce behaviour that is expected to enhance their research productivity.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to investigate institutional support as a determinant of the career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- i. Ascertain the level of career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria.
- ii. Determine the level of institutional support of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria.
- iii. Find out the relationship between institutional support and career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria; and
- iv. Determine the challenges of career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria.

1.5 Hypotheses

There is no significant relationship between institutional support and career development of female librarians in federal universities in the Southwestern Nigeria.

Scope of the study

This research examines institutional support as a determinant of career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated how institutional support of female librarians influences career development in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. The research focuses on female librarians. This category of females is those who have focused on achieving in life. Under institutional support, the study covers financial support, career growth, transparency in promotion, gender equality and research support. Under career development, which is the dependent variable, the study covers educational attainment, promotion and advancement, networking and mentoring. The geographical scope is the federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. There are seven (7) federal universities in Southwest Nigeria, which are: University of Ibadan (UI), University of Lagos



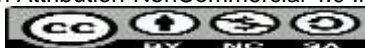
(UNILAG), Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB), Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), Federal University, Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE) and Federal University of Health Sciences (FUHS), Ila-Orangun.

Literature Review

A career is a profession or chosen area of employment that can encompass one or more jobs. It also refers to the education, training, and experience required to advance in the current position or to move on to another. Career development is the process by which an individual's occupational position evolves. It is the process of making long-term learning decisions to link personal demands for physical or psychological fulfilment with prospects for job success.

Johnston and Williams (2015) performed research in Qatar on the future training of female librarians. The training will help female librarians advance in their careers. They discovered that Qatari female librarians require cataloguing training as well as RDA, electronic resource management, information literacy, and copyright issues. The findings suggested that the majority of female librarians who responded had poor catalogue skills and that they required informal training programs to advance their careers in the event of promotion and to increase library objectives. However, financing was discovered to be the primary obstacle. The study suggested that informal training programs for female librarians be implemented to develop knowledge sections of the library.

Uphoff and Buck (2016) posit that institutions constitute norms and behaviours that persist over a long period in time by serving socially valued purposes. Institutions exist to define human behaviour by prescribing a set of constraints (norms of behaviour, conventions and rules) and incentives which affect individual choices, which in the long run affect the output of economies and societies. Institutions refer to deep aspects of social structure, which act as authoritative guidelines and constraints for behaviour (Scott, 2005). The Institutional support refers to the effort, assistance or encouragement that universities render or provide for female librarians in policies, regulations, monetary and non-monetary form, which impels librarians to perform their responsibilities in an effective and productive manner. Research is important or essential to findings, innovations, development and adequate dissemination and implementation of knowledge in a broad spectrum of fields in a knowledge-based modern culture. Federal universities are anticipated to be the powerhouses of studies and provision of resources that a researcher can invest in securing a nation's future in an increasingly powerless and unpredictable environment.



Fakhraei, Imami and Manuchehri (2015) argue that when female librarians feel satisfied and supported by their universities, they will put in more effort in the work and will feel committed to the universities and leaving the library will be difficult for them. However, in other literature, this is not often the case with librarians in public libraries. Studies have shown that most librarians in the public sector have it in mind to quit or leave office if they find a better one, unlike their counterparts in a private corporate system, such as the oil and related industries. Aborishade and Obioha (2019) report that librarians in most public institutions demonstrate a lack of dedication, a nonchalant attitude towards work and some show signs of regret and dissatisfaction, and as such show a lack of commitment, and many intend to leave if they find a better offer somewhere else.

In other words, institutional support plays a salient role in female librarians' job satisfaction and encourages them to show' commitment to the universities in which they serve or any type, including libraries/librarians, based on the relationship between institutional support, job satisfaction and dimensions of employees' commitment as projected in social exchange and social identity theory. A significant amount of literature has been developed over the years to improve the understanding of the reward system for female librarians and the extent to which they can influence the levels of their commitment, motivation and job satisfaction. Additionally, the task of universities where female librarians work creates an avenue for institutional support, which motivates female librarians to perform excellently, brilliantly and satisfactorily for the growth of the library.

Saka, Akor and Opaleke (2016) studied the influence of institutional support and job satisfaction on the performance of female librarians in universities. Herzberg's two-factor theory was based on. The results revealed that there was no significant relationship between institutional support and job satisfaction on job performance among the female librarians. The study recommended that intrinsic and extrinsic factors should be applied. In addition, Akintayo (2018) found that female librarians were satisfied with their jobs due to institutional support provided by federal universities. They indicated that they were very satisfied with the nature of work and were satisfied with responsibility, achievement, and recognition, while satisfaction with promotion was at a low level. It was recommended that federal universities should look into the factors that are important to enhance the job satisfaction of female librarians.

Institutional support is important in federal universities. Female librarians are encouraged to pursue their interests under formal standards of conduct in the regular and legal domains of institutions.



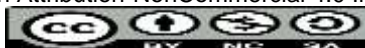
METHOD

A correlational research design was adopted for the study. The method was adopted because it is used in studying the distribution and degree of relationship among random variables. The method is also considered appropriate for obtaining reliable information. It facilitated the test of hypotheses on the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable (Siedlecki, 2020).

The population of this study is all female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. According to the data collected from seven (7) federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria, that is: University of Ibadan (UI), Ibadan, University of Lagos (UNLAG), Akoka, Yaba, Lagos, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Federal University of Agriculture (FUNAAB), Abeokuta, Federal University of Technology (FUTA), Akure, Federal University (FUOYE), Oye-Ekiti and Federal University of Health Sciences, Ila-Orangun. The data collected from the universities' libraries gave a total of 63 female librarians. This study employed total enumeration.

A self-developed questionnaire titled "Institutional support as determinant of career development of female librarians in federal universities (ISDCDFLFU)" was designed for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into five (5) different sections, Sections A – E. The instrument was structured to enable respondents to express their opinion on different rating scales. Section A solicits information on demographic variables, and the remaining sections sought information on specific areas of the research constructs. Sections B, C and D have the rating scales of: Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), Strongly Disagree (1). The questionnaire underwent scrutiny from the researcher and other colleagues in the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies (LARIS) to ascertain its content and face validity. A pre-test for the questionnaire was conducted at the University of Ilorin, Kwara State University, Malete, Summit University, Offa and Al-hikma University, Ilorin in Kwara State.

The Cronbach-alpha method was used to determine the reliability coefficients of the 30 copies of the instrument. The reliability for Section B, Institutional support, was $r=0.85$, Section C, Career development, was $r=0.79$, and Section D, Challenges facing career development of female librarians, was $r=0.80$. Therefore, the measuring instrument is valid for the study. A total of 63 copies of the questionnaire were administered to female librarians. Copies of completed questionnaires were collected immediately after respondents had duly filled them on the appointed date. The data was analysed quantitatively using descriptive statistics. Simple percentages were used to analyse the demographic information of the respondents. Frequency count, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used data analysis. For the test of hypotheses, the hypothesis was tested using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) analysis to determine the level of significant relationship with the degree of freedom set at a 0.05



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level of significance. Analysis of the data was on a computer using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 21.

Table 1: Population of the study

S/No	Federal Universities	Number of female librarians
1.	University of Ibadan, Ibadan(UI), Ibadan	15
2.	University of Lagos (UNILAG), Akoka Yaba, Lagos	09
3.	Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife	13
4.	Federal University of Agriculture(FUNAAB), Abeokuta	12
5.	Federal University of Technology (FUTA), Akure	06
6.	Federal University (FUOYE), Oye-Ekiti	06
7.	Federal University of Health Sciences, Ila-Orangun	02
8.	TOTAL	63

Source: Field survey, 2023

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 63 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the female librarians across the 7 federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. These universities were from Southwestern States comprising: University of Ibadan (UI), Ibadan, University of Lagos (UNILAG), Akoka, Yaba, Lagos, Federal University of Agriculture (FUNAAB), Abeokuta, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Federal University of Technology (FUTA), Akure, Federal University (FUOYE), Oye-Ekiti, and Federal University of Health Sciences, Ila-Orogun. A total of 63 copies of the questionnaire were returned and found useful for the study's analysis. The response rates of the administered copies of the questionnaire are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Questionnaire distribution and response rate

Federal Universities	Copies of the questionnaire		Response rate (%)
	Distributed	Returned and used	
University of Ibadan, Ibadan (UI), Ibadan	15	15	23.8
University of Lagos (UNILAG), Akoka Yaba, Lagos	09	09	3.2
Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife	13	13	20.6
Federal University of Agriculture (FUNAAB), Abeokuta	12	12	9.5
Federal University of Technology (FUTA), Akure	06	06	9.5
Federal University (FUOYE), Oye-Ekiti	06	06	14.4
Federal University of Health Sciences, Ila-Orangun	02	02	19.0
TOTAL	63	63	100.0

Source: Field survey 2020

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Table 2 shows the breakdown of the number of respondents surveyed in the federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. The population of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria are the University of Ibadan (UI), which had the highest number of respondents, 15 (23.8%), compared with other universities in the study. Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, had the second highest number of respondents, 13 (20.6%). Federal University of Health Sciences had the lowest number of respondents, 2 (19.0). Respondents used in this study were female librarians.

Table 3: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

S/N	Institution	Frequency	Percent (%)
1	University of Ibadan (UI)	15	23.8
2	University of Health Sciences, Ila Orangun	02	3.2
3	Obafemi Awolowo University, (OAU) Ile Ife	13	20.6
4	Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE),	06	9.5
5	Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA)	06	9.5
6	University of Lagos (UNILAG), Akoka Yaba, Lagos	09	14.4
7	Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB)	12	19.0
	Total	63	100.0
	Age		
1	25 to 35years	23	36.5
2	36 to 40years	05	7.9
3	41 to 50years	16	25.4
4	51 years and above	19	30.2
	Total	63	100.0
	Working Experience		
1	Less than 1 year	10	15.9
2	1 to 5 years	15	23.8
3	6 to 10 years	09	14.3
4	11 to 15 years	05	7.9
5	16 to 20 years	10	15.9
6	Above 21 years	14	22.2
	Total	63	100.0
	Religion		
1	Christianity	53	84.1
2	Islam	10	15.9
	Total	63	100.0
	Marital status		
1	Married	42	66.7
2	Single	21	33.3
	Total	63	100.0

Demographic information

The demographic information identified the characteristics of the female librarians, which include: name of the institution, age group, educational qualification, and years of



working experience, religion and marital status in the seven (7) federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria.

Table 3 shows the breakdown of the demographic characteristics of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. The findings showed that 15(23.8%) of the respondents were from the University of Ibadan (UI), 13(20.6%) from Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), and 2(3.2%) from the University of Health Sciences, Ila Orangun. The Table 3 further revealed that: majority of respondents 23(36.5%) were between the ages of 25-35 years, 5(7.9%) of the respondents were between the age range of 36-40 years, 16(25.4%) of the respondents were between the age range of 41-50 years and 19(30.2%) of the respondents were between the age range of 51 and above.

According to the respondents' years of experience, majority of the female librarians 10(15.9%) have been on the job for the period of less than 1 year, however, 15(23.8%) respondents have worked for 1-5 years on the job, 9(14.3%) respondents have been on the job for 6-10 years, 5(7.9%) respondents with working experience ranging from 11-15 years, 10 (15.9%) with working experience ranging from 16-20 years, 10(15.9 %) respondents with working experience ranging from 16-20 years and 14(22.2%) respondents with above 21 years working experience. It is also shown in Table 3 that the religious status of the respondents: 53(84.1%) were identified as Christian, and 10(15.9%) identified as Muslim. The majority of the respondents, 42(66.7%), were married, and 21(33.3%) were single.

Table 4: The Level of Career Development of Female Librarians in Federal Universities in Southwestern Nigeria

S/N	Item Description	SA(%)	A(%)	D(%)	SD (%)	\bar{X}	S. Dev.
1	I feel that my career align with my current position as a female librarian.	10 (15.9)	34 (54.0)	14 (22.2)	5 (7.9)	2.78	.81
2	I am confident in my abilities and skills required for success in my role as a female librarian.	13 (20.6)	31 (49.2)	13 (20.6)	6 (9.5)	2.81	.87
3	As a female librarian I actively pursue opportunities for professional development within the field of librarianship.	17 (27.0)	31 (49.2)	13 (20.6)	2 (3.2)	3.00	.78
4	As a female librarian I actively engage in networking activities to expand my professional connections within the library community.	14 (22.2)	40 (63.5)	6 (9.5)	3 (4.8)	3.03	.71
5	I actively seek feedback from supervisors or colleagues to improve my performance as a female librarian.	10 (15.9)	29 (46.0)	16 (25.4)	8 (12.7)	2.63	.89



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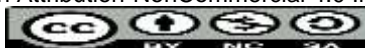
6	I regularly assess my progress towards my career goals and make necessary adjustments as a female librarian.	10 (15.9)	34 (54.0)	15 (23.8)	4 (6.3)	2.59	.89
7	I am confident in my ability to navigate and overcome challenges in career as a female librarian.	13 (20.6)	30 (47.6)	14 (22.2)	6 (9.5)	2.79	.78
8	I am satisfied with the level of recognition and appreciation I receive for my contributions as a librarian.	16 (25.4)	30 (47.6)	10 (15.9)	7 (11.1)	2.87	.92
9	As a female librarian I have a clear understanding of the potential career paths available to me within the library profession.	7 (11.1)	33 (52.4)	13 (20.6)	10 (15.9)	2.79	.88
10	I actively seek out for mentorship or guidance to help develop my career as a female librarian.	13 (20.6)	37 (58.7)	8 (12.7)	5 (7.9)	2.92	.80
	TOTAL	12 (19.0)	33 (52.5)	12 (19.0)	6 (9.5)		
	N=63, Average mean=2.82 Weighted mean=2.50					2.82	0.83

Key: Strongly Agree(SA=4), Agree(A=3), Disagree(D=2), Strongly Disagree(SD=1)

Table 4 presents the findings on the level of career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. The findings revealed that majority of female librarians engage in networking activities (\bar{x} =3.03; std dev. = 0.71); pursuit of professional development (\bar{x} =3.00; std dev. = 0.78); seeking mentorship or guidance (\bar{x} =2.92; std dev. = 0.80); satisfaction with level of recognition and appreciation (\bar{x} =2.87; std dev. = 0.92); seeking feedback for improvement (\bar{x} =2.63; std dev. = 0.89); assessment of progress towards career development (\bar{x} =2.59; std dev. = 0.89); ability to navigate and overcome challenges in career as a female librarians (\bar{x} =2.79; std dev. = 0.79); having a clear understanding of the career paths available within the library (\bar{x} =2.79; std dev. = 0.88); and career aligned with current position (\bar{x} =2.78; std dev. =0.81).

Table 5: Test of Norms showing Level of Career Development of Female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria

Norms Range	Grade	Weighted Mean
1-1.33	Low/Poor	2.82
1.34-2.67	Moderate/Average	
2.68-4.00	High	



To confirm the level of career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria, a test of norms was conducted. Results showed that a scale between 1 and 1.33 is low; 1.34-2.66 is moderate, while 2.67- 4 is high. The overall mean for female librarians among federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria is 2.50, which falls between the scales of 2.67 and 4. It can therefore be concluded that the level of career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria is moderate. It means that at a certain level, federal universities in Nigeria are ready.

To ascertain the respondent’s response on the level of institutional support available for female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. Female librarians were instructed to point out their agreement or disagreement with items that were developed as contained in the scale that was used to measure the construct. The results were presented in Table 6.

Table 6: The Level of Institutional Support Available of Female Librarians in Federal Universities in Southwestern Nigeria

S/N	Item Description	SA(%)	A(%)	D(%)	SD (%)	\bar{X}	S. Dev.	Rank
1	The institution provides financial support for professional development opportunities(conferences, workshops, training programs) of female librarians.	10 (27.0)	34 (54.0)	14 (22.2)	5 (7.9)	2.78	.81	9
2	Mentorship programs are available to support the career growth of female librarians.	13 (20.6)	31 (49.2)	13 (20.6)	6 (9.5)	2.81	.87	6
3	The institution has clear and transparent promotion criteria for career advancement of female librarians.	17 (27.0)	31 (49.2)	13 (20.6)	2 (3.2)	3.00	.78	2
4	There are equal opportunities for both male and female librarians to take on leadership roles.	14 (22.2)	40 (63.5)	6 (9.5)	3 (4.8)	3.03	.71	1
5	Policies promoting gender equality are effectively implemented in the workplace for female librarians.	14 (22.2)	40 (63.5)	6 (9.5)	3 (4.8)	2.94	.89	3
6	The institution recognizes and values a diverse set of skills and contributions from female librarians.	10 (15.9)	29 (46.0)	16 (25.4)	8 (12.7)	2.63	.89	10
7	Work-life balance initiatives, such as flexible working hours, are in place.	7 (11.1)	33 (52.4)	13 (20.6)	10 (15.9)	2.59	.89	11
8	Female librarians are well-represented in leadership positions within the library.	10 (15.9)	34 (54.0)	15 (23.8)	4 (6.3)	2.79	.78	7
9	The institution supports research and publication activities for female librarians.	16 (25.4)	30 (47.6)	10 (15.9)	7 (11.1)	2.87	.92	5
10	The institution actively addresses gender-based discrimination.	13 (20.0)	30 (47.6)	14 (22.2)	6 (9.5)	2.79	.88	8
11	Family-friendly policies are in place to support female librarians.	13 (20.6)	37 (58.7)	8 (12.7)	5 (7.9)	2.92	.80	4
	TOTAL	12 (19.0)	34 (54.0)	12 (19.0)	5 (8.0)			
	N=63, Average mean=2.83, Weighted mean=2.50					2.83	0.83	

Key: Strongly Agree (SA=4), Agree (A=3), Disagree (D=2), Strongly Disagree (SD=1)



Table 6 presents the level of institutional support available for female librarians in federal universities in the Southwestern Nigeria. The findings revealed that: equal opportunities for both male and female librarians to take on leadership roles ($\bar{x}=3.03$; std dev. = 0.71); institution has clear and transparent promotion criteria for career advancement ($\bar{x}=3.00$; std dev. = 0.78); policies promotion and gender equality are effectively implemented in the workplace ($\bar{x}=2.94$; std dev. = 2.94); family and friend policies are in place ($\bar{x}=2.92$; std dev. = 0.80); institution support research and publication activities ($\bar{x}=2.87$; std dev. = 0.92); Work-life balance initiative such as flexible working hours are in place ($\bar{x}=2.59$; std dev. = 0.59); and recognition and values a diverse set of skills from female librarians ($\bar{x}=2.59$; std dev. = 0.89).

It was also indicated by the respondents that the institutional supports available of female librarians are: female librarians are well represented in the leadership positions within the library work-life ($\bar{x}=2.79$; std dev. = 0.78); mentorship programs are available to support the career development ($\bar{x}=2.81$; std dev. = 1.87) and institution actively address gender based discrimination ($\bar{x}=2.79$; std dev. = 0.88).

To ascertain the respondents' response to the challenges facing the career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. Female librarians were instructed to point out their agreement with items that were developed as contained in the scale to measure the construct. The results were presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Challenges facing career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria

S/N	Item Description	SA(%)	A(%)	D(%)	SD (%)	\bar{X}	S. Dev.	Rank
1	Female librarians have limited access to leadership roles compared to their male counterparts.	11 (17.5)	26 (41.3)	18 (28.6)	8 (12.7)	2.61	.93	5
2	Gender-based discrimination is a significant challenge for female librarians in the workplace.	12 (19.0)	23 (36.5)	22 (34.9)	6 (9.5)	2.76	.90	3
3	Work-life balance is difficult for female librarians to achieve due to institutional demands.	13 (20.6)	22 (34.9)	22 (34.9)	5 (7.9)	2.89	.89	1
4	Female librarians feel undervalued and their contributions are not adequately recognized.	8 (12.7)	14 (22.2)	22 (34.9)	19 (30.2)	2.17	1.00	11
5	Female librarians face limited opportunities for professional development in the institution.	8 (12.7)	21 (33.3)	23 (36.5)	11 (17.5)	2.41	.92	8
6	The promotion criteria for career development are unclear or challenging for female librarians.	6 (9.5)	20 (31.7)	24 (38.1)	13 (20.6)	2.30	.90	9
7	Mentorship programs for female librarians are insufficient.	12 (19.0)	20 (31.7)	19 (30.2)	12 (19.0)	2.53	1.01	6



8	There is a lack of support for research and publication activities for female librarians.	7 (11.1)	19 (30.2)	21 (33.3)	16 (25.4)	2.27	.97	10
9	Family responsibilities negatively impact the career development of female librarians.	11 (17.5)	25 (39.7)	21 (33.3)	6 (9.5)	2.66	.88	2
10	The institution does not effectively address gender-based issues in the workplace.	8 (12.7)	26 (41.3)	18 (28.6)	11 (17.5)	2.50	.93	7
11	Family-friendly policies are not well-implemented, impacting the career development of female librarians.	13 (20.6)	22 (34.9)	17 (27.0)	11 (17.5)	2.58	1.02	4
	TOTAL	10 (16.0)	22 (35.0)	20 (32.0)	11 (17.0)			
	N=63, Average mean=2.51, Weighted mean=2.50					2.51	0.94	

Key: Strongly Agree (SA=4), Agree (A=3), Disagree (D=2), Strongly Disagree (SD=1)

Table 7 presents the findings on the challenges facing the career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. The findings revealed that family-friendly policies were not well-implemented (\bar{x} =2.58; std. dev. = 1.02); institutions were not effectively addressing gender-based issues (\bar{x} =2.50; std dev. = 0.93); Family responsibilities negatively impacted career development (\bar{x} =2.66; std dev. = 0.88), Lack of support for research and publication activities (\bar{x} =2.27; std dev. = 0.97); Gender-based discrimination was a significant challenge (\bar{x} =2.76; std dev. = 0.90); And limited access to leadership roles (\bar{x} =2.361; std dev. = 0.93).

In addition, Table 7 reported that work-life balance is difficult to achieve due to institutional demands (\bar{x} =2.89; std dev. = 0.89); mentorship programs are insufficient (\bar{x} =2.53; std dev. = 1.01); limited opportunities for professional development in the institution (\bar{x} =2.41; std dev. =0.92); promotion criteria for career development are unclear (\bar{x} =2.30; std dev. =0.90); and feel undervalue and their contribution are not adequately recognized (\bar{x} =2.17; std dev. =1.00).

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between institutional support and career development of female librarians in federal universities in the Southwestern Nigeria.

To ascertain the respondents' response on the significant relationship between institutional support and career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria, female librarians were instructed to point out their agreement with items that were developed as contained in the scale that was developed to measure the construct. The results were presented in Table 8.

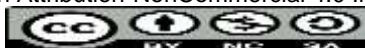


Table 8: The Relationship between Institutional Support and Career Development of Female Librarians in Federal Universities Southwestern Nigeria

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Df	r	P	Sig.
Career development	63	32.75	6.25	62	.555**	.000	Sig.
Institutional Support	63	31.11	7.19				

*Correlation is significant at 0.05(2-tailed)

Table 8 showed a significant relationship between institutional support and career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria ($r(62) = .555^{**}$, $p < 0.05$). The correlation coefficient between institutional support and career development is 0.555. This value indicates a moderate to strong positive correlation between the two variables. The p-value associated with the correlation coefficient is less than 0.001 ($p < 0.001$), indicating that the correlation is statistically significant. The positive correlation coefficient of 0.555 suggests that as institutional support increases, the career development of female librarians also tends to increase.

Career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria

Findings on the career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria revealed that they moderately engage in networking, pursue professional development and seek mentorship and satisfaction with recognition. Roberts (2018) argues that career development programs are getting significant global attention. The slow development of university policies and strategies for capacity building for female librarians causes a lack of precise planning, monitoring, and evaluation models for continued capacity development of female librarians. Staff training, particularly for female librarians, gives a channel for new information, skills, and experience required to update libraries' aims and objectives.

Universities are responsible for providing well-grounded institutional and informal support structures that boost the professional development of female librarians (Chabaya, 2015). Johnston and Williams (2015) performed research in Qatar on the future training of female librarians. The training will help female librarians advance in their careers. Their research discovered that Qatari female librarians require cataloguing training, as well as RDA, electronic resource management, information literacy, and copyright issues. The findings suggested that the majority of female librarians who responded had poor catalogue skills and that they required informal training programs to advance their careers in the event of promotion and to increase library objectives. However, financing was discovered to be the primary obstacle. The study suggested that informal training programs for female librarians be implemented to develop knowledge sections of the library.



In addition, findings revealed that among the listed career development areas are educational attainment, promotion and advancement and networking and mentoring. This finding agrees with a study by Perini (2016), the journey of career development typically initiates with formal education, and many librarians hold a master's degree in Library and Information Science (MLIS) or a closely related field. This educational achievement often serves as a significant milestone in their career development. Additionally, some female librarians may opt for further certifications or specialised training in fields such as archives management, digital librarianship, or information technology.

The study also finds a high relationship between career development and female librarians. As librarians gain more experience during the mid-career phase, they encounter opportunities for promotions and career development. They ascend to roles such as department heads, library managers, or supervisors, with responsibilities spanning various facets of library operations and staff management. During this stage, active involvement in professional associations and networking becomes vital for expanding one's career horizons. Female librarians have the option to specialise in specific areas, such as children's or youth services, special collections, or digital librarianship. Specialisation frequently leads to deeper expertise and the potential for assuming more advanced roles within these particular domains. However, these findings contradict those of Ngetunyi (2020), who discovered that female librarians faced significant challenges in their career development. These challenges included issues related to education and training, a lack of mentors, limited access to informal networks, and gender-based discrimination, indicating that not all librarians have the same experience in terms of career development and support.

It is essential to recognise that these efforts alone may not be sufficient to address the pervasive gender disparities that persist within the library profession. Despite their engagement in networking and professional development activities, female librarians continue to encounter systemic obstacles such as unequal pay, limited opportunities for leadership roles, and workplace discrimination. On mentoring, Jackson (2021) notes that mentorship can be valuable; access to mentorship opportunities remains uneven, with many female librarians lacking access to senior mentors who can provide meaningful guidance and advocacy. This inequality is further compounded for women of colour, who often face intersecting barriers related to race and gender. Gonzalez (2022) suggests that recognition may be undermined by the prevalence of gender bias in the evaluation and acknowledgement of women's contributions within the profession. Despite their achievements and contributions, female librarians may find their work undervalued or attributed to their male counterparts.

Institutional support available for female librarians in federal universities Southwestern Nigeria

The institutional support available for female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria includes opportunities for leadership roles, clear and transparent promotion criteria for career advancement, promotion policies and gender equality are effectively implemented in the workplace, family and friend policies are in place, and the institution supports research and publication activities. This finding aligns with Chabaya (2015), who states that universities are responsible for providing well-grounded institutional and informal support structures that boost the professional development of female librarians. Johnston and Williams (2015), who performed research in Qatar, discovered that female librarians require cataloguing training, as well as RDA, electronic resource management, information literacy, and copyright issues. The findings suggested that the majority of female librarians who responded had poor catalogue skills and that they required informal training programs to advance their careers in the event of promotion and to increase library objectives.

However, financing was discovered to be the primary obstacle. The study suggested that informal training programs for female librarians be implemented in order for them to develop knowledge in many sections of the library. Generally, universities that want to earn the commitment of female librarians must be ready to provide the necessary support. Some institutional supports provided by university libraries include research support in the form of conference sponsorship, research grants, publication support, technical support and pedagogical support, particularly in a knowledge-based economy. Fakhraei, Imami and Manuchehri (2015) found that when female librarians feel satisfied and supported by their universities, they put in more effort at work and feel committed to the university library.

However, in other literature, this is not the case often with librarians in public libraries, as studies have shown that most librarians in the public sector have it in mind to quit or leave office if they find a better one, unlike their counterparts in a private corporate system, such as the oil and related industries. Aborishade and Obioha (2019) supported that statement, that librarians in most public institutions demonstrate a lack of dedication, a nonchalant attitude towards work and that some show signs of regret and dissatisfaction, and as such show lack of commitment, and many intend to leave if they find a better offer somewhere else.

Challenges facing career development of female librarians in federal universities n Southwestern Nigeria

Among the challenges to the career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria are limited access to leadership roles, gender-based discrimination, institutional demand, limited opportunities, limited mentorship



programs, lack of support for research and family-friendly policies. This finding is corroborated by limited access to leadership roles. Edwards and D'Amour (2020) emphasise that there is a persistent underrepresentation of women in leadership positions within libraries. Despite the predominance of female librarians in the universities, they are often underrepresented in top administrative roles, which can perpetuate gender inequalities and limit opportunities for development.

On gender-based discrimination, Scott (2021) found that female librarians frequently encounter bias in hiring, promotion, and workplace treatment, leading to disparities in salary, job satisfaction, and career development. On institutional demands and limited opportunities, Akintayo (2018) found that female librarians often face institutional demands that disproportionately affect their career trajectories. The expectation of "caretaking" responsibilities, such as managing family and household duties, can hinder their ability to pursue professional development opportunities and advance in their careers. Ngetunyi (2020) states that mentorship programmes can be invaluable for career advancement; many female librarians encounter limited access to mentorship opportunities. The study highlights the importance of implementing structured mentorship programmes tailored to the needs of female librarians, yet such initiatives are often lacking or insufficiently resourced.

On the lack of support for research and family-friendly policies, Gonzalez (2022) concluded that female librarians may also face challenges in accessing support for research endeavours and balancing work with family responsibilities. Studies have shown that the absence of family-friendly policies, such as flexible work arrangements and parental leave, can exacerbate gender disparities and contribute to the "leaky pipeline" phenomenon, where women leave the profession due to insufficient support.

However, Roberts (2018) disagrees that most of the female librarians' career development programmes in universities are getting significant global attention. One of the contributing causes to the slow development of university policies and strategies for capacity building is the lack of precise planning, monitoring, and evaluation models for the continued capacity development of female librarians. Staff training, particularly for female librarians, gives a channel for new information, skills and experience required to update libraries' aims and objectives.

Relationship between institutional support and career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria

Findings from this study showed a significant relationship between institutional support and career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria ($r = .555, P < 0.05$). The findings support Uphoff and Buck (2016), who found that universities constitute norms and behaviours that persist over a long period in time by serving socially valued purposes. University has also been identified to

exist to shape human interaction by establishing a stable structure through which the set down rules (formal) and norms (informal) that characterise human behaviour in a given situation. Scott (2021) found that institutions exist to define human behaviour by prescribing a set of constraints (norms of behaviour, conventions and rules) and incentives that affect individual choices.

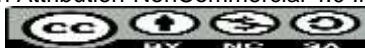
Saka, Akor and Opaleke (2016) used Herzberg's two-factor theory in their study; the results revealed that there was no significant relationship between institutional support and career development among female librarians. The study recommended that intrinsic and extrinsic factors should be applied. In addition, Akintayo (2018) found that female librarians were satisfied with their jobs due to the institutional support provided by federal universities. They indicated that they were satisfied with the nature of work and responsibility, achievement, and recognition, while satisfaction with promotion was at a low level. It was recommended that the federal universities should look into the factors that are important to enhance the job satisfaction of female librarians.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study investigated institutional support as a determinant of career development among female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria. Institutional support determines the career development of female librarians in universities in Southwestern Nigeria. The study concluded that female librarians are open to changes, career development and activities required for their career upgrade. It is appropriate that university libraries design a career development process that will enable both male and female librarians to flourish and excel in their jobs.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Females' librarians in Southwestern Nigeria need to engage more in networking, pursuing professional development and seek mentorship, as well as to always yearn for satisfaction and recognition in their profession.
- ii. Universities' library managements in Southwestern Nigeria should identify favourable institutional support for female librarians.
- iii. Universities' library management in Southwestern Nigeria is encouraged to provide more financial support, especially for the female librarians, to facilitate their research and publication processes, as well as speed up their promotion opportunities.
- iv. Among the challenges to career development of female librarians in federal universities in Southwestern Nigeria are limited access to leadership roles, gender-based discrimination and institutional demand; therefore, the management of university libraries should provide effective means of reducing



the tension and conflicts that occur in the workplace to widen leadership opportunities for female librarians.

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