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Incentives as Predictor of Turnover Intention of Librarians in Private Universities in Southern Nigeria

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Abstract
Retention of staff is a critical challenge in academic institutions, particularly in private universities with limited funds and where skilled professionals, such as librarians, play a crucial role in research and knowledge management. This study investigates incentives as a predictor of turnover intention among librarians in private universities in Southern Nigeria. The survey research design was used with data collected through structured questionnaires administered to librarians across all the private universities in Southern Nigeria. Total enumeration sampling technique where all of the librarians were used for the study. making a total of 306. However, 286 of the returned questionnaires was found usable. The study used descriptive and inferential statistical to analyse the data and findings revealed that commendations, with a mean score of ($\overline{X}$ = 14.72, SD = 4.51) was the incentive most enjoyed by the librarians. Turnover intention of the librarians was also shown to be high with a mean score of ($\overline{X}$ = 46.46, SD = 5.87). The only hypothesis postulated revealed (r = -0.892, N= 289, P < 0.05) meaning a negative correlation between incentive and librarians' turnover intention. This implies that the higher the level of incentives enjoyed by the librarians, the lower the turnover intention and vice versa. It is recommended that management of private universities prioritise incentives in order to reduce if not totally eradicate turnover intention. Incentives such as career and academic development opportunities led to staff retention.

Keywords: Incentives, Turnover Intention, Librarians, Private Universities, Employee Retention, Southern Nigeria

Introduction

Employee retention remains a major concern within higher education, particularly in academic libraries where professional librarians are central to research support, information management, and student academic success. In private university libraries, this concern is more pronounced due to differences in employment conditions, job security, and incentive structures when compared with public institutions (Fasola & Popoola, 2024). Turnover intention, which reflects an employee's psychological withdrawal prior to actual resignation, has become increasingly common among librarians in private universities and poses serious challenges for library effectiveness, service continuity, and institutional efficiency. Research indicates that librarians who eventually leave their positions often disengage long before their

physical exit, a process described as psychological withdrawal (Van der Baan et al., 2025). However, organisational attention in Nigeria tends to focus more on actual turnover than on turnover intention, with few institutions conducting exit interviews to understand librarians' reasons for leaving.

One key factor influencing turnover intention is the nature and adequacy of incentives available to librarians. Incentives include both financial rewards such as salaries, bonuses, and benefits, and non-financial rewards such as recognition, career development opportunities, educational advancement, work-life balance, and job security (Nwobu et al., 2024). When incentives are well structured, they can enhance job satisfaction, motivation, and organisational commitment, thereby reducing turnover intention. Conversely, inadequate incentives may result in dissatisfaction, low morale, and an increased likelihood of resignation. Private universities often face persistent staff retention challenges alongside issues of limited funding and manpower, and the loss of trained librarians' places additional financial and operational strain on these institutions.

Incentives also reflect organisational culture, as some institutions actively promote reward systems that encourage staff commitment. Incentives may be tangible or intangible and form part of the broader motivational framework within universities (Medvedev et al., 2024). Literature suggests that public universities are more likely to support librarians through sponsored workshops, conferences, seminars, and study leave with pay, practices that foster professional growth, loyalty, and improved job performance. In contrast, librarians in private universities are frequently required to self-sponsor professional development activities, which may weaken commitment and heighten turnover intention (Adetayo & Babarinde, 2023). Preliminary studies further indicate that incentive practices in many private universities are insufficiently prioritised as a deliberate strategy for staff retention.

Despite the recognised importance of incentives in reducing turnover intention, empirical studies focusing specifically on librarians in private universities in Southern Nigeria remain limited. Much of the existing literature has concentrated on academic staff or public universities, leaving the experiences of librarians in private university libraries underexplored. This study therefore seeks to bridge this gap by examining incentives as predictors of turnover intention among librarians in private universities in Southern Nigeria, with the aim of generating evidence-based insights that can inform effective retention strategies.

Statement of the Problem

High turnover intention among librarians in private universities in Southern Nigeria has become a growing concern, given its implications for service quality, institutional memory, and the sustainability of academic library operations (Fasola & Popoola, 2024). Despite the critical role librarians play in supporting teaching, learning, and research, private universities often operate under employment conditions that differ markedly from those in public

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institutions, particularly with respect to incentive structures such as remuneration, promotion opportunities, professional development support, and welfare benefits. Existing studies on turnover intention within the Nigerian higher education sector have largely focused on academic staff in the faculties, leaving librarians underrepresented and the specific influence of incentives insufficiently examined. As a result, there is limited empirical evidence on how incentives shape librarians' intentions to remain in or leave private university employment in Southern Nigeria. This gap constrains the ability of university management to design effective retention strategies grounded in evidence. The present study addresses this problem by examining incentives as a predictor of turnover intention among librarians in private universities in Southern Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of the study is to investigate incentives as a predictor of turnover intention of librarians in private universities in southern Nigeria. While the specific objectives are to;

i. Determine the incentives enjoyed by librarians in private university libraries in southern Nigeria
ii. Find out the level of turnover intention of librarians in private university libraries in southern Nigeria; and
iii. Find out the relationship between incentives and turnover intention of librarians in southern Nigeria.

Hypothesis

One hypothesis was postulated to drive this study;

Ho: There is no significant relationship between incentives and turnover intention of librarians in private university libraries in southern Nigerian.

Literature Review

Incentives can be classified as rewards which may be tangible (hard) or intangible (soft). In the first scenario, these are shown to be rewards extended to workers for completing activities that meet or surpass the goals set forth at the outset. In the second, they are characterized as public praise given in recognition of commonly accepted accomplishments in the context of organisational culture (Feldvari et al, 2024). Kefas (2024) opined that incentives such as better wages and other benefits are very crucial in libraries. A librarian who is not well paid will not be committed to the library and his work may be done in a lackadaisical manner. However, when there is proper incentive scheme, there is a sense of belong to the organisation that will further hard work and a sense of commitment.

Incentives have been known to spur the workforce to do more as they know that they will be rewarded for their effort however warns that the incentive statement is not all cut and dried as it is often argued that incentives are necessary but certain factors have to be put into consideration when incentivising (Wibowo et al, 2024). This is as a result of issues that have

led to fall out from it. An incentive scheme that is not well laid out may have undesirable results. Employees may perform their duties with the aim that their activities will be rewarded. In such an instance, a failure to implement the incentive may lead to dissatisfaction which may then result in nursing the intention to quit the organisation.

Within this context, it is important to note that reward systems are created with the goal of enhancing organisational productivity and rewarding those who meet or exceed expectations. Idowu et al (2019), found in a study of staff of 4 companies in Oyo state that because of their significant impact on incentivising, satisfaction, and inclusion, reward systems have the capacity to influence culture. Their findings showed that a large number of those sampled posit that the incentives in their workplace was high and commensurate with the work. The exhibited great loyalty to the company. The behaviours they elicit form the organisation's prevailing patterns of behaviour, resulting in perceptions of what the organisation represents, believes in, and its principles.

Incentives can come in several forms such as intrinsic and extrinsic, monetary and non-monetary, performance-based or membership based (Idowu et al, 2019). An organisation's reward system will have repercussions on motivating satisfaction or dissatisfaction of workers based on how it is applied. Alhmoud and Rjoub (2020) stated that these repercussions may be based on the kinds of incentives given for certain behaviours. Tangible incentives such as cash bonuses or salary increase, they are also called hard incentives while intangible incentives are those like praise or public recognition, career growth and advancement. In more recent studies, Sureephong et al, (2020) highlighted the importance of formal and informal incentives in organisations, as well as how they are employed in some corporations to motivate staff to improve their performance.

Cross (2019) identified the reasons why organisations give incentives to their staff to include increasing productivity, driving or arousing a stimulus to work, improving commitment in job performance, psychologically satisfying, leading to job satisfaction and avoiding turnover, shaping the behaviour or outlook of subordinates towards work, increasing efficiency, instilling enjoyment and enthusiasm towards job performance, increasing their abilities to ensure full utilization and exploitation. He posits further that proper incentives lead to more employee commitment to the organisation, satisfaction with their job and reduced turnover intention. Invariably, incentives are a necessity in organisations that want to retain good workers.

In achieving incentives among employees, Wang and Song (2021) noted that employee recognition, gift cards, special events, bonus schemes, merchandise rewards, staff development, work/life benefits, compensation system, group tours, individual travel, and raffles are common incentives provided by managers and heads of organisations. This corroborates the views of Novianty and Evita (2018) that employees would ordinarily perform an action as a result of the inspiration from within and outside of themselves in order to fulfil

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their desires. Thus, the incentives provided by organisation could help the employees to achieve the organisational goals more effectively.

Incentives are also a great motivator and morale booster as shown in the study of Ogunmakin (2023) in a survey of staff and employers of small and medium scale businesses in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti state Nigeria. The study revealed that both soft and hard incentives such as bonuses and merit had a significant and positive influence on the morale and motivation of the two hundred and forty respondents used for the study. This implies that incentives are very important and should not be overlooked as it has the ability to be a morale booster and a motivator of staff.

Sang et al (2024) in a study on the effect of incentive factors on turnover intention of PHC workforce in rural China, found that rural primary healthcare (PHC) workforce in Anhui Province, China, exhibited moderate satisfaction with incentive factors, with hygienic factors scoring slightly higher than motivational factors, while their turnover intention remained below average but has increased post-pandemic. Key determinants reducing turnover intention included individual status, salary, and individual progress, with social support significantly mediating these relationships. Although job burnout was above average and also influenced turnover intention, its mediating effect was weaker compared to social support. The findings highlight the importance of enhancing salary, providing career development opportunities, and strengthening social and psychological support systems to reduce burnout and turnover intention, thereby stabilizing the rural PHC workforce.

In a survey of 174 library staff at the City of Johannesburg Libraries in the Gauteng province of South Africa, Masenya et al, (2020) discovered while investigating predictors of turnover intention in librarians, that their turnover intention level was high. The authors also found that although several factors were responsible for the high level of turnover intention, dissatisfaction in terms of rewards such as regular and equitable salaries and fringe benefits, promotions and commendations was a major predictor for their turnover intention.

Moreover, authors are united in their views that factors that cause turnover intention include; not being satisfied with the pay and ones efforts not being recognised (Toth et al, 2026; Sang et al, 2024); job dissatisfaction, organisational dissatisfaction, limited opportunities for growth and promotion, juicier opportunity in another organisation, or not approving or ready to adjust to changes and restructuring within the organisation (Odunewu et al, 2024) a breakdown in communication between staff and supervisors.

Incentives guides activities towards the direction of a goal as they help to motivate individuals through rewarding employees for outstanding job performance through options such as training for career advancement, flexible work hours, a pleasant working environment and educational advancement. Incentive is a very crucial variable in organisational behaviour as it has been known to work in conjunction with other variables to mould behaviour (Wibowo et al, 2024). It is a motivation to act that arises from the fact that human behaviour is geared

towards the achievement of certain objectives. A good payment scheme can encourage employees, lowering turnover and the desire to hunt for new positions. Bakare et al (2025), posit that retention of talented and skilled employees is attainable if organisations prioritise financial and non-financial incentive programs in their human relations policies, since incentives have been widely acclaimed as an inducement that is able to encourage and motivate employees to perform or act in an expected way and achieve a desired goal.

The study of Doan et al (2025) found that in Vietnam's high-turnover industries, especially retail, hospitality, and manufacturing, immediate financial incentives are a strong driver of job satisfaction and employee retention. Using survey data from 387 employees and structural equation modeling, the authors show that performance-based bonuses and profit sharing significantly improve job satisfaction, which in turn reduces employees' intention to leave, while stock options have little to no effect in this context. Retirement benefits also have a positive but smaller impact on satisfaction. Notably, bonuses are far more effective in manufacturing than in retail or hospitality, where their effects are similar. Overall, the findings suggest that Vietnamese workers in labour-intensive sectors prioritize short-term, tangible financial rewards over long-term incentives, and that retention strategies are most effective when tailored to industry conditions and employees' immediate financial needs.

Career development, such as training, is also a motivator that encourages employees to remain on the job and to also be more productive. Bakare et al (2025), found in a study of 52 professional librarians from 3 selected universities in Kwara State, on organisational Factors and employee turnover intention in selected university libraries in Nigeria
that professional and career development accounted for a high reason why librarians have turnover intention. These are forms of incentives that would spur employees to be more committed to the organisation. When employees are given opportunity to advance professionally, they display commitment to the organisation and intent to stay.

Methodology

The survey research design of the correlational type was adopted for this study. Librarians in private universities in Southern Nigeria totalling three hundred and six (306) formed the population of the study. Total enumeration sampling procedure was adopted for the study. This ensured that all the librarians in the universities studied took part in the research. The questionnaire was the instrument of data collection. Of the 306 questionnaires distributed, 286 were found usable. Data analysis was done using percentage, inferential statistics and Pearson product moment correlation was used to test the only hypothesis postulated at 0.05 level of significance.

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FINDINGS

Table 1: Respondents' socio-demographic characteristics

S/N	Variable	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
1	**Designation**	Ass. Librarian	44	15.2
		Librarian II	56	19.4
		Librarian 1	79	27.3
		Senior librarian	57	19.7
		Principal Lib.	35	12.1
		Dep. Librarian	18	6.3
		Total	**289**	**100**
2	**Gender**	Male	116	40.1
		Female	173	59.9
		Total	**289**	**100**
3	**Age**	20-30	59	20.4
		31-40	168	58.1
		41-50	46	16
		51 and above	16	5.5
		Total	**289**	**100**
4	**Marital status**	Married	224	77.5
		Single	61	21.1
		Divorced	4	1.4
		Total	**289**	**100**
4	**Qualification**	Bachelor Degree	109	37.7
		Master Degree	139	48.1
		PhD	41	14.2
		Total	**289**	**100**
5	**Length of service in this library?**	0-5 years	86	29.7
		6-10 years	132	45.7
		11-15 years	45	15.6
		16-20 and above	26	9
		Total	**289**	**100**

Table 1 Shows the socio-demographic features of the respondents. Majority are Librarian I (79 = 27.3%). There were more females, 173(59.9%) than males. Distribution of respondents by age revealed more respondents between age 20-40. Majority of the respondents, 224 (77.5%) were shown to be married. Majority of the respondents, 139 (48.1%) had Master degree. Length of service revealed that majority, with 132(45.7%) had work experience in their current library of 6-10years.

The implication of the demographic statistics of the studied librarians to the research in lieu of age, job status, educational qualification and length of service is that most of the respondents are between the ages of 20 to 40years and had also spent less than 5years in their

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Volume 20, Issue 3, 2025

current workplace. For this category of librarians, nursing turnover intention would not be unexpected since they are still in their prime and would want work environments that can satisfy their intrinsic need and maybe financial mobility. The length of service also has implications since the longer one stays at a job, the lesser the need to move as job status would have risen and roots might have been planted in terms of family and children. Similarly, high academic qualifications could give one more edge in applying to another library for a higher position.

Research question 1: what are the types of incentives enjoyed by librarians in private universities in southern Nigeria?

Table 2: Types of incentives enjoyed by librarians of private universities in southern Nigeria

S/N	Variable	%	%	%	%		
	Regular salary increases	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**	$\overline{X}$	**SD**
1.	When I consider the pay, I feel undervalued by this institution.	34 (11.6)	84 (28.7)	145 (49.5)	26 (8.9)	2.43	0.81
2	The salary package in this library is equitable	36 (12.37)	120 (41.0)	110 (37.5)	23 (7.8)	2.44	0.81
3.	There is regular salary increase in this library	19 (6.5)	168 (57.3)	71 (24.2)	31 (10.6)	2.26	0.73
4	There is unfair salary disparity in the pay package	25 (8.5)	68 (23.2)	154 (52.6)	42 (14.3)	2.26	0.81
5.	The pay package in this institution is lesser than what is obtained in similar institutions	19 (6.5)	87 (29.7)	129 (44.0)	54 (18.4)	2.60	0.86
	Arithmetic =		**Overall**	$\overline{X}$ **and**	**SD**	**11.99**	**4.03**
		Weighted	**Mean=**	**2.39**			
	Career development						
6.	People here advance at the same rate as they do in other similar institutions	26 (8.9)	173 (59.0)	74 (25.3)	16 (5.5)	2.72	0.70
7	there are a lot of opportunities for career development	12 (4.1)	54 (18.4)	214 (73.0)	9 (3.1)	2.79	0.55
8	I am permitted to go for conferences, seminars and workshops	15 (5.1)	60 (20.5)	193 (65.9)	21 (7.2)	2.69	0.67
9	The institution takes care of my conference and workshop expenses	18 (6.1)	85 (29.0)	136 (46.4)	50 (17.1)	2.42	0.84
	Arithmetic mean =		**overall**	$\overline{X}$ **and**	**SD**	**10.62**	**2.76**
		Weighted	**Mean =**	**2.65**			

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Volume 20, Issue 3, 2025

	Educational development						
10	My chances of educational development is limited	40 (13.7)	65 (22.2)	158 (53.9)	26 (8.9)	2.26	0.80
11.	I am stagnated educationally in my library	19 (6.5)	83 (28.3)	137 (46.8)	50 (17.1)	2.24	0.81
12	Staff educational development is a top priority of my institution	17 (5.8)	152 (51.9)	92 (31.4)	98 (9.6)	2.66	0.73
13	I am encouraged to go for further studies	9 (3.1)	167 (57.0)	74 (25.3)	39 (13.3)	2.81	0.69
	Arithmetic mean =	**Weighted**	overall **Mean =**	$\overline{X}$ **and 2.49**	SD	**9.97**	**3.03**
	Commendations	**SA**	**A**	**D**	**SD**	$\overline{X}$	**SD**
14.	My efforts do not seem to be incentivised as they should be.	20 (6.8)	140 (47.8)	114 (38.9)	15 (5.1)	2.57	0.69
15.	There are no incentives for those who work here	21 (7.2)	113 (38.6)	143 (48.8)	12 (4.1)	2.49	0.69
16.	My institution gives physical incentives such as money and gifts	38 (13.0)	140 (47.8)	72 (24.6)	39 (13.3)	2.61	0.87
17.	My institution gives non tangible incentives such as paid trips and vacations	18 (6.1)	62 (21.2)	156 (53.2)	53 (18.1)	2.15	0.79
18.	I prefer non tangible incentives such as paid trips and vacations	26 (8.9)	101 (34.5)	156 (53.2)	6 (2.0)	2.50	0.68
19	I am satisfied with my chances of promotion	9 (3.1)	147 (50.2)	86 (29.4)	47 (16.0)	2.40	0.79
	Arithmetic mean =	**Overall Weighted**	$\overline{X}$ **and Mean =**	**SD 2.45**		**14.72**	**4.51**

Table 2 reveals that the incentives enjoyed by librarians in private university libraries in southern states of Nigeria falls into four parts, namely, regular salary increase, career development, educational development and commendations. Regular salary increase has a mean score of ($\overline{X}$ = 11.99, SD = 4.03), career development ($\overline{X}$ = 10.62, SD = 2.76), educational development ($\overline{X}$ = 9.97, SD = 3.03) and commendations ($\overline{X}$ = 14.72, SD = 4.51). The mean score of each of the incentives available in the libraries studied showed that commendations, with a mean score of ($\overline{X}$ = 14.72, SD = 4.51) was the incentive most enjoyed by the respondents.

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Research question 2: What is the level of turnover intention of librarians in private universities in Nigeria?

Table 3a: Level of turnover intention of librarians in private universities in southern Nigeria

S/N	Variable	SA	A	N	D	SD	$\overline{X}$	S.D
1.	I often think of quitting my present job	108 (36.9)	83 (28.3)	73 (24.9)	15* (15.1)	10 (3.4)	2.91	0.00
2	In the coming year, I will most likely hunt for a new employment.	108 (36.9)	107 (36.5)	50 (17.1)	24* (8.2)	0 (00.0)	3.16	0.02
3.	Newspaper employment advertisements have piqued my curiosity.	116 (7.8)	91 (31.1)	56 (19.1)	23 (39.6)	3 (1.0)	3.05	0.03
4	I am going to leave this library as soon as I can.	107 (36.5)	69 (23.5)	92 (31.4)	18* (6.1)	3 (1.0)	2.97	0.94
5.	At the earliest opportunity, I will leave my current employment for a similar post with better compensation in another library.	59 (20.1)	116 (39.6)	56 (19.1)	52 (17.7)	6 (2.0)	3.58	0.06
6.	Continuing in my current position will not allow me to achieve my life's goals.	6 (2.0)	112 (38.2)	88 (30.0)	73 (24.9)	10 (3.4)	3.10	0.92
7.	This work most times compromises my personal values	18 (6.1)	50 (17.1)	95 (32.4)	110 (37.5)	16 (5.5)	2.80	0.99
8.	I will disengage from this job immediately I am able to get a better one.	69 (23.5)	108 (36.9)	63 (21.5)	43 (14.7)	6 (2.0)	3.66	0.06
9.	When I am not given the opportunity to attain a personal job-related goal, I am usually upset at work.	33 (11.3)	105 (35.8)	51 (17.4)	94 (32.1)	6 (2.0)	3.22	0.08
10.	Apprehension about the unknown frequently inhibits me from leaving this job.	42 (14.3)	68 (23.2)	89 (30.4)	70 (23.9)	20 (6.8)	3.14	0.14
11.	I often consider leaving this job and starting my own business	31 (10.6)	41 (14.0)	89 (30.4)	109 (37.2)	19 (6.5)	2.84	0.09
12.	It is extremely improbable that I will ever leave this library.	18 (6.1)	25 (8.5)	83 (28.3)	93 (31.7)	70 (23.9)	2.40	0.12

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Volume 20, Issue 3, 2025

13.	I would much rather not continue working in this library.	40 (13.7)	101 (34.5)	67 (22.9)	75 (25.6)	6 (2.0)	2.73	0.03
14.	I frequently check the internet for alternate job options.	67 (22.9)	91 (31.1)	54β (18.4)	49 (16.7)	28 (9.6)	3.32	0.23
15.	I frequently consider changing jobs in order to effectively meet my personal needs.	68 (23.2)	92 (31.4)	80 (27.3)	40 (13.7)	9 (3.1)	3.58	0.08
	Arithmetic mean =		**Overall**	$\overline{X}$ **and Weighted**	**SD Mean=**	**3.19**	**46.46**	**5.87**

Table 3b showing the test of norm on turnover intention of librarians in private universities in southern Nigeria

Grand mean = 46.46, Maximum score = 60, Interval = $\frac{60}{3} = 20$, Classification = High, Medium, Low

Test of Norm Table

Interval	Mean	Level	Frequency	%
1 to 20		Low	42	14.5
21 to 40		Medium	94	32.5
41 to 60	46.46	High	153	53

Table 3a presents the level of turnover intention of the librarians in private universities in southern Nigeria. In testing for level of turnover intention of the librarians, a test of norm was used. Table 3b reveals the test of norm score for turnover intention as contained in table 3a. In accordance with the test norm of turnover intention of the respondents, a score of 1-20 implies low turnover intention, 21 – 40 implies medium turnover intention and 41 – 60 implies high turnover intention. The aggregate mean score of the turnover intention of the respondents is ($\overline{X}$ = 46.46, SD = 5.87). Since this lies in the range interval of 41-60, it is safe to posit that the turnover intention of the respondents is high.

Test of hypothesis

Table 4: Correlation between incentives and turnover intention of librarians

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	r	Sig. P	Remark
Incentives	2.5104	.78303	289			Sig.
Turnover Intention	3.1073	1.10817	289	-0.892	.000	

Table 4: presents the relationship between incentives and turnover intention of librarians. (r = -0.892, N= 289, P < 0.05). This means that there exists a negative correlation between incentive and librarians' turnover intention in private universities in southern Nigeria.

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Volume 20, Issue 3, 2025

Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. The implication of this is that, the higher the level of incentives enjoyed by the librarians, the lower the turnover intention and vice versa.

Discussion of findings

Finding of this research revealed that though various incentives were accruable to librarians in private universities such as regular salary increment and written commendations. It is also evident from the result that salary and other emoluments in these universities is not equitable or competitive with those of public institutions in the region. Also, staff development especially in the area of conference and seminars are not often sponsored by the various institutions since librarians have to pay for such by themselves. Allowing staff to upgrade their academic status by granting study leave was also revealed as part of the incentives that accrue to librarians of private universities in southern Nigeria although without pay. Physical incentives (cash and gifts) were found not to be a recurring development in private universities. Non-tangible gifts such as paid trips and vacation was not a feature of private universities in southern Nigerian as shown by the findings of the research. One can further deduce from this finding that the non-application of such incentives may promote the belief in staff that there is no job security for them and that the owners do not care about their wellbeing contradicting the findings of Ogunmakin (2023).

It was also revealed that turnover intention of librarians in private universities in Nigerian southern states was high. Test of norm showed that most of the respondents were already nursing the intention to leave, corroborating Masenya et al, (2020)). Turnover intention being a precursor of actual turnover needs to be checked. A library where librarians are constantly quitting or high level of turnover intention will not be able to carry out its functions successfully as the anti-organisational behaviour of the librarians nursing intention to leave will affect service delivery and overall efficiency.

The study further showed a significantly relationship between incentives and turnover intention of librarians in private universities in southern Nigeria. This implies that institutions that focus on incentivising their librarians through provision of intrinsic and extrinsic incentives such as staff development, educational development, job security, regular salary increases and prompt payment of salaries would deter librarians from nursing thoughts of leaving.

Conclusion

The study concludes that librarians in private universities in southern Nigeria experience limited and inconsistent incentives, leading to high turnover intention. Although some incentives such as salary increments, commendations, and study leave exist, they are often inadequate, non-competitive, or provided without sufficient financial support. The lack of sponsored staff development, weak physical and non-physical incentives, and perceived job insecurity contribute to dissatisfaction and intentions to leave. The significant relationship between incentives and turnover intention confirms that improved intrinsic and extrinsic

incentives are essential for retaining librarians, sustaining effective library services, and enhancing institutional performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made;

1. Private universities should review and improve librarians' salary structures to make them more competitive with those in public institutions. This would directly tackle one of the strongest sources of dissatisfaction and turnover intention.
2. Private universities should institutionalize funding for staff development by routinely sponsoring librarians to attend conferences, workshops, and seminars. This would reduce the financial burden on staff, strengthen professional competence, and signal institutional commitment to career growth.
3. Study leave policies should be revised to include partial or full pay. Granting study leave without pay undermines its value as an incentive and may discourage academic advancement; paid study leave would better support librarians' professional and academic progression.
4. Private universities should introduce consistent physical and non-physical incentives such as performance-based cash rewards, gifts, paid vacations, or sponsored trips. Even modest but regular incentives can improve morale, reinforce a sense of being valued, and counter perceptions of job insecurity.
5. Management should develop a broader retention strategy that combines incentives with clear assurances of job security and staff welfare. Transparent communication, recognition practices, and fair treatment would help reduce turnover intention and improve librarians' commitment, service delivery, and overall library effectiveness.

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