# Mentoring and Information Sharing as Predictors of Work Performance of Librarians in Oyo State owned Tertiary Institutions

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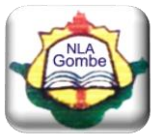akinyoolaoladoyin@yahoo.com

**Abstract**

*As the usage and expectations of library users are changing so also, librarians have to provide services to meet those needs. Librarians therefore, need necessary skills, strategies and competencies to deliver these services. The study examines mentoring and information sharing as predictors of work performance of librarians in Oyo state tertiary institutions. The study used correlational research design. 119 participants (68 females, 51 males) drawn from Oyo state tertiary institutions through simple random sampling procedure. Three research instruments: Job Mentoring Inventory (α =.69), Workers Information Sharing Scale (α =.74), and Job Performance Scale (α =.81) were used to gather information for the study. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple regression statistics were used to analyze data. The study revealed that there was significant relationship between mentoring and work performance (r=.29) and significant relationship between information sharing and work performance (r=.29). A combination of mentoring and information sharing accounted for a total of 17% of the total variance in work performance of librarians in Oyo state tertiary institutions value [$F_{(2,118)} = 11.84$; $P<.05$]. Having discovered that both mentoring and information sharing influence work performances of librarians in Oyo state tertiary institutions, the paper recommends that a formal mentoring and information sharing should be embarked upon by librarians in Oyo state tertiary institutions for positive work performance.*

**Keywords**: mentoring, information sharing, knowledge sharing, librarian work performance

**Introduction**

Librarianship as a profession is expanding as a result of information explosion and technological changes. Librarians need to be as savvy as the clienteles they serve in providing increasingly complex information needs. Professional development opportunities are abound if librarians are to keep up with technological changes in the field of librarianship. Professional development is the continuous process of acquiring new knowledge and responsibilities or work environment (Spencer & Ard, 2006). To effectively nurture professional development for better performance, there are a lot of on-the- job training programs that should be embarked upon by librarians some of them are: seminars, conferences, workshops, mentoring programs, knowledge sharing, information sharing, coaching, consultation and reflective supervision. In order to have depth of knowledge required by librarianship, librarians need to begin one or more professional on- the- job training for better performance.

Librarians are responsible for selecting, ordering, acquiring, organizing and preservation of library resources. They also get involved in directing, planning, organizing, staffing, coordinating, budgeting and evaluating the library's operations. Librarians' job should be the one that would make them to combine some former roles of traditional operations and
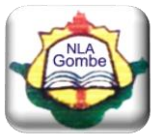
modern day operations especially in Nigeria but, this is not always the case with some librarians. The librarian's work performance is the activities relevant to the success and development of the library. Previous studies reported that librarians work performances have not been meeting the set levels of expectation in some tasks. Oyewole and Popoola (2013) studied the level of job performance of library personnel in Colleges of Education in Nigeria, the result revealed moderate level of job performance. The findings of Saka and Salman (2014) on the level of job performance of personnel in Universities in North-Central, Nigeria revealed a moderate level of job performance. Their study revealed some of the barriers of academic librarians' job performance to include lack of appropriate reward for expanded new roles, lack of security, social facilities, lack of status, recognition, poor physical working conditions among others. Nwosu, Ugwuegba and Okeke (2013) maintained that the librarians' poor job performance, if allowed to continue, may affect the academic culture of Nigerian universities.

Akor (2009) investigated influence of University library leadership styles on the job performance of professional librarians in North Central zone of Nigeria. The study shows that the job performances of librarians are at a low level in the North Central Zone of Nigeria. Research also shows that publications output of librarians are low as reported by Babalola and Nwalo 2013 and Amusa, Iyoro and Olabisi (2013). This prompted investigation of mentoring and information sharing as predictor of work performance for librarians. Many studies have looked at in-service training, seminars, conferences, workshops and some other strategies to improve job performance but few had been done on mentoring and information sharing. Nkebem (2009) reported that there was a significant relationship between in-service training and job performance of librarians and that in-service training can significantly predict the job performance of librarians in Nigeria positively. In the words of Udofia (2014) it was revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between staff training and job performances in the university of Uyo library. However, Tanoli (2016) studied impact of training and mentoring on employee performance and revealed that both training and mentoring have significant positive effect on employee performance.

Adewuyi and Makinde (2018) are of the opinion that mentoring are not rampant among female librarians but among few male librarians. At the end of the study, it was discovered that even though mentoring is being practiced in Nigerian libraries, the practice was relatively low hence, mentoring had not really improved the overall job performance of cataloguers in Nigerian libraries. Adewuyi, Nduka and Ojo (2010), in their study on academic mentorship in Nigerian libraries recommended mentoring among all librarians because the study revealed low level of mentoring. However, Ugocha, Igwe, and Ibenne (2018) discovered that there was scarce exploration of knowledge sharing practices in the literature. Mesmer-Magnus and Dechurch (2019) studied information sharing and team performance and found out that information sharing can positively predict team performance. According to Akraham and Bokhari (2011) individuals' performance can be achieved through knowledge sharing. This was revealed in their study of the role of knowledge sharing on individual performance, considering the factor of motivation. Li and Sandino (2017) maintain that information sharing did not have a significant effect on any outcomes of creative work and work performance.

**Review of Literature**

Mentoring has been seen as a process of learning and development based on a personal relationship in which an experienced librarian, called a mentor, helps a new librarian, called mentee, to develop as a professional and achieve professional goals (Pan & Hovde, 2010). It is also described as a viable vehicle for effective management of employees' capabilities,

time and talent as well as tool for grooming new and junior employees for future leadership roles (Ogunrewo & Ngema, 2013). A mentor is a wise and trusted counselor or teacher. He advices, trains and counsel mentee. A mentee is a person who is advised, trained or counseled by a mentor. Mentoring to Kaufmann (2009) has a long standing tradition in many professions like law, medicine, and business organization, medical and health professions where practitioners also have academic appointment similar to librarianship. Adewuyi et.al (2018) affirmed that acquisition of required knowledge and skills necessary for performance in the workplace can be derived basically through learning, while learning itself is achievable through so many channels such as mentoring, on the job training, reading books, attending conferences and workshop, sharing knowledge and information. A study conducted by Bello and Mansor (2013) revealed that in order to have a professional development all professions need to engage in continuous training to keep pace with the developments and challenges in their fields. Sodipe and Madukoma (2013) assert that mentoring plays a positive role in ensuring librarians success in their career. They recommended that library administrators should establish mentoring program for employee development through skill acquisition and consequent success in career.

Mentoring has been described by Spencer (2010) as the process of development of a relationship between the mentor and the mentee. It is regarded as shared experience between the duos. Sodipe, jt.au. (2013) assert that Librarians in informal mentoring in their research titled mentoring and career success of academic librarians in selected Universities in Ogun State thus, plays a positive role in ensuring their success in career. They recommended that library administrators should establish mentoring program for employee development through skill acquisition and consequent success in career. Adewuyi, et.al (2010), in their study on academic mentorship in Nigerian libraries recommended mentoring among all librarians. Uchenna (2019) maintains that mentoring has positive effect on employees performance and their career.

There are many factors that can hinder effective mentoring among librarians. These factors may come from mentors, mentees and organizations. Goldman, (2011) identified unfair expectations from either mentee or mentor, time commitments of the duo, and mentees unwillingness to learn, mismatch of mentor/mentee and broken confidentiality, integrity on the part of the mentor/mentee, demise of party (Adeniji & Adeniji 2010 & Mckimm, Jollie and Hecter, 2007). However, these challenges can be overcome through training to know what and what to be achieved, sharing information, ideas, support and give feedback, knowledge should never be hoard by mentors, mentees should be ready to open up, not to hide anything from mentors. Time commitment, mutual respect, willingness to listen to each other or to one another and clear expectations from mentee/mentor are also important (Ugwuanyi, 2010 & Goldman (2011). Mentoring gives way to information sharing.

Information is facts provided or learned about something or someone. It can also be described as knowledge about a particular subject, issue, event or process. It is the communication or reception of knowledge or intelligence. Information sharing is the act of providing a helpful answer to a request for information. In the context of this research information sharing is synonymous to knowledge sharing. Information sharing relates to activities of distributing useful information among people, systems or organizational unit in an open environment. Information sharing encompasses what to share, whom to share how to share and when to share of which if properly addressed would minimize sharing cost, information deficiency or overload and improve supply chain responsiveness (Sun & Yen, 2005). The term information sharing is preferred in library and information science while knowledge sharing is preferred in the field, such as management science, strategic management and other. Information about
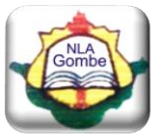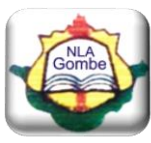
what one knows can only be shared with another. In the real sense of it knowledge cannot be shared (Wilson, 2010). He contends that studies dealing with knowledge sharing do not focus on the sharing of documents, transferring information through messages, or sharing access to databases or direct interpersonal communication, individually or at meeting. He argued that knowledge sharing appears as a misnomer because the sharing activity focuses on information regarding what one knows, not knowledge per se.

Sonnenwald (2006) describes information sharing as a set of activities by which information is provided to others, either proactively or upon request, such that the information has an impact on another person's image of the world… and creates a shared, or mutually compatible working, understanding of the world. In the work of Ugocha, et.al (2018) knowledge is described as a process where individuals mutually exchange their tacit and explicit knowledge leading to the creation of new knowledge jointly. Sharing knowledge is about communicating knowledge within a group of people, friends, and colleagues in an informal and formal situation. Ugocha, et al (2018) opined that knowledge sharing attitudes among librarians may either make or mar the provision of result-oriented services to library and information users. Information sharing and knowledge sharing involve seeking and providing information.

Cabrera et al (2015) proposed that knowledge sharing consists of two major elements; seeking information and ideas from co-workers and providing ideas and insights to others. Knowledge sharing enables librarians to share their insight and experiences in order to allow for fast, efficient and effective provision of information services to their users. Knowledge sharing among librarians builds upon the amount and quality of their interactions as well as addressing issues related to the reluctance to share knowledge, and the willingness and ability to use knowledge of others. Maponya (2004) maintained that an employee's attitude and competencies may impede knowledge sharing such as fear of personal insecurity, fear of being seen as ignorant and fear of loss of superiority and knowledge ownership after sharing information. In order to encourage the knowledge creation, a knowledge worker needs to perform knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing is about working together, help each other and one another to collaborate.

Gurteen (2013) corroborated this statement that knowledge sharing is not limited to what is given by others, and what we will get, but when there is someone who volunteered to help others to build new capacity which results in action and knowledge sharing is like the learning process. However, sharing information is seen as an intrinsic part of any frontline practitioners' job when working with children and young people. The decision about how much information to share with whom and when, can have a profound impact on individuals lives. Information sharing helps to ensure that an individual receives the right services at the right time and prevents a need from becoming more acute and difficult to meet.

In the study of information sharing, information quality and usage of IT tools in Malaysian organization, the researchers maintained that information has little value, if it is not shared among the supply chain partners. If there is lack of trust, certain information may be withheld from supply chain partners (Omar, Ramayah, May-Chinlo, Tan & Siron, 2010). In their words Li and Lin (2006), maintained that information have dual functions, the supply chain can benefit and contribute to the improvement in performance of organization. In their study, Kwon and Suh (2004) asserted that information sharing reduces uncertainty in the behavior of human, which eventually brings improvement in the level of trust. Lee (2000) reported that the knowledge and experience of library staff should be valued and shared. It was observed that many librarians leave with their knowledge because it is not shared. In order to improve

operations of the library, librarians need to share their knowledge. Research has it that knowledge sharing initiatives have not been embraced by librarians and sometimes based on verbal conversations. However sharing of knowledge among librarians can improve organizational learning in the library (Parirookh and Fattahi, 2005, Lelic, 2001 & Maponya, 2004). But to Li and Sandino (2017), information sharing does not have positive effect on any outcome of creative work and work performance.

Work performance determines the existence and effectiveness of an organization. For any organization to move forward, the work performance of the workers must be able to achieve the organizational goals. Dar, Akmal, Naseem, Khan (2011) sees job performance as an activity in which an individual is able to accomplish the task assigned to him/her effectively, subject to the normal constraints. Work performance therefore could be described as any action that can lead to achieving organization goals and objectives and any action that can add value to the development of any organization. Work performance could be determined by the type of training received and gained. Job performance according to Johari and Yahaya (2009), has become one of the significant indicators in managing organizational performance. They are of the opinion that employees' job performance as a source of competitive advantage to promote responsiveness in enhancing overall organizational effectiveness.
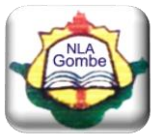
## Statement of the Problem

The adoption of information and communication technology (ICT) by the Nigerian Libraries has resulted in the remarkable change in the nature and performance of the librarians' professional works. This has also resulted in the overall superior quality of library services delivery to the clienteles both traditional and modern ways of library operations. Cursory observation indicates that the level of work performance of librarians is low because some librarians are not ICT compliance, some have poor interaction with other librarians and some do not share and receive information that would assist in improving their performances at work from others (Li and Sandino, 2017). This has been affecting provision of improved library services delivery to the users and professional development.

The intent of this study therefore, is to investigate whether mentoring and information sharing among librarians have relationship with work performance.

## Objectives

1. To find out relationship between mentoring and work performance of library personnel in Oyo state.
2. To find out the relationship between information sharing and work performance of library personnel in Oyo state.
3. To find out if there is any relationship between the contributions of mentoring and information sharing and work performance.

## Hypotheses

- There is no significance relationship between mentoring activities and work performance of librarians in Oyo State
- There is no significance relationship between information sharing and work performance of librarians in Oyo State.
- Mentoring activities and information sharing do not significantly and jointly predict the work performance of librarians in Oyo State.

## Methodology

### Design

This study employed correlational research design. This methodology was adopted because the study focused on finding the relationship between the independent variables (mentoring and information sharing) and dependent variable (work performance) of librarians in Oyo State.

### The Study Population, Sample and Sampling Procedure

All library personnel in Oyo State owned tertiary institutions made up of the population n of the study. As at the time of the study there were seven tertiary institutions owned by Oyo State government, each having its own library, one hundred and nineteen participants were randomly selected through the process of simple random sampling.
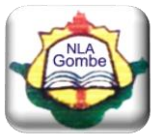
### Instrument

Three instruments were used to collect information. They include:

**Job Mentoring Inventory:** The researcher-made inventory consists 20 items with the response format of Yes (3) ''indifference'' (2) and "No" (1) A typical example is "my mentor is always ready to help me". The validation of the instrument was ensured by giving it to two experts in the field of measurement and evaluation. The approved items were finally administered to participants. The reliability co-efficient of the test using a test-retest within two week interval recoded r = .69, which is believed to be high enough for the study.

**Workers information sharing scale**: The scale is also constructed by the researcher to gather information from participants on how they share information among co-worker. It is made up of 10 item with response format of "very much like me" (4) "like me" (3) "unlike me" (2), "never like me" (1). An example of the items is "I share information with on various topics that can enhance my performance". Experts on measurement and evaluation were also engaged in the validity of the instrument. The scale was administered after the experts adjudged the scale has being valid. The reliability co-efficient of the test after a period of two weeks test-retest read r = .74.

**Work Performance Scale:** This is adopted from Annual Performance Evaluation Report form of senior non-teaching staff of Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo. Part two of the form which contained 35 items were adapted for the study. The adapted aspect was subject to validation with the help of experts in measurement and evaluation and the scale was rated valid. An example of the items read "1 anticipate problem and develop solution in advance". The test-retest validation of the instrument read r = .84.

## Data collection

The permission of the library authorities of each institution was sought before the instrument administration. Two individuals in each institution who were trained in the instrument administration worked with the researcher in the information collection. One hundred and thirty (130) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the participants. However, only one hundred and nineteen (119) copes properly filled were returned and analyzed. The administration of the instrument took a span of two weeks.

## Data Analysis

The data collected for the research were analyzed using frequency distribution, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Pearson Product moment correlation coefficient and regression model multiple were also used to determine the relationship between independent and dependent variables.
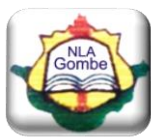
## Results

The demographic information of the respondents in the study revealed that out of 119 respondents, 68 (53% were males while 51 (47%) were females. This means more males participated than females. It was also revealed that 7(6%) respondents had Ph.D in library studies, 38(32%) had Master of Library Study/Master of Library, Archival and Information Studies, 27(23%) were holders of Bachelor of Library Studies, 41(34%) had Diploma in library studies while 6 (6%) had other qualifications. The study also revealed that 25 (21%) were junior staff while 94 (79%) were senior staff. 61 participant (51%) had spent between 1-5 years on the job. 34 (29%) had spent between 6-10 years while 24 (20%) had spent between 11 years and above on the job. In relation to age, 27 (23%) were below 30 years in age, 49 (41%) were between 30-39 years, 27 (23%) were 40-49 years while 16 (13%) were above 50 years and above.

The first hypothesis states that there would not be significant relationship between work performance and mentoring. The hypothesis is subjected to statistical analysis. The outcome is stated in Table 1.

**Table 1: Relationship between Work Performance and Mentoring**

| Variable | No | Mean | SD | Df | r-cal | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Work performance | 119 | 148.94 | 20.13 | | | |
| | | | | 117 | .287 | .002 |
| Mentoring | 119 | 50.02 | 8.63 | | | |

Table 1 showed a significant relationship between work performance and mentoring. The rcal (.287, $P < 0.01$) is significant at 0.05 level of significance set for the study. Therefore the hypothesis of non-significance could therefore not be confirmed. The table further showed the relationship between the two variables is positive. This indicates that as mentoring relationship is increasing work performance would also increase.

Hypothesis 2 also predicted that there would not be significant relationship between work performance and information sharing. This hypothesis is also tested and the result is stated in Table 2.

**Table 2: Relationship between Work Performance and Information Sharing**

| Variable | No | Mean | SD | Df | r-cal | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Work performance | 119 | 148.94 | 20.13 | | | |
| | | | | 117 | .287 | .002 |
| Mentoring | 119 | 34.94 | 5.93 | | | |

Going by the information on Table 2, the relationship between work performance and information sharing is significant and positive (r-cal = .284; P< 0.01). This is significant at 0.05 alpha level set for the study. The outcome implies a rise in work performance with a rise in information sharing. The hypothesis which predicted there would not be significant relationship between work performance and information sharing is therefore not confirmed.

The third hypothesis stated that mentoring activities and information sharing will not significantly predict the work performance of librarians in Oyo State tertiary institutions. The result is stated in Table 3.

**Table 3: Regression Analysis of Predictive Value of Mentoring and Information Sharing and Work Performance**

| Model | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Regression | 8104.532 | 2 | 4052.266 | 11.842 | .000 |
| Residual | 39696056 | 116 | 342.207 | | |
| Total | 47800.588 | 118 | | | |
| | R = .412, | $R^2$ = .170 | Adj. $R^2$=.155 | St. Err. of Est = 18.49885 | |

The result on Table 3 showed the joint contributions of both mentoring and information sharing on work performance of librarians. The result showed that a combination of the two variables accounted for a total of 17% of the total variance in work performance of librarians in Oyo State. The result yield a coefficient of multiple regression R = .412; $R_2$ = .170, Adjusted $R_2$ = .155 and Standard Error of the Estimate 18.50. The table further yielded a significant r-ratio of value [$F_{(2,118)}$ = 11.842; P<.01]. This is significant at 0.05 level of alpha set for the study. The hypothesis of non-significance could no longer hold. This showed that the contribution could not be traced to the occurrence of chance.

**Table 4: Independent contribution of Mentoring and Information Sharing to Work Performance**

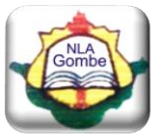| Model | Unstandardized coefficient | | Standardized co-efficient | t. | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | St. Error | Beta | | |
| (constant) | 79.229 | 14.426 | | 5.492 | .000 |
| Mentoring | .695 | .197 | .298 | 3.517 | .001 |
| Information sharing | 1.001 | .287 | .295 | 3.485 | .001 |

Table 4 further showed the relative contribution of the two independent variables (mentoring and information) sharing on work performance of Oyo state librarians. The results showed that both mentoring ($\beta$ = .298; t = 3.517; P < 0.01) and information sharing ($\beta$ = .295; t = 3.485; P < 0.01) significantly contributed independently to work performance. Although the two independent variables showed similar potency in the prediction of work performance mentoring proved to be more powerful predictor of work performance.
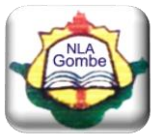
**Discussion of Findings**

The findings revealed that there is significant relationship between work performances and mentoring, This finding corroborated the submission Tanoli (2016) who studied impact of training and mentoring on employee performance and revealed that both training and mentoring have significant positive effect on employee performance. It equally supported study of Uchenna (2019) and Sodipe and Madukoma (2013) who found that mentoring has positive effect on employee performance and their career. However, the outcome disagree with studies of Adewuyi and Makinde (2018) and Adewuyi, Nduka and Ojo (2010) who studied academic mentorship in Nigerian and found out that even though mentoring is being practice, it was relatively low and had not really improved the overall job performance of cataloguers (librarians) in Nigeria. The reason that could be attributed to the outcome of the study could be that workers who attached themselves to mentors are likely to develop positive self-belief and are rarely likely to make mistakes as their mentors may be ready to stand by them at the time of work performance.

The findings also revealed that there is a rise in work performance with a rise in information sharing. This supported findings of Mesmer-Magnus and Dechurch (2009) who found out that information sharing positively predicted team performance across all levels of people. It also corroborated the work of Akram and Bokhari (2011) that individual performance can be achieved through knowledge sharing. However, this finding was in contrast with the finding of Li and Sandino (2017), their study revealed that information sharing did not have a significant effect on any outcomes of creative work and work performance. The outcome of the current study could be linked to the fact that information exchange by workers at different for a such as seminars, conferences and workshop etc are capable of giving workers sense of direction in the new means of library usage, hence, improvement on job performance. The finding of this study also revealed that there is joint and significant prediction of mentoring and information sharing on work performance of librarians. This should not cast a speck of surprise since the two variables independently relate with work performance.

**Conclusion**
The conclusion that can be made from these findings are both mentoring and information sharing have significant effects on work performance of library personnel in Oyo state owned tertiary institutions. It therefore implies that to enable one to perform well in ones' endeavor, there is need for acquisition of more knowledge. When librarians are exposed to other peoples' knowledge through mentoring and information sharing, it is believed there would be better performance. Mentoring and information sharing are antidote for professional growth, career development and positive work performance, their joint prediction should not have been attributed to the occurrence of chances.
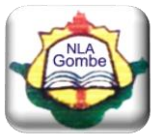
## Recommendations

1. A formal mentoring program should be embarked upon in all the libraries in tertiary institutions in Oyo state for professional growth and career development.
2. Information sharing should be more practiced by Oyo state library personnel for effective dissemination of services and positive work performance through attendance at seminars, conferences and workshops.
3. Librarians in Oyo state tertiary institutions irrespective of their status should keep updating their knowledge through networking with others through mentoring and information sharing so that they will not be found wanting in performing their duties and service provision.
4. Librarians should create platforms on social media like Facebook and whatsApp where information and mentoring practices will be shared.

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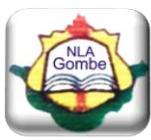
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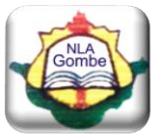
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