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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS CORRELATE OF MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION RESOURCES IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN NORTH-CENTRAL, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Effective management of information resources in university libraries is essential. Despite the recognisedd importance of emotional intelligence in organisational settings, its specific impact on resource management in libraries remains underexplored. This study examined emotional intelligence as correlates of management of information resources in university libraries in North-central Nigeria Four null hypotheses were formulated. A correlational survey research design was adopted. The population of the study consisted of 254 professional librarians in the six Federal universities in North-central, Nigeria. The population was used as the sampling size since the population is manageable, there is no sampling for the study. Data for this study was collected by means of structured questionnaire titled "Emotional Intelligence Scale Self-Assessment (EISA) and "Management of Information Resources Questionnaire" (MIRQ). CronbachAlpha Method was used to check the internal consistency of EISA and MIRQ and their respective reliability values obtained were 0.81 and 0.79. Linear regression analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. It was found that while self-awareness and self-regulation had moderate positive relationships with resource management, social awareness and relationship management exhibited strong positive correlations. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that since social awareness demonstrated a strong positive relationship with resource management, university libraries should encourage librarians to develop user-centered service approaches. Training programmes should emphasize active listening, empathy, and user engagement strategies to ensure that librarians understand and respond effectively to users' needs.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Management, Information resources, University libraries

Introduction

Information resources are crucial for universities to achieve academic goals. They support research by providing necessary data and knowledge. Aboyade and Eluwole (2018) explained that information resources facilitate teaching and learning by offering a variety of resources for lecturers and students. They promote innovation by providing access to up-to-date information, fostering creativity within the academic community. Information resources in university libraries include electronic books(eBooks), which are digital versions of traditional print books, often accessible through online databases; online journals, whose subscriptions allows electronic access to articles and publications; databases, referring to an aggregated collections of academic journals, reports, and various types of research data that can be used for in-depth study; as well as the institutional repositories which are digital collections that showcase the scholarly output of the university, including theses, research papers, and presentations (Madukoma, Unegbu & Olorunkalu, 2023). Therefore, management of information resources encompasses a range of activities aimed at ensuring that library resources remain accessible, relevant, and user-friendly.

Managing information resources such as online databases, e-books, and digital journals is crucial for ensuring that users have access to a wide range of academic materials. Therefore, the management of information resources involves the processes and strategies used to acquire, organise, preserve, and provide access to information materials in libraries. According to Mamza, Bantai and Aliyu (2024), effective management ensures that information resources remain relevant, accessible, and useful to users while maintaining their integrity over time, stressing that key aspects of managing information resources include: (i) Acquisition**:** selecting and procuring resources that align with the institution's objectives and user needs; (ii) Cataloging and Classification: Organising resources systematically to facilitate easy retrieval; (iii) Digitization**:** Converting physical materials into digital formats to enhance accessibility and preservation; (iv) User Services: Providing guidance and support to users inaccessing and utilising resources; and (v) Preservation and Conservation: Protecting resources from physical deterioration and obsolescence.

The management of information resources in university libraries, particularly in North-central, Nigeria is undergoing significant transformation. With the rapid advancement of technology and the increasing availability of digital tools, libraries are shifting from traditional print-based systems to hybrid models that integrate both physical and digital resources. This shift not only demands technical proficiency but also requires librarians to effectively engage with users, adapt to change, and manage the complexities of digital interactions. As libraries become more user-centered and technology-driven, the role of librarians extends beyond resource management to include communication, problem-solving, and emotional engagement with users.

Emotional intelligence (EI) emerges as a critical variable that shapes librarians' ability to navigate the emotional and social dimensions of their roles, especially in a technology-driven environment. It serves as the foundation for building strong interpersonal relationships, managing stress, and fostering user trust and satisfaction. Also, the ability to understand and manage one's emotions and the emotions of others, plays a crucial role in how librarians interact with digital technologies and library users. Furthermore, it is the ability to sense, understand, monitor, manage, and use emotions, which is crucial in many aspects of human development, including social relationships, academic and career accomplishment, and overall well-being (Anand, Gorantla, Ranjan & Morcos, 2023). It is a collection of interpersonal and cognitive abilities that influence how individuals comprehend and express themselves, as well as how they use emotional information effectively (Ralte, Alphonsa, Nisha, & Aishwarya, 2023). Operationally, EI refers to the capacity to recognise, understand, and manage one's own emotions and those of others. Daniel Goleman, a pioneer in this field, defines EI as encompassing self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness and relationship management (Goleman, 2006). These components enable individuals to navigate social complexities, foster positive relationships, and make informed decisions.

Gani and Magoi (2022) revealed that while many librarians possess a basic understanding of digital technologies, there is a notable gap in EI training. This gap often manifests in inadequate user

interaction and a lack of proactive engagement in problem-solving scenarios. Balamurugan and Ranganathan (2020) reiterated that deficits in EI include limited self-awareness, which can lead to misinterpretation of users' needs, resulting in inadequate support and negative experiences for patrons. Additionally, challenges in user interaction arise, as EI is crucial for understanding user emotions and concerns. Lack of training opportunities for EI among librarians in North-central, Nigeria leaves them ill-equipped to navigate social and emotional dimensions of user interactions. This lack of empathy can negatively impact digital resource management, as users may disengage from library services when they feel unsupported or misunderstood, further exacerbating the emotional disconnect (Gani & Magoi, 2022). Therefore, addressing these emotional intelligence deficits is crucial for improving the effectiveness of library services and fostering a more positive user experience.

The connection between EI and digital proficiency among librarians is vital in shaping the overall effectiveness of library services, particularly in managing digital resources and fostering meaningful user engagement. While EI equips librarians with the ability to understand and respond empathetically to user needs and concerns, digital proficiency empowers them to navigate and manage digital platforms efficiently. Together, these competencies create a balanced approach to digital resource management, ensuring emotional connection in user interactions. This study therefore seeks to determine EI and librarians' digital proficiency as correlate of management of information resources in university libraries in North-central, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Observations indicate that many librarians struggle to effectively manage user expectations, particularly in an era where digital access is expected to be seamless and immediate. Instances of frustration among students and faculty members due to system downtimes, slow responses to inquiries, and difficulties navigating electronic databases highlight the growing demand for librarians to possess strong EI, comprising self-awareness, empathy, stress management, and interpersonal skills is essential for librarians to maintain positive interactions, handle conflicts, and enhance user satisfaction. Furthermore, the stressful nature of library work, exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure, limited funding, and frequent technological disruptions, places a significant burden on librarians.

Many are observed to exhibit signs of burnout, frustration, and detachment, which negatively impact their ability to provide quality service. The lack of training programmes focused on emotional intelligence further compounds the issue, leaving many librarians ill-equipped to manage both the technical and emotional dimensions of their roles. Despite the increasing recognition of EI as a crucial factor in service-oriented professions, there is limited empirical research examining its correlation with the management of information resources in university libraries in North-central, Nigeria. This study, therefore, seeks to bridge this gap by investigating the extent to which librarians' EI influences their effectiveness in managing information resources, ensuring optimal service delivery, and fostering a positive library-user experience.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between self-awareness and management of information resources in university libraries in North-Central, Nigeria
2. There is no significant relationship between self-regulation and management of information resources in university libraries in North-Central, Nigeria
3. There is no significant relationship between social-awareness and management of information resources in university libraries in North-Central, Nigeria
4. There is no significant relationship between relationship management and management of information resources in university libraries in North-Central, Nigeria

Methodology

A correlational survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised all the 254 professional librarians in the six Federal

Universities in in North-central, Nigeria. For this study, a sample of all 254 professional librarians was used. As a result, since the population is manageable, there is no sampling for the study. Data for

the study was collected by means of structured questionnaire. The first instrument is a questionnaire titled "Emotional Intelligence Scale Self-Assessment (EISA)". The EISA 33-item question divided into 4-subscales which covers self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness and relationship management. The second instrument is a validated structured questionnaire titled "Management of Information Resources Questionnaire" (MIRQ). It is structured on a 4-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) with nominal values 4,3,2 and 1, respectively. It is a 12-item questionnaire structured on a 4-point scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) with nominal values 4,3,2 and 1, respectively. Cronbach Alpha Method was used to check the internal consistency of EISA and MIRQ and their respective reliability values obtained were 0.81 and 0.79. Linear regression analysis was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level.

Data Analysis and Results

Table 1: Linear Regression on Relationship between Self-awareness and Information Resources Management

Linear	R	R^2	B	T	a.level	p-value
Regression	.432[a]	.187	.354	7.608	.05	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Awareness
b. Dependent: Management of Information Resources

Table 1 provides a linear regression analysis on self-awareness as a significant predictor of management of information resources by librarians in university libraries in North-central, Nigeria. The R value of 0.432 indicates a moderate positive relationship between self-awareness and management of resources. The R^2 value of 0.187 means that about 18.7% of the variation in management of information resources can be explained by self-awareness. The beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.354$) shows that for every unit increase in self-awareness; there is a positive increase in the management of information resources. The t-value of 7.608 and the p-value of 0.000 (which is less than the 0.05 significance level) confirm that this result is statistically significant. In short, self-awareness positively and significantly influences how well librarians manage information resources.

Table 2: Linear Regression on Relationship between Self-regulation and Information Resources Management

Linear	R	R^2	β	T	a.level	p-value
Regression	.409[a]	.167	.318	7.116	0.05	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Regulation
b. Dependent: Management of Information Resources

Table 2 provides results of a linear regression on, which shows that self-regulation significantly predicts management of information resources in universitylibraries in North-central, Nigeria. The R value of 0.409 indicates a moderate positive relationship. The R^2 value of 0.167 means that self-regulation explains about 16.7% of the variation in the management of information resources. The beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.318$) suggests that an increase in self-regulation leads to a positive improvement in managing resources. The t-value of 7.116 and the p-value of 0.000 (which is less than the 0.05 significance level) confirm that this prediction is statistically significant. In simple terms, librarians who are better at controlling their emotions and behaviours tend to perform better in managing library resources.

Table 3: Linear regression on Relationship between Social Awareness and Information Resources Management

Linear	R	R^2	β	T	a.level	p-value
Regression	.822[a]	.676	.717	22.930	0.05	0.001

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social -Awareness
b. Dependent: Management of Information Resources

Table 3 provides results of simple linear regression analysis. The result shows that social awareness is a strong and significant predictor of the management of information resources. The R value of 0.822 again points to a very strong positive relationship. The R^2

value of 0.676 means that about 67.6% of the variation in management of information resources can be explained by librarians' level of social awareness. The beta coefficient (β=0.717) indicates a strong positive influence: as social awareness increases, management of information resources improves considerably. The t-value of 22.930 and the p-value of 0.001 (which is less than 0.05) further confirm that this result is statistically significant. In short, librarians who are more socially aware are much better at managing library resources.

Table 4: Linear regression on Relationship between Management and Information Resources Management

Linear Regression	R	R^2	B	t	a.level	p-value
	.723[a]	.523	.610	16.627	0.05	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Relationship Management
b. Dependent: Management of Information Resources

The result of simple linear regression analysis is provided in Table 4. According to the results, it is shown that relationship management significantly predicts the management of information resources. The R value of 0.723 shows a strong positive relationship, and the R^2 value of 0.523 means that about 52.3% of the variation in how librarians manage information resources can be explained by their relationship management skills. The beta coefficient (β=0.610) indicates that an increase in relationship management leads to a strong positive improvement in managing information resources. The t-value of 16.627 and the p-value of 0.000 (which is less than 0.05) confirm that this result is statistically significant. Simply put, librarians who are better at managing relationships tend to perform much better in managing library resources.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings on self-awareness showed a moderate positive relationship between this emotional intelligence component and the management of information resources among librarians in university libraries in North-central, Nigeria. This suggests that librarians who are more in tune with their personal emotions, strengths, and limitations are more capable of effectively organising, preserving, and disseminating library resources. The corresponding hypothesis was statistically significant, confirming that self-awareness plays a critical role in resource management. Supporting this, Rahman and Muhammed (2018) found that self-awareness positively influenced work productivity among library staff, which can be interpreted as indirectly boosting their ability to manage information resources. Similarly, Aboyade and Eluwole (2018) affirmed that EI components, including self-awareness, improved librarians' effectiveness, though their influence might be constrained by inadequate ICT infrastructure and organisational support.

However, the findings contradicted the work of Adeniran and Salisu (2022), which observed only a low positive correlation between emotional self-awareness and information literacy competence. Additionally, Owolabi *et al*. (2022) reported a low correlation between self-knowledge and the actual use of information resources. These differences may stem from variations in institutional environments or respondents' perceptions across different geographic regions. Overall, while self-awareness is a valuable attribute for librarians, its effectiveness in improving resource management may be contingent on both internal capacities and external support systems. The findings on self-regulation indicated a moderate yet statistically significant positive relationship with the management of information resources. This implies that librarians who are skilled in controlling their emotions, adapting to change, and maintaining a calm, focused demeanor are more likely to engage in systematic and effective resource management.

Self-regulation may help librarians remain composed and goal-oriented when faced with the challenges of digital resource handling, cataloguing, and user demands. Although the relationship was not as strong as with other EI components, its significance confirms that self-regulation contributes meaningfully to job performance. Supporting evidence from Rahman and Muhammed (2018) and Owolabi *et al*. (2022) established that self-regulation positively affects overall productivity, even if it does not directly translate to every specific task. However, this finding diverged from that of Adeniran and Salisu (2022), which concluded that self-regulatory skills had a low influence on electronic resource collection development (ERCD). Similarly, Owolabi *et al*. (2022) noted that self-regulation was relatively low among

librarians in relation to their creativity. These discrepancies could again be attributed to the differing levels of professional development, institutional resources, and the subjective interpretations of what self-regulation entails across different library environments. Nevertheless, the significance of the hypothesis suggests that fostering self-regulatory skills remains essential for enhancing librarians' performance in resource management.

The findings on social awareness revealed a strong and statistically significant positive relationship with the management of information resources in university libraries. This implies that librarians who are more socially aware than those who understand the emotions, needs, and concerns of library users are better positioned to manage resources in ways that meet user expectations and foster community engagement. These findings were consistent with the study by Aboyade and Eluwole (2018), who found that librarians' social awareness contributed positively to user satisfaction, suggesting that an empathetic understanding of users enhances service delivery. Rahman and Muhammed (2018) similarly emphasized the role of social awareness in promoting community involvement through library services, showing that socially attuned librarians are better at anticipating and responding to informational needs. Furthermore, Owolabi *et al*. (2022) linked social awareness with higher productivity in library settings. The finding was further supported by Adeniran and Salisu (2022), who found that EI, including social awareness, had a significant relationship with reducing library anxiety among students, an indirect indicator of better user experience and resource accessibility. Taken together, these findings indicate that social awareness does not only enhance communication and service responsiveness, but also directly impacts the effective allocation and utilisation of information resources.

The findings on relationship management showed a strong and significant positive relationship with librarians' ability to manage information resources. This means that the ability to build and maintain productive professional relationships, whether with colleagues, academic staff, or library users greatly enhances the processes of acquiring, organising, and disseminating library materials. When librarians are skilled in relationship management, they are more likely to engage in effective collaboration, promote resource sharing, and foster an inclusive and user-centered library environment. Supporting this finding, Owolabi *et al*. (2022) demonstrated that relationship management correlates positively with job productivity in libraries, while Rahman and Muhammed (2018) highlighted how effective interpersonal relationships led to improved user satisfaction and more efficient service delivery. Aboyade and Eluwole (2018) further emphasized the need for strong collaborative ties between librarians and academics to ensure the success of information literacy initiatives, which directly influence how resources are utilised.

However, the findings contrasted with those of Adeniran and Salisu (2022), who argued that many librarians lack formal training in relationship management, thereby limiting its practical influence. They also noted that some libraries prioritise technical skills over soft skills, such as communication and interpersonal relations, which may account for the perceived limited impact of relationship management in certain contexts. These divergent findings could be influenced by regional or institutional differences in training, priorities, and professional development structures. Nonetheless, the overall significance of the hypothesis underscores that relationship management is a critical EI component that can substantially improve the management of information resources in university libraries.

Conclusion

The study establishes emotional intelligence as a critical correlate of effective management of information resources in university libraries in North-central, Nigeria.The findings affirm that while all components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management are significantly linked to how librarians manage resources, the strength of these relationships varies. Social awareness and relationship management emerged as particularly strong predictors, underscoring the importance of interpersonal and social competencies in resource handling. These results suggest that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in librarians' ability to manage resources effectively, but its influence varies across different EI components.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Given the weak correlation between self-awareness and resource management, universities should implement professional development programmes focused on self-awareness training. Workshops and reflective exercises can help librarians better understand their emotions, strengths, and limitations, ultimately improving decision-making in resource management.
2. Given the weak correlation between self-regulation and resource management, it is recommended that university libraries provide stress management and resilience-building workshops for librarians. Encouraging mindfulness practices and emotional regulation techniques can help librarians remain calm, focused, and adaptable in managing library resources effectively.
3. Since social awareness demonstrates a strong positive relationship with resource management, university libraries should encourage librarians to develop user-centered service approaches. Training programmes should emphasize active listening, empathy, and user engagement strategies to ensure that librarians understand and respond effectively to users' needs.
4. As relationship management was found to be significantly associated with effective resource management, university libraries should focus on improving teamwork, collaboration, and communication skills among librarians. Institutions should foster mentorship programmes and professional networking opportunities to strengthen interpersonal relationships within the library system.

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