



Mentoring as a Predictor of Cataloguing Attitude among Early-Career Librarians: A Survey of Federal Universities in South-East Nigeria

Emenike Chiemeka Nkamnebe

Academy Library, Nigeria Police Academy Wudil,

Kano State, Nigeria

nkamnebe@polac.edu.ng

Abstract

This study aimed to determine the effect of mentoring on early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing in federal universities in South-East Nigeria. The study specifically aimed to: identify mentoring programmes to which early-career librarians are exposed for skill development in cataloguing, examine their attitude towards cataloguing, and determine the influence of mentoring on their attitude towards cataloguing. Using quantitative method and census survey, data were collected from 63 respondents through questionnaire, and analyzed using SPSS (version 25). Findings revealed that the respondents have experienced different mentoring programmes, with one-on-one mentoring (90.5%), supervisory mentoring (88.9%), job rotation (87.3%), conferences/seminars/workshops (85.7%) and staff orientation (84.1%) being the most practiced, while reverse mentoring (28.6%), external mentoring (23.8%), and e-mentoring, (23.8%) were the least practised. The observed mean 7.90 suggests a moderate-level of exposure to mentoring indicating positive inclination to mentoring. Findings further revealed that respondents demonstrated positive attitude towards cataloguing, with overall grand mean of 4.54. Regression analysis indicated that mentoring had significantly positive, small-sized effect on early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing ($\beta = 0.248$).

The study concludes that mentoring positively impacts early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing, but not to be solely relied on for shaping early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing. Findings have implications for policy formulation, LIS education and training, professional practice, and research. Among others recommendations, the study highlighted need for university library administrators to explore and implement innovative strategies that can positively influence early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing, thus complementing the impacts of the existing mentoring programmes.



Keywords

Mentoring, Attitude towards Cataloguing, Early-Career Librarians, Cataloguing, Academic Libraries, South-East Nigeria.

Introduction

Effective mentoring in organisation of recorded knowledge and information (ORKI) is the key to unlocking early-career librarians' potential, by fostering a positive attitude, and cultivating a lifelong passion for cataloguing operations. This not only has a profound impact on early-career librarians' cataloguing attitude, but builds a positive perception and increased enthusiasm for cataloguing, while also enhancing their technical skills and professional growth.

Mentoring plays essential role in developing an individual, by providing guidance, support, and enabling environment for growth, leading to various performance outcomes, e.g., increased self-confidence, maximized learning, increased scholastic and career satisfaction, promotion of personal and professional growth (Mijares, Baxley, & Bond, 2013). Other outcomes include job performance, motivation, and various attitudinal, behavioural, career-related, and health-related outcomes (Eby et al., 2013; Xu & Payne, 2014). It is a process which offers supports to the career growth of the mentee, e.g., the early-career librarians by providing coaching, visibility, protection, and challenging assignments (Library Leadership and Management Association, 2023, Freedman, 2021). Moreover, psychological development in the forms of role modelling, provision of confirmation, counselling, and friendship are additional supports provided by mentors (Freedman, 2021).

Mentoring is a global trend, and universally considered an essential means of developing the competence, professional proficiency and personal growth of an individual (Fletcher & Mullen, 2012; Fransson & McMahan, 2013). Whether formal or informal in approach, it is an activity that has been frequently linked with various professional occupations (Harrington & Marshall, 2014). An analysis of the concept of mentoring by Mijares, Baxley and Bond (2013) shows that mentoring transcends many disciplines such as Nursing, Anthropology, Business, Education, Psychology, and Social Work. Hence, mentoring practice is widely accepted as a valuable and effective form of personal and professional development in many fields, industries or contexts, including librarianship and, by extension, the academic or university libraries.



Mentoring, according to the Human Resources (2022) “brings value at many levels for mentees, mentors, supervisors and the organization for which they work” (p.1). Therefore, “Effective mentoring brings long-term benefits to the institution, the mentor and the mentee” (Tan, 2016, p.5). The import of mentoring programmes for mentees with regard to their job satisfaction, career advancement, improved knowledge and skills, advice and guidance, have been established for the last three decades in most disciplines, e.g., library and information science (LIS), Education, Nursing, Business & Psychology (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006; Freedman, 2021).

Early-career librarians often perceive cataloguing as a complex task, requiring meticulous attention to detail and adherence to specific standards. Studies (e.g., De Klerk & Fourie, 2017; Isyaku, Bello & Ado, 2018) had reported prevalence of negative perception among early-career librarians towards cataloguing, manifesting in the forms of lack of interest and negative attitude. Furthermore, researcher’s observations revealed that a number of early-career librarians are reluctant about engaging in cataloguing operations, while those working in the cataloguing department often seek chances for redeployment. Mentoring emerges as a potential strategy to address these challenges, providing the targeted support necessary to build positive perception, interest, skills, and confidence in cataloguing. However, research on influence of mentoring on early-career librarians’ attitude towards cataloguing is yet to receive a wider research attention. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring mentoring as a predictor of cataloguing attitudes among early-career librarians in federal universities in South-East Nigeria.

Review of Literature

The origin of mentoring as a concept has frequently been linked to Homer's *Odyssey* in Ancient Greece (Ragins & Kram, 2007; Tan, 2016), and the apprenticeship culture of the Chinese ancient society, where apprenticeships were a common method for training skilled workers. Its link with ancient civilization however, Mullen and Klimaitis (2021) argue that mentoring relationships have endured over time and will likely continue to grow, built on their core functions of career development and psychological support.

The meaning of the concept of mentoring has changed and expanded overtime. Mentoring has been perceived as a strong interpersonal relationship that fosters transfer of knowledge, skills, and experience from an experienced individual (the mentor), to a less experienced one, (the mentee) (Fitzgerald & McNamara, 2021). However, while the classical/traditional definitions of



mentoring had frequently emphasized the protégé as the sole beneficiary in a mentoring relationship, modern definitions have challenged this position, describing mentoring as a relationship which holds mutual benefits for both mentors and the mentees (Dominguez & Hager, 2013; Parylo et al., 2012). Thus, mentoring researchers in the recent past have advocated for extending the understanding of mentoring relationships beyond the classical/traditional one-on-one relationships (Lunsford, Crisp, Dolan, & Wuetherick, 2017).

Mentoring provides career and psychosocial functions (Kram, 1985; Ragins and Kram, 2007), and may be supposedly beneficial in terms of addressing negative dispositions, e.g., negative attitude, low interest and disinclination towards for cataloguing, which has been observed among early-career librarians (Bello & Mansour, 2017). Within this context, Whiteside (n.d) contends that having a positive mindset fosters self-esteem and self-belief, highlighting the role of a mentor in inculcating this belief in the mentee. For instance, Laurian-Fitzgerald (2016) observed that students who began their skill learning process with a positive mindset maintained their positive outlook and approaches to academic challenges, a finding that may also apply to learning cataloguing skills, fostered by positive attitude.

Mentoring plays a pivotal role in shaping an individual's attitude and skill development. In this context, Kyrgidou and Petridou (2013) established that mentoring influenced mentees' attitude as well as knowledge and skill – benefits that may also extend to early-career librarians. Individuals tend to engage in a task in which they have positive attitude (Abdalkrim & Elhalim, 2016; Estacio & Cabrera, 2018; Khan, Dongping, & Ghauri, 2014; Susanty & Miradipta, 2013). This highlights the imperativeness of shaping early-career librarians' attitude through mentoring. Adamu, Yunusa, and Miringa (2017) note that transformation and positive change in libraries largely depend on its personnel's' positive frame of mind, e.g., positive attitude. Hence, in cataloguing, Nwosu, Njoku, Ottong and Ottong (2018) acknowledge that positive attitude is one of the three cardinal principles that guide cataloguing professionals in acquiring competencies and skills.

Mentoring, among other benefits, helps in the cultivation of positive attitudes (Harrington & Marshall, 2014). Hence, exposure to mentoring is premised to motivate early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing. Lamentably, scholars (Adamu, Yunusa, & Miringa, 2017; David-West & Wali, 2020; Mahlatji, Maphopha, & Dikotla, 2016; Ogunniyi, 2015; Rafiu, 2020; Yusuf, 2015) had reported a continued trend of negative attitude towards cataloguing among LIS students



- a development that will potentially compromise their cataloguing proficiencies upon transition to workplace environment. Bello and Mansour (2013), advocate that this trend can potentially be addressed through mentoring.

Lately, a number of studies (Adewuyi & Makinde, 2018; Bello & Mansor, 2011, 2013; Olatokun & Njideaka, 2020; Popoola, Iyoro, & Ogungbo, 2022) have been conducted on mentoring as means of professional development in cataloguing. However, the focus of these studies has largely been on existing cataloguing professionals, with limited attention given to the specific needs and experiences of early-career librarians. As a result, mentoring research on early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing has received little research attention. Thus, research on attitudinal development of early career librarians in cataloguing, through mentoring has becomes imperative.

A number of studies, e.g., Adamu (2018), Nwosu, Njoku, Ottong and Ottong (2018), Mahlatji, Maphopha, and Dikotla (2016) have established gaps in the education and training of LIS students, which presumably has negative impact on early-career librarians attitude, and subsequently, their skill development in cataloguing.

Studies exist on cataloguers' perception of mentoring activities (e.g., Adewuyi & Makinde, 2018; Bello & Mansor, 2011, 2013; Olatokun & Njideaka, 2020; Popoola, Iyoro, & Ogungbo, 2022), confirming mentoring as an effective strategy for skill development in cataloguing. However, studies are scarce that focused on impact of mentoring on attitude towards cataloguing, especially from the experiences of early-career librarians, irrespective of the pivotal role positive attitude plays in skill development. Although mentoring is beneficial at all career stages (Burke & Tumbleson, 2019), mentoring research in cataloguing, with focus on early-career librarians becomes necessary. On this note, Hussey and Campbell-Meier (2021) observes that new library and information science (LIS) professionals, who have no previous experience in information organizations (cataloguing), are often left adrift, unsure of how to apply theory or best practice to a new work environment.

Mentorship programmes for newly graduated nurses in the field of Nursing have proved to be efficacious, not only in improving their nursing proficiency, but also increase their self-confidence, enabling them adjust to their roles more effectively, helping them develop new skills



and knowledge, and make them better equipped to work with others (Mijares, Baxley, & Bond, 2013).

Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that well-structured and implemented mentoring programmes would have a similar positive impact on early-career librarians in cataloguing, in terms of shaping their attitude towards cataloguing. Specifically, such programmes would provide the guidance, support and feedback necessary to fostering a positive mindset, including self-confidence, positive attitude, interest, etc. which are as well necessary for skill development. Well-structured mentoring programmes would help to address the unique challenges and needs of early-career librarians in cataloguing. Among the many approaches to initiate new librarians into cataloguing, the most efficient and productive approach is on-the-job trainings (Bilotta, 2019), which usually includes mentoring. Librarianship skills (e.g., cataloguing) are best learnt on the job (Pan & Hovde, 2010; Nwabueze & Anike, 2016). This study is therefore focused on determining the effect of mentoring on early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing. This has received limited research attention, especially within the Nigerian perspective.

A multisite case study, this study took place in five federal universities of South-Eastern Nigeria - University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN), Federal University of Technology, Owerri (FUTO), Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUAU), Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU), Awka, and Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo (AE-FUNAI). These universities are situated in the five states (Enugu, Imo, Abia, Anambra and Ebonyi States) which constitute the South-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The overarching aim of this study is to determine the impact of mentoring on early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Identify the mentoring programmes early-career librarians are exposed to for skill development in cataloguing,
2. Examine early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing,
3. Determine the influence of exposure to mentoring on early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing.



Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What mentoring programmes are early-career librarians exposed to for skill development in cataloguing?
2. What is the early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing?
3. What is the influence of early-career librarians' exposure to mentoring on their attitude towards cataloguing?

Research Hypothesis

Consistent with the study's objectives and research questions, the following alternative hypothesis was tested to establish the effect of early-career librarians' exposure to mentoring on their attitude towards cataloguing. H₁: Early-career librarians' exposure to mentoring will significantly influence their attitude towards cataloguing.

Method

This study is a census survey of early-career librarians in South-East Nigeria. The study adopted quantitative research method, aligning with the positivist research paradigm. Using survey questionnaire, data were collected from 63 accessible early-career librarians, out of 66 who were targeted (See the distribution details in Table 1 on Findings below). Of 66 questionnaires distributed, 63 questionnaires representing 95.5% response rate were successfully received and found useful for the study. The study employed a closed-ended questionnaire type, structured on 5-point Likert Scale of 1-Uncertain, 2-Strongly Disagree, 3-Disagree, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree. Data collected were analysed using SPSS (Version 25), and presented using frequency counts, percentages, mean ratings, and simple regression analysis.

For the descriptive statistics of Mean and Standard Deviation computed to determine the early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing, a Criterion Mean of 2.50 was set as a benchmark for decision rule of accepting or rejecting an item. In this way, any descriptor statement having a Mean score of less than the criterion Mean of 2.50 (i.e. Mean = 0.00 to 2.49) is considered rejected while a Mean score greater than or equal to Criterion Mean of 2.50 (i.e. Mean = 2.50 and above) is accepted by the respondents. Furthermore, the level of attitude in cataloguing was measured as follows: a Mean score of 1.00 – 1.75 implies Low Level; Mean score = 1.76 – 2.50



implies Moderate Level; Mean score = 2.51 – 3.25 implies High Level; Mean score = 3.26 – 5.00 implies Very High Level.

Decision rule on effect of exposure to mentoring on early-career librarians’ attitude towards cataloguing was determined using the statistical coefficient (β) as follows: 0 – 0.29 = small effect; 0.30 – 0.49 = medium effect; and 0.50 and above = large effect, as suggested by (Nieminen, 2022). The p -value was utilized as a statistical metric to inform the decision regarding the rejection or retention of the alternative hypothesis, thereby determining the significance of the observed effects of mentoring on early-career librarians’ attitude towards cataloguing. In this light, a p -value less than ($<$) 0.05 led to the rejection of null hypothesis (though not stated), indicating statistical significance and support for the alternative hypothesis. Conversely, a p -value greater than ($>$) 0.05 resulted in the null hypothesis not being rejected, suggesting insufficient evidence to support the alternative hypothesis.

Results

This section presents an in-depth discussion of the findings, aligned with the research questions that guided the study.

Table 1: Distribution of the early-career librarians according to the participating universities

S/N	Institutional Libraries	Number of Questionnaire Distributed & Response Rates		
		Expected Respondents	Actual Respondents	% of Actual Respondents
1.	Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo	11	10	15.9%
2.	Federal University of Technology, Owerri	12	12	19.0%
3.	Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike	10	10	15.9%
4.	Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka	19	17	27.0%
5.	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	14	14	22.2%
	Total	66	63	100%

Source: Research Survey, 2025

Respondents' Demographics

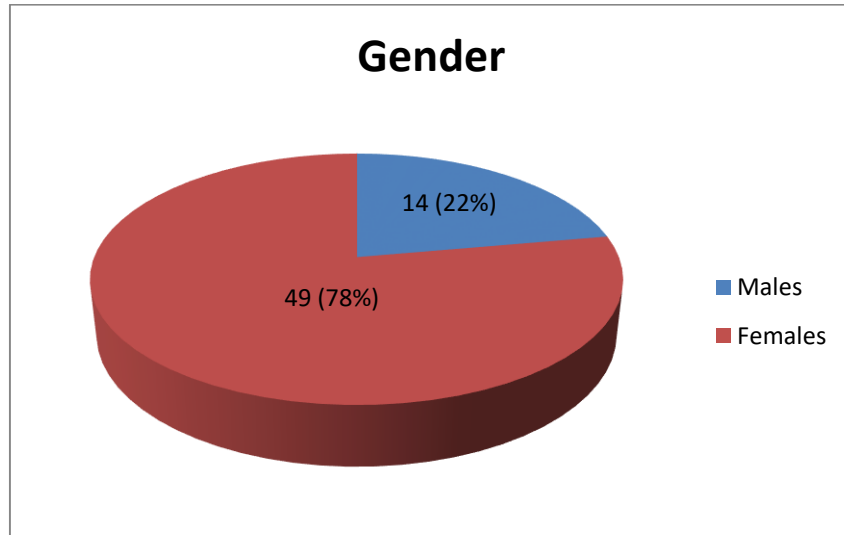


Figure 1: Respondents' Gender

The background information on the participants displayed in Figure 1 shows that majority, 49 (78%) of the participants were females, while 14 (22%) were males.

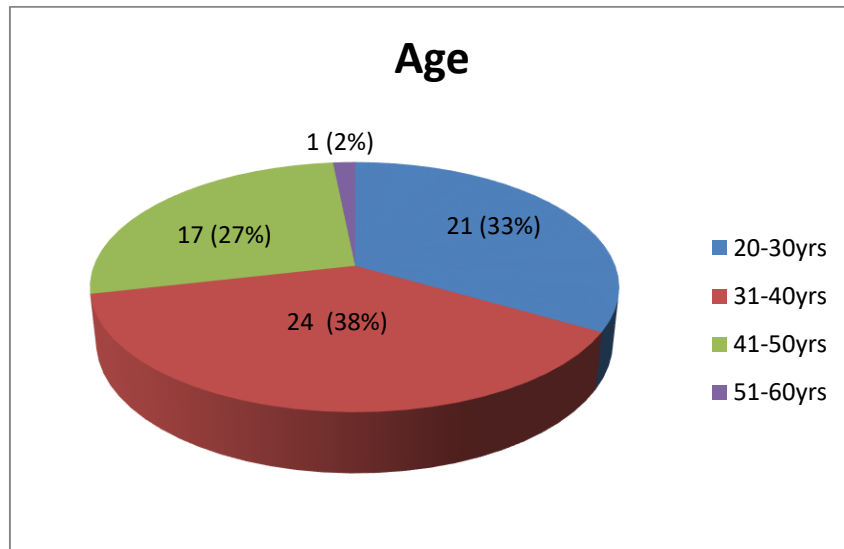


Figure 2: Respondents Age

Information on Figure 2 showed that 24 (38%) of the respondents were aged between 31-40 years, which was the age bracket most represented. This was followed by 21 (33%) of the respondents aged between 20 and 30 years of age. Also, 17 (27.0%) of the respondents fell within the category of 41 and 50 years, while 1 participant (2%) fell within the range of 51 - 60 years.

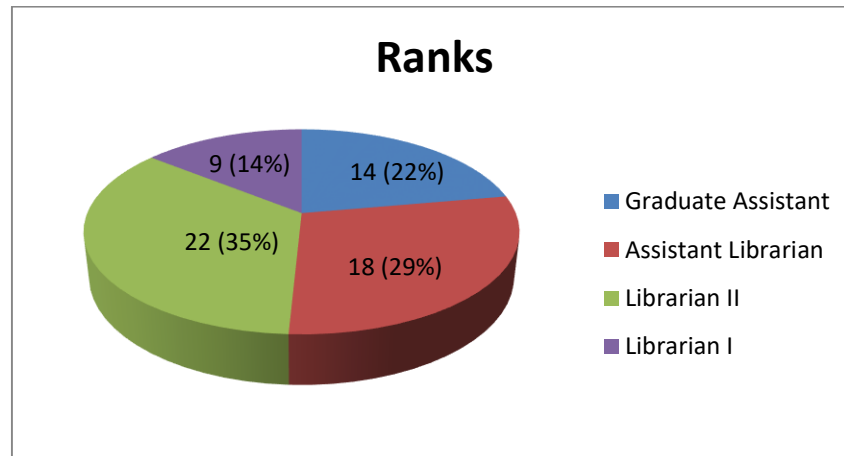


Figure 3: Ranks of the Respondents

In terms of their ranks, Figure 3 shows that 22 (35%) of the participants were in the Librarian II cadre. This was followed by 18 (29) respondents in the Assistant Librarian Cadre. Figure 4 further revealed that 14 (22%) of the participants were in the Graduate Assistant Cadre, while 9 (14%) of the respondents were in Librarian I Cadre.

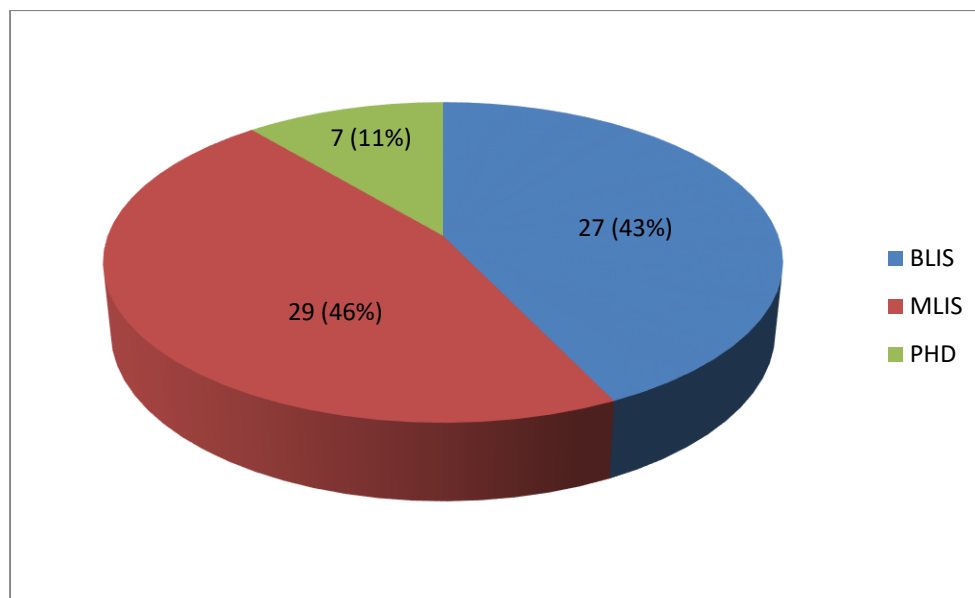


Figure 4: Respondents' Highest Qualifications

Regarding the participants' distribution according to the highest academic qualification obtained, Figure 4 depicts that 29 (46%) of the participants possessed Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS). Moreover, 27 who possessed BLIS accounted for 43% of the participants; while 7 (11%) of the participants possessed PhD.



Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of the Predictor and Outcome/Criterion Variables

Variables	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Exposure to mentoring	63	3.00	13.00	7.90	2.34
Attitude	63	25.00	40.00	36.29	3.92

Table 2 presents the summary of the descriptive statistics arising from the questionnaire survey, providing an overview of the distribution of scores for each variable. It shows the mean and standard deviation scores of the predictor and the outcome/criterion variables. N = number of participants, Min = minimum or lowest value or score observed in the dataset of each variable. Max = maximum or largest value or score observed in the dataset of each variable. Mean = average score for each variable, while SD = standard deviation, indicating variability around the mean. The mean scores ranged between 7.90 (exposure to mentoring) and 34.59 (outcome expectation).

Research Objective 1: *Mentoring programmes are early-career librarians exposed to for skill development in cataloguing in the federal universities in South-East Nigeria?*

This research objective sought to find out the mentoring programmes early-career librarians have been exposed to in cataloguing. To achieve this objective, the researcher listed a wide-range of mentoring programmes, guided by relevant literature. From the listed programmes, respondents were given the leeway to select as many programmes as were applicable to them. In Table 3 below, the responses (N) represents the number of participants who agreed that they have been exposed to a particular mentoring programme, while % of Respondents represents their percentage vis-à-vis the total number of the respondents.

Table 3: Early-career Librarians’ Multiple Responses & Percentages on Mentoring Programmes for Skill Development in Cataloguing (n=63)

Mentoring Programmes	Responses		% of Respondents
	N		
1. One-on-one mentoring (face-to-face interaction between a mentor and mentee)	57		90.5
2. Supervisory Mentoring (Guidance from an experienced colleague, e.g., unit/departmental head).	56		88.9
3. Staff/job Rotation (temporarily posting staff to different departments to expand skill sets)	55		87.3
4. Conferences/Seminars/Workshops	54		85.7



5. Staff Orientation (introducing new librarian seeks mentoring support from other librarians) outside his/her primary workplace)	53		84.1
6. Team mentoring (team members share knowledge, expertise and experiences)	40		63.5
7. Internship (temporarily work experience programme that allow recent graduates to gain practical experience)	40		63.5
8. Peer Mentoring (more exposed early-career librarian mentors less-exposed early-career librarian)	36		57.1
9. Group Mentoring (a senior librarian willingly mentors a group of early-career librarians with common area of interest)	35		55.6
10. Situational Mentoring (short-term mentoring programme for responding to a particular situation or solving a particular problem)	34		54.0
11. Reverse mentoring (early-career librarian mentors older librarian in new technologies, while the older librarian transfers professional experience to the early-career librarian)	18		28.6
12. External mentoring (a new librarian seeks mentoring support from other librarians) outside his/her primary workplace)	15		23.8
13. E-mentoring/Distance/Virtual Mentoring (use of ICTs to foster interaction between a mentor and a mentee who are separated by geographical distance)	15		23.8
*Total	508		806.3

Source: Research Survey, 2025 **Computation Based on Multiple Responses*

The multiple responses shown in Table 3 above revealed that the respondents have experienced diverse mentoring programmes presented in their order of importance, e.g., one-on-one mentoring (90.5%), supervisory mentoring (88.9%), and staff/job rotation (87.3%), conferences/seminars/workshops (85.7%) and staff orientation (84.1%), etc. Reverse mentoring (28.6%), external mentoring (23.8%), and e-mentoring, (23.8%) were the least experience mentoring programmes as Table 3 above indicated.

Furthermore, the mean score of 7.90, as presented in Table 2 above (see the Descriptive Statistics of Predictor and Outcome/Criterion Variables), suggests a moderate-level of exposure towards mentoring, indicating that the early-career librarians have a positive inclination towards exposure mentoring.



Research Objective 2: *Early-career librarians’ attitude towards cataloguing*

This research objective sought to determine the influence of exposure to mentoring on early-career librarians’ attitude towards cataloguing. To achieve this objective, eight questions were posed on a 5-point Likert Scale of 1-Uncertain, 2-Strongly Disagree, 3-Disagree, 4-Agree, 5-Strongly Agree to obtain the respondents’ views about their cataloguing attitude (see Table 4 below).

Table 4: Early-Career Librarians Attitude towards Cataloguing

Attitude towards Cataloguing	Undecided		Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Mean	S.D
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
I am comfortable with operations relating to cataloguing	1	1.6%	1	1.6%	2	3.2%	31	49.2%	28	44.4%	4.33	0.76
I like working with people who love cataloguing	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	3.2%	24	38.1%	37	58.7%	4.56	0.56
I enjoy carrying out operations which would help me acquire more cataloguing skills	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	4.8%	28	44.4%	32	50.8%	4.46	0.59
I feel that cataloguing skill is necessary to every librarian	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	3.2%	15	23.8%	46	73.0%	4.70	0.53
I will embrace every opportunity to acquire skills in cataloguing	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	3.2%	24	38.1%	37	58.7%	4.56	0.56
As a librarian, I appreciate the importance of having cataloguing skills	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	1.6%	20	31.7%	42	66.7%	4.65	0.51
I feel more enthusiastic about improving my cataloguing	1	1.6%	0	0.0%	3	4.8%	23	36.5%	36	57.1%	4.48	0.74



I would encourage new librarians to pursue career in cataloguing	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	4.8%	22	34.9%	38	60.3%	4.56	0.59
Grand Mean											4.54	0.61

Source: *Research Survey, 2025*, **Criterion Mean = 2.50**

Table 4 above presents the descriptive statistics of Mean and Standard Deviation computed to determine the early-career librarians’ attitude towards cataloguing. The results revealed that the mean ratings for all the descriptor statements were greater than the Criterion Mean of 2.50, which implies that all the statements were accepted by the respondents. Since the overall Grand Mean rating of 4.54, with a Standard Deviation of 0.61 is greater than the Criterion Mean of 2.50, the analysis implies that there was a strong agreement with all the descriptor statements (Mean Score ranging from 4.33 to 4.70). Based on the yardstick set for determining the level of attitude observed, it was concluded that the early-career librarians in federal universities in South-East Nigeria demonstrated a very-high positive attitude towards cataloguing.

Research Objective 3: *Influence of exposure to mentoring on early-career librarians’ attitude towards cataloguing.*

This research objective aimed to determine the influence of exposure to mentoring on early-career librarians’ attitude towards cataloguing. To achieve this objective, from the composite scores, the scores from the exposure to mentoring were statistically correlated with the scores from early-career librarians’ attitude towards cataloguing, using simple regression analysis, thus testing research hypothesis 1:

H₁: Early-career librarians’ exposure to mentoring will significantly influence their attitude towards cataloguing.

Table 5: Test of Significance of Simple Regression with Exposure to Mentoring as a Predictor of Early-Career Librarians’ Attitude towards Cataloguing

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	Remark
Constant	33.156	1.493		22.209	.000	Significant
Mentoring	.387	.180	.248	2.142	.036	Significant

*S = Significant



The regression analysis in table 5 examines the relationship between exposure to mentoring and early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing. Table 5 shows that exposure to mentoring has significantly positive effect on early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing ($\beta = .248$; $t = 2.142$; $p = .036$). The β value .248 indicates that a unit increase in exposure to mentoring leads to .248 unit increase in early-career librarians' attitude to cataloguing, indicating a positive effect. The positivity of this effect shows that exposure to mentoring has a positive impact on early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing. Table 4 reveals that the β value (.248) falls within the range: 0 – 0.29. Therefore, guided by the decision rule, the effect-size is small (Nieminen, 2022), suggesting that exposure to mentoring has little effect on early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing.

However, this result was statistically significant, indicating that the observed relationship between exposure to mentoring and attitude towards cataloguing did not occur by chance. Table 4 also indicated that the p-value (.036) is < 0.05 significant level. Therefore, the H_1 which states that early-career librarians' exposure to mentoring will significantly influence their attitude towards cataloguing is retained. This suggests that early-career librarians' exposure to mentoring has a positive effect on their attitude towards cataloguing.

Discussion

This section provides an in-depth discussion of the findings, aligned with the study's objectives.

Mentoring programmes Early-Career Librarians have been exposed to for Skill Development in Cataloguing

Findings revealed that the early-career librarians have been exposed to thirteen different mentoring programmes, including one-on-one mentoring, supervisory mentoring, job rotation, participation in conferences, seminars, and workshops; staff orientation, team mentoring, internship, peer mentoring, group mentoring, situational mentoring, reverse mentoring, external mentoring, and e-mentoring, in this order of importance. This result corroborates Nwabueze and Anike's (2016) findings, which earlier reported presence of one-on-one mentoring, e-mentoring, involvement in professional networks, associations, conferences, and seminars. This finding also confirms Ubogu's (2019) result, which previously reported sponsorship to conferences, seminars and workshops, and individual mentoring as the mentoring programmes available to librarians.



Other scholars, e.g., Bello and Mansour (2013), Idoko, Ugwuanyi, and Osadebe (2016), Madu (2017), Olatokun and Njideaka (2019) have also reported presence of similar mentoring programmes in Nigerian university libraries. Furthermore, a middle-level of exposure to mentoring observed (7.90) suggests a positive predisposition to mentoring activities by the respondents. This finding is in dissonance with Sulayman, Eiriemiokhale, and Olarongbe's (2024) finding, which reported that the culture of mentoring remains under-adopted in Nigerian university libraries and related information institutions, despite its benefits.

Early-Career Librarians' Attitude towards Cataloguing

The results revealed that early-career librarians in federal universities in South-East Nigeria have positive disposition towards cataloguing, hence the overall Grand Mean rating of 4.54. Attitude has been identified as an important determiner of an individual's disposition towards an activity (Ajzen, 1991). Thus, attitudes play a pivotal role in shaping the learning process and, consequently, performance attainment, e.g., skill development in a task. Azodos' (2014) study on influence of attitude on performance in technical skill acquisition lends validity to this assertion. An individual may likely not involve in an activity towards which he demonstrates negative attitude, and vice versa. Hence, attitude is an important factor for an individuals' intention to engage in an activity, leading to skill development. This assertion is validated by studies of Rafiu (2020) and Ogunniyi (2015). An investigative study by Rafiu (2020) sought to determine the effect of attitude on student's academic performance in cataloguing and classification course in Nigerian polytechnics, established that students' attitude has a significant relationship with their performance in cataloguing and classification courses. Within the context of the present study, the favourable disposition observed may have positive implication for early-career librarians' skill development in cataloguing.

Influence of Exposure to Mentoring on Early-Career Librarians' Attitude towards Cataloguing

The result indicated that exposure to mentoring impacts early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing operations. The analysis revealed a statistically significant, though small, positive relationship between early-career librarians' exposure to mentoring and their attitude towards cataloguing ($\beta = 0.248$, $p = 0.36$). This modest effect size suggests that mentoring has a limited, yet potentially-meaningful impact on early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing.



This finding may be suggestive of factors other than mentoring having more significant influence on early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing. These results support outcomes of previous findings that investigated similar phenomenon in various fields and contexts.

In the Library and Information Science domain, for instance, a study conducted by Abdullahi (2023) found that a majority of students initially perceived cataloguing and classification as the most challenging course in their field. However, following their industrial training experience, their attitudes underwent a significant shift. This positive change was attributed to the provision of adequate mentorship and sufficient practical experience during the training period. The findings of the present study are also congruent with the findings of Njoku (2017), which reported that librarians acknowledged the significant influence of mentoring on their attitudes, values, interest, and behavioural tendencies towards performance output.

Notwithstanding the scarcity of studies examining this phenomenon within the librarianship context, empirical evidence from other disciplines validate this finding. Thus, findings of the present study agree with that of Mi-Youn (2019), which confirmed the effect of mentoring programmes on nursing students' learning attitude and college life adaptability. The findings also support other mentoring research (Midigo, Omia, Odundo & Mwanda, 2018, Okurame, 2009, Salami, 2010), which have substantiated the predictive power of mentoring on attitude.

Overall, these findings suggest that while mentoring can have some benefits in shaping early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing, it may not be enough to overcome the deeply ingrained negative attitudes towards cataloguing. This phenomenon is better explained by the result of the regression analysis, which revealed a statistically significant, though, modest effect size of mentoring on attitude towards cataloguing ($\beta = 0.248$). This finding suggests that the mentoring intervention accounted for a limited proportion of variance in attitude, suggesting that other factors may exert a more substantial influence on attitude formation towards cataloguing, as earlier stated. The small effect size implies that mentoring, while contributing to attitude development, is only one of several factors that have influence on cataloguing attitude, which is beyond the scope of the present study, and therefore calling for further investigations.



Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that early-career librarians' exposure to mentoring positively impacts their attitude towards cataloguing. Specifically, early-career librarians have been exposed to diverse mentoring experiences, while the medium-level exposure to mentoring recorded suggests a positive inclination towards mentoring.

Early-career librarians in federal universities in South-East Nigeria demonstrated positive disposition or attitude towards cataloguing. This suggests that they are favourably disposed towards cataloguing, which is a positive indication of willingness to engage in cataloguing practice, which has a positive implication for their skill development in cataloguing.

A statistically-significant and positive relationship between early-career librarians' mentoring and their attitude towards cataloguing was observed, indicating that mentoring plays a pivotal role in shaping early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing. However, the small effect size observed in the relationship suggests that mentoring alone is not a sufficient strategy to shape early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing. Furthermore, although mentoring is valuable in moulding early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing, its impact should not be overstated. Other variables which are beyond the scope of this study might have more significant influence on attitude towards cataloguing than mentoring.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, the study recommends as follows:

- University library administrators should explore and implement innovative strategies that can positively influence early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing to complement the existing mentoring programmes. These could be in the forms of creating professional development opportunities, incentives, collaboration and teamwork, recognition and awards, etc which may yield significant impact.
- Since one-on-one, supervisory, and job rotation are the most-practiced types of mentoring programmes, university library administrators should consider frequent evaluation of their effectiveness with the aim of strengthening them where they are weak. Moreover, the least practiced mentoring programmes, e.g., reverse mentoring, external mentoring, and e-mentoring should be stepped up to avail early-career librarians the opportunity to experience diverse mentoring programmes and tap from their unique benefits.



- The mean score (Mean = 7.90) of early-career librarians' exposure to mentoring indicates an average exposure to mentoring programmes generally. Although this is an encouraging development, this result suggests need for improvement.
- Given that the early-career librarians demonstrated positive attitude towards cataloguing as findings suggest, university library administrators should initiate and implement programmes that could foster early-career librarians' attitude towards cataloguing. This is very imperative, given that positive attitude towards cataloguing is presupposed to encourage performance attainment goal, such as skill development in cataloguing.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire Survey on Mentoring as a Predictor of Cataloguing Attitudes among Early-Career Librarians in Federal Universities in South-East Nigeria

Section A: Demographic Information

Please, answer the following by placing a tick (✓) for the appropriate answer.

- 1. What is the name of your university?
- 2. Gender: Male Female
- 3. Which of the age brackets do you belong to?
- 4. Age: 20-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 61+
- 5. Rank: Graduate Assistant Assistant Librarian Librarian II Librarian I
- 6. Professional/Working Experience: 0-6yrs
- 7. Highest Qualification Obtained: BLIS MLIS PhD

Others (please, specify)

SECTION B: Mentoring Programmes for Skill Development in Cataloguing

Question 1: Which of these mentoring programmes have you been exposed to for skill development in cataloguing? Choose as many as applicable to you.

- 8. One-on-one mentoring (*face-to-face interaction between a mentor and a mentee*),
- 9. Supervisory Mentoring (*Guidance from an experienced colleague, e.g., unit/departmental head*).
- 10. Team mentoring (*team members share knowledge, expertise and experiences*)
- 11. Situational Mentoring (*short-term mentoring programme for responding to a particular situation or solving a particular problem*).
- 12. Group Mentoring (*one or small group of junior librarians is/are mentored by a group of experienced librarians*).
- 13. Peer Mentoring (*more exposed early-career librarian mentors less-exposed early-career librarian*).
- 14. Staff Orientation (*introducing new librarians to the library, its procedures, operations and practices*)
- 15. Conferences/Seminars/Workshops
- 16. External mentoring (*a new librarian seeks mentoring support from other librarians outside his/her primary workplace*)
- 17. E-mentoring/Distance/Virtual Mentoring (*use of ICTs to foster interaction between a mentor and a mentee who are separated by geographical distance*)
- 18. Reverse mentoring (*early-career librarian mentors older librarian in new technologies, while the older librarian transfers professional experience to the early-career librarian*).
- 19. Staff Rotation (*temporarily posting staff to different departments to expand skill sets*)
- 20. Internship (*temporary work experience programme that allow recent graduates to gain practical experience*).



Please, specify others not listed above:

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SECTION C: Attitude towards Cataloguing

Please, tick (√) on the box which BEST represents your views about your **attitude towards cataloguing**

Key: SA-Strongly Agree; A-Agree; D-Disagree; SD-Strongly Disagree; U-Undecided

S/N	Attitude towards Cataloguing Skill	SA (5)	A (4)	D (3)	SD (2)	U (1)
21.	I am comfortable with operations relating to cataloguing.					
22.	I like working with people who love cataloguing.					
23.	I enjoy carrying out operations which would help me acquire more cataloguing skills.					
24.	I feel that cataloguing skill is necessary to every librarian.					
25.	I will embrace every opportunity to acquire skills in cataloguing.					
26.	As a librarian, I appreciate the importance of having cataloguing skills.					
27.	I feel more enthusiastic about improving my cataloguing skills.					
28.	I would encourage new librarians to pursue career in cataloguing.					