

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AS A PREDICTOR OF RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY AMONG ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA

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Abstract

Research productivity remains a major indicator of academic performance, professional relevance, and scholarly contribution within higher education institutions. Academic librarians, as members of the academic community, are increasingly expected to contribute to knowledge production through active participation in research and publication activities. However, research engagement among librarians is influenced not only by institutional factors but also by psychological and interpersonal competencies such as emotional intelligence. This study examined emotional intelligence as a determinant of research productivity among academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey and correlational research design. The population comprised 130 academic librarians in federal university libraries within the North-Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria, while 119 valid responses were used for the analysis. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure emotional intelligence competencies, particularly self-awareness, empathy, and social skills. Descriptive statistics comprising mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research objectives, while Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) was employed to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and research productivity. The findings revealed that academic librarians possessed a high level of emotional intelligence and demonstrated a relatively high level of research productivity. The study further established that self-awareness, empathy, and social skills exerted positive influence on research productivity. In addition, a strong positive relationship was found between emotional intelligence and research productivity among academic librarians ($r = 0.721$, $p < 0.05$). The study concludes that emotional intelligence is a significant psychological factor that enhances librarians' research engagement, collaboration, and scholarly productivity. The study recommends regular emotional intelligence development programmes, mentorship initiatives, and supportive institutional research policies aimed at improving research productivity among academic librarians.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, research productivity, academic librarians, self-awareness, empathy, social skills, North-Central Nigeria.

Introduction

Research productivity is widely recognized as a major indicator of academic excellence, institutional relevance, and knowledge advancement within higher education systems. Universities are expected not only to disseminate knowledge through teaching but also to generate new knowledge through research and scholarly publications. Consequently, academic staff, including librarians, are increasingly evaluated based on their scholarly contributions such as journal publications, conference papers, books, and collaborative research activities. Within this academic environment, academic librarians occupy a strategic position as facilitators of information access, research support, and

scholarly communication. Beyond their traditional roles, librarians are now expected to contribute actively to institutional research output through sustained participation in scholarly and professional research activities. However, the research productivity of academic librarians is often constrained by challenges such as heavy workload, inadequate funding, limited mentorship opportunities, insufficient institutional support, and competing professional responsibilities (Makinde, Haliso, & Alegbeleye, 2020).

In recent years, attention has shifted beyond structural factors to the influence of personal and psychological competencies on professional effectiveness and productivity. Among these competencies, emotional intelligence has emerged as an important determinant of workplace behaviour, collaboration, motivation, and performance. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, regulate, and appropriately manage one's emotions and those of others. According to Daniel Goleman, emotional intelligence encompasses competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, which are essential for effective functioning in knowledge-driven environments. Within academic librarianship, emotionally intelligent librarians are more likely to manage stress effectively, sustain motivation, build collaborative relationships, and engage productively in research and publication activities (Yaya & Opeke, 2016; Afolabi & Abidoeye, 2022).

Despite growing scholarly interest in emotional intelligence and workplace outcomes, limited empirical studies have specifically examined its influence on research productivity among academic librarians in Nigeria, particularly in North-Central Nigeria. Existing studies have focused largely on institutional support, ICT competencies, mentoring, and work environment as determinants of research productivity, with comparatively little attention given to emotional intelligence as a psychological factor influencing scholarly output. This study therefore investigates emotional intelligence as a determinant of research productivity among academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria with a view to providing empirical insight into the emotional competencies that shape research engagement and scholarly productivity among librarians.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine emotional intelligence as a determinant of research productivity among academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria with emphasis on self-awareness, empathy and social skills.

The specific objectives are to:

1. determine the level of emotional intelligence among academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria
2. examine the level of research productivity among academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria
3. identify the influence of self-awareness, empathy, and social skills on research productivity among academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria and
4. determine the emotional intelligence competencies that significantly enhance research productivity among academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria.

Literature Review

Concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional intelligence (EI) has developed into a key construct in psychology and education, addressing the limitations of relying solely on cognitive ability to explain performance. Originally defined by Salovey and Mayer (1990) as the ability to perceive, understand, and manage emotions, EI shifted attention beyond intelligence quotient (IQ) to include emotional and social competencies. This perspective gained wider prominence through Goleman (1995), who argued that qualities such as empathy, emotional regulation, and interpersonal awareness are critical predictors of workplace success. Consequently, EI is now regarded as a multidimensional construct encompassing emotional awareness, regulation, and application in guiding thought and behaviour.

In professional and academic contexts, EI is increasingly recognized as essential for effective performance, collaboration, and leadership. It enables individuals to manage stress, sustain motivation, and build productive relationships, thereby enhancing job satisfaction and output (Ojedokun & Balogun, 2020). Empirical studies further indicate that emotionally intelligent individuals demonstrate resilience, adaptability, and creativity competencies vital for academic work that requires sustained intellectual effort and collaboration (Adekunle & Madukoma, 2022). Within librarianship, EI supports both service delivery and scholarly engagement, as librarians with high EI exhibit empathy, effective communication, and composure under pressure, which enhance professional interactions and research collaboration (Nwosu & Igwe, 2019; Adeleke & Olayinka, 2021).

In Nigeria, the relevance of EI is amplified by increasing expectations for research productivity amid institutional constraints such as inadequate funding, staff shortages, and limited infrastructure. These challenges heighten workplace stress, making emotional intelligence an essential coping resource that

enables librarians to remain motivated and committed to professional and research responsibilities (Mohammed & Salisu, 2021; Akinyemi, 2023). Thus, EI extends beyond a personal attribute to a strategic capability that supports adaptation, research engagement, and overall professional effectiveness in academic librarianship.

Research Productivity of Academic Librarians

Research productivity is a central indicator of academic effectiveness, institutional reputation, and national knowledge advancement. Within universities, it encompasses a range of scholarly outputs, including journal articles, conference papers, book chapters, technical reports, research grants, and innovative professional contributions. It reflects the intellectual capacity of academic staff and serves as a benchmark for evaluating institutional performance and global relevance (Tijani & Adetoro, 2020; Ahmed & Musa, 2021). For academic librarians, research productivity signifies their ability to engage in systematic inquiry, document professional practice, and generate knowledge that enhances library services and information management.

The concept has expanded beyond traditional publication counts to incorporate broader measures of scholarly engagement and impact, such as citation frequency, h-index, research collaboration, and knowledge dissemination (Okonedo & Popoola, 2022). This shift highlights that productivity is not only about the volume of output but also its quality, visibility, and relevance. In this context, librarians operate as both information managers and knowledge creators, using research to drive innovation, strengthen institutional learning, and support interdisciplinary collaboration (Onuoha & Ogbuiyi, 2020). However, in Nigeria, research productivity among academic librarians remains constrained by factors such as inadequate funding, limited mentorship, heavy workloads, and insufficient institutional support, alongside organizational cultures that prioritize administrative duties over scholarly engagement (Ezeani & Ogbodo, 2019; Mohammed & Salisu, 2021). Strengthening research capacity is therefore essential for enhancing academic standards and aligning with global best practices (Akintunde & Omeluzor, 2023).

Research productivity is also closely linked to professional recognition and career progression, as librarians who publish, present at conferences, and engage in collaborative research tend to achieve greater visibility and advancement within academic systems (Onyebuchi & Ogunrombi, 2022). Beyond institutional influences, individual factors particularly components of emotional intelligence such as motivation, resilience, and self-regulation play a significant role in shaping research engagement (Adekunle & Madukoma, 2022). Consequently, research productivity should be viewed as a multidimensional construct influenced by both environmental conditions and personal

competencies, underscoring the need for integrated strategies that address structural barriers while enhancing individual capacity.

Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Research Productivity

A growing body of literature has examined the link between emotional intelligence (EI) and librarians' productivity, particularly in relation to research output. In the academic library context, productivity extends beyond routine service delivery to include scholarly publishing, professional contributions, and institutional engagement. EI is broadly understood as a set of emotional and social competencies that shape how individuals perceive, regulate, and utilize emotions in demanding tasks. Within research settings, these competencies play a crucial role in sustaining motivation, managing stress, and maintaining long-term scholarly commitment, thereby influencing overall research performance.

Empirical evidence consistently indicates that EI enhances research productivity through multiple psychological and social mechanisms. Librarians with higher EI are better equipped to cope with setbacks such as manuscript rejection, manage stress, and persist in complex research tasks (Adekunle & Madukoma, 2022; Eze & Nwankwo, 2024). EI also facilitates effective collaboration, which is increasingly essential in contemporary research environments characterized by teamwork and interdisciplinary partnerships. Emotionally intelligent librarians tend to demonstrate empathy, strong communication skills, and interpersonal sensitivity, enabling them to build productive academic networks and engage more actively in joint research and publication activities (Akintunde & Omeluzor, 2023; Wong & Law, 2002).

Self-motivation, a core dimension of EI, further strengthens research engagement by fostering persistence, discipline, and goal orientation. Librarians with strong emotional competencies are more likely to sustain interest in research, generate new ideas, and contribute meaningfully to academic discourse (Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden, & Dornheim, 1998). Development and validation of a measure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and* et al., 1998; Bello & Lawal, 2023; Mensah & Owusu, 2020). Conversely, low EI can hinder productivity by increasing susceptibility to stress, weakening motivation, and limiting effective collaboration (Oso & Olaniyi, 2024). Additionally, EI contributes to cognitive processes such as creativity and problem-solving, which are essential for producing original research and navigating complex academic challenges (Baker & Holloway, 2020; Mandal & Ray, 2018).

Despite its positive influence, the relationship between EI and research productivity is shaped by contextual and institutional factors. Structural constraints such as heavy workloads, inadequate funding, and limited mentorship can restrict the translation of emotional competence into tangible

research outputs (Eze & Okonkwo, 2020). Demographic factors, including gender and professional experience, also moderate this relationship, while international evidence highlights the role of EI in enhancing job satisfaction, adaptability, and persistence in scholarly work (Kennedy & Brancolini, 2018; Corral & Muir, 2019). Overall, the literature suggests that while EI significantly supports research productivity, its full impact depends on supportive institutional environments. Strengthening emotional competencies alongside improved organizational support systems is therefore essential for enhancing librarians' scholarly performance and professional effectiveness (Oyeboade, 2016; Yaya, Akintayo, & Uzohue 2016).

Gap in the Literature

Although existing studies have established a relationship between emotional intelligence and general workplace productivity among librarians, limited empirical attention has been given to its influence on research productivity specifically. Moreover, most studies have focused on librarians in South-Western Nigeria, leaving other regions relatively underexplored. This study addresses this gap by examining emotional intelligence as a predictor of research productivity among academic librarians in federal universities in North-Central Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on two theories, Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence and Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). The Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence developed by Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer conceptualises emotional intelligence as a set of cognitive abilities related to the perception, understanding, utilization, and regulation of emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). The theory identifies four major components of emotional intelligence, namely perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thinking, understanding emotions, and managing emotions effectively. Individuals who possess these emotional abilities are often better equipped to cope with stress, maintain motivation, and manage interpersonal relationships within professional environments. In relation to this study, the theory provides a useful framework for explaining how emotional intelligence can influence research productivity among academic librarians. Librarians who are able to regulate emotions effectively and remain motivated are more likely to persevere in research activities such as conducting studies, writing manuscripts, collaborating with colleagues, and responding positively to peer-review feedback, thereby enhancing their overall scholarly productivity.

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), developed by Icek Ajzen (1991), explains that human behaviour is guided primarily by behavioural intentions, which are influenced by attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. Attitude refers to an individual's

evaluation of a behaviour, subjective norms involve perceived social expectations, while perceived behavioural control reflects an individual's belief in their capability to perform a task successfully. Within the context of academic librarianship, the theory helps explain how librarians' intentions to engage in research activities may be shaped by their perceptions of research, institutional expectations, and confidence in their research abilities. Emotional intelligence may strengthen these behavioural components by improving librarians' confidence, resilience, interpersonal relationships, and ability to manage research-related stress. Consequently, the theory provides additional explanation for how emotional competencies can positively influence research engagement and scholarly productivity among academic librarians.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey and correlational research design. The design was considered appropriate because it allows the researcher to collect quantitative data from a large population and examine relationships between variables. According to Babbie (2020), survey research is useful in generating quantitative data that describe characteristics of a population and identify relationships between variables.

Population, Sampling and Sampling Technique

The population of the study consisted of 130 professional academic librarians working in federal universities in North-Central Nigeria. A total enumeration technique was employed, allowing all members of the population to participate in the study. The table below shows the population of the study;

Table 1: Population of the Study

S/N	UNIVERSITY	POP.	SOURCE
1.	Yakubu Gowon University (formerly University of Abuja)	9	University of Abuja Library
2.	Federal University Lokoja (FULOKOJA)	14	FUL University Library
3.	Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi	13	FUAM Library
4.	Federal University Lafia (FULAFIA)	10	University Library
5.	Federal University of Technology, Minna (FUT Minna)	26	FUT Minna Library
6.	University of Jos (UNIJOS)	31	UniJos Library

7.	University of Ilorin (UNILORIN)	27	Unillorin Library
	TOTAL	130	

Data Collection Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure emotional intelligence and research productivity. The use of a structured questionnaire is justified because it enables efficient data collection from a large and geographically dispersed population while maintaining uniformity of responses (Bryman, 2016).

Validity and Reliability of Instrument

The instrument was validated by experts and subjected to reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha. A pilot test was conducted among 30 librarians of Nasarawa State University. A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.80 was realized, thereby confirming the reliability of the instrument.

Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) to determine the relationship between emotional intelligence and research productivity.

Ethical Considerations

The study adhered strictly to established ethical principles guiding social science research. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and respondents were adequately informed about the purpose and objectives of the research before the administration of the questionnaire. The respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, as no personal identifiers were included in the instrument. Informed consent was obtained from the participants, and they were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without any negative consequences. Furthermore, the data collected were used strictly for academic purposes and were handled with utmost confidentiality to ensure the privacy and protection of the respondents' information.

Analysis and Interpretation

Data collected was analysed quantitatively using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, and standard deviation were used to summarise respondents' demographic characteristics and responses to questionnaire items. Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Table 2: Response Rate Across Sampled Universities (Population N = 130; n = 119)

University	Population	Responses Received	Rate (%)
Yakubu Gowon University, Abuja	9	8	88.9
Federal University Lokoja	14	13	92.9
Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi	13	12	92.3
Federal University of Lafia (FULAFIA)	10	9	90.0
Federal University of Technology, Minna	26	24	92.3
University of Jos (UNIJOS)	31	28	90.3
University of Ilorin (UNILORIN)	27	25	92.6
Total	130	119	91.5

Note. Field Survey, 2025.

Table 2 shows that questionnaires were administered to all 130 academic librarians across the seven sampled universities. Of these, 119 completed questionnaires were retrieved and validated for analysis, yielding an overall response rate of 91.5%. Response rates across individual institutions ranged from 88.9% to 92.9%. This high level of participation provides a reliable empirical basis for the study findings.

Objective One: Determine the Level of Emotional Intelligence among Academic Librarians in Federal University Libraries in North-Central Nigeria

Table 3: Level of Emotional Intelligence among Academic Librarians (N = 119)

S/N	Descriptive Items	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean (SD)	Remark
1	I am aware of my emotions during workplace interactions	4 (3.4)	8 (6.7)	12 (10.1)	51 (42.9)	44 (37.0)	4.03 (0.91)	High
2	I can control my emotions in stressful situations	6 (5.0)	10 (8.4)	15 (12.6)	48 (40.3)	40 (33.6)	3.89 (0.97)	High
3	I understand how my emotions affect my professional behaviour	3 (2.5)	9 (7.6)	11 (9.2)	50 (42.0)	46 (38.7)	4.06 (0.88)	High
4	I show empathy toward library users and colleagues	5 (4.2)	11 (9.2)	14 (11.8)	49 (41.2)	40 (33.6)	3.91 (0.95)	High
5	I maintain positive interpersonal relationships in the workplace	4 (3.4)	7 (5.9)	13 (10.9)	53 (44.5)	42 (35.3)	4.04 (0.87)	High
6	I communicate effectively with colleagues and library users	5 (4.2)	8 (6.7)	15 (12.6)	50 (42.0)	41 (34.5)	3.97 (0.92)	High
	Grand Mean						3.98 (0.92)	High

Table 3 revealed that academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria possessed a high level of emotional intelligence with a grand mean score of 3.98. The respondents particularly agreed that they understood how their emotions affected their professional behaviour and maintained positive interpersonal relationships within the workplace. The relatively low standard deviation values indicated that the respondents' opinions were closely related.

Objective Two: Examine the Level of Research Productivity among Academic Librarians in Federal University Libraries in North-Central Nigeria

Table 4: Level of Research Productivity among Academic Librarians (N = 119)

S/N	Items	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean (SD)	Remark
1	I regularly publish articles in scholarly journals	7 (5.9)	12 (10.1)	18 (15.1)	46 (38.7)	36 (30.3)	3.77 (1.02)	High
2	I actively participate in academic conferences and workshops	5 (4.2)	10 (8.4)	16 (13.4)	49 (41.2)	39 (32.8)	3.92 (0.94)	High
3	I engage in collaborative research with colleagues	4 (3.4)	9 (7.6)	15 (12.6)	51 (42.9)	40 (33.6)	3.96 (0.89)	High
4	I contribute chapters to scholarly books and publications	11 (9.2)	16 (13.4)	22 (18.5)	40 (33.6)	30 (25.2)	3.52 (1.13)	Moderate
5	I participate in institutional research activities regularly	6 (5.0)	11 (9.2)	17 (14.3)	48 (40.3)	37 (31.1)	3.83 (0.98)	High
6	I make efforts to improve my research and publication output	5 (4.2)	8 (6.7)	14 (11.8)	52 (43.7)	40 (33.6)	4.00 (0.89)	High
	Grand Mean						3.83 (0.97)	High

Table 4 revealed that academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria demonstrated a high level of research productivity with a grand mean score of 3.83. The respondents particularly agreed that they made efforts to improve their research and publication output and actively engaged in collaborative research activities. However, contributions to scholarly books and publications recorded a relatively lower mean score compared to other research productivity indicators.

Objective Three: Identify the Influence of Self-awareness, Empathy, and Social Skills on Research Productivity among Academic Librarians

Table 5: Influence of Emotional Intelligence Competencies on Research Productivity (N = 119)

S/N	Items	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean (SD)	Remark
1	Self-awareness helps me remain motivated toward research activities	4 (3.4)	9 (7.6)	13 (10.9)	50 (42.0)	43 (36.1)	4.00 (0.89)	High Influence

2	Empathy improves my ability to collaborate with research partners	5 (4.2)	11 (9.2)	15 (12.6)	49 (41.2)	39 (32.8)	3.89 (0.95)	High Influence
3	Social skills enhance my participation in scholarly networking	3 (2.5)	8 (6.7)	12 (10.1)	52 (43.7)	44 (37.0)	4.06 (0.85)	High Influence
4	Emotional intelligence helps me cope with research-related stress	5 (4.2)	9 (7.6)	14 (11.8)	51 (42.9)	40 (33.6)	3.94 (0.91)	High Influence
5	Emotional intelligence improves communication during academic collaboration	4 (3.4)	7 (5.9)	15 (12.6)	53 (44.5)	40 (33.6)	3.99 (0.87)	High Influence
6	Emotional intelligence contributes positively to my research productivity	3 (2.5)	8 (6.7)	13 (10.9)	50 (42.0)	45 (37.8)	4.06 (0.84)	High Influence
	Grand Mean						3.99 (0.89)	High Influence

The findings in Table 5 showed that self-awareness, empathy, and social skills exerted strong influence on research productivity among academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria. Social skills and the overall contribution of emotional intelligence to research productivity recorded the highest mean scores, indicating that interpersonal competencies significantly enhance scholarly engagement, collaboration, and publication activities among librarians.

Objective Four: Determine the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Research Productivity among Academic Librarians

Table 6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis Showing the Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Research Productivity (N = 119)

Variables	Mean	SD	r-value	p-value	Decision
Emotional Intelligence	3.98	0.92	0.721	0.000	Significant
Research Productivity	3.83	0.97			

Table 6 revealed a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and research productivity among academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria ($r = 0.721$, $p < 0.05$). The result implies that academic librarians with higher emotional intelligence competencies tend to demonstrate higher levels of research productivity. The finding further suggests that competencies such as self-awareness, empathy, and social skills significantly enhance librarians' ability to engage effectively in scholarly research and publication activities.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria possessed a high level of emotional intelligence, particularly in the areas of self-awareness, empathy, and social skills. The respondents demonstrated strong ability to understand and

manage their emotions, maintain positive interpersonal relationships, and communicate effectively with colleagues and library users. The findings support the position of Daniel Goleman that emotional intelligence competencies are essential for effective workplace performance and professional relationships. The result is also consistent with the findings of Onwubiko (2020), who reported that emotionally intelligent librarians demonstrated improved workplace effectiveness and organizational performance. Similarly, Adeyemi, Temim, and Uzamot (2021) found that affectivity and social adjustment positively influenced librarians' interactions and relationships within library environments. The high level of emotional intelligence observed in this study may be attributed to the collaborative and service-oriented nature of academic librarianship, which requires continuous interaction with users, researchers, and colleagues.

The study further revealed that academic librarians demonstrated a relatively high level of research productivity through journal publications, conference participation, collaborative research, and engagement in institutional research activities. This finding suggests that academic librarians in federal university libraries are increasingly participating in scholarly communication and knowledge production despite existing institutional and professional challenges. The result corroborates the findings of Makinde et al. (2020), who observed that academic librarians in Nigerian universities were actively involved in research and publication activities, although constrained by factors such as workload and inadequate research support. The prominence of collaborative research observed in this study also aligns with the submission of Ugochukwu-Smooth and Nwabueze (2023), who argued that professional collaboration and capacity-building initiatives significantly enhance librarians' research engagement and scholarly visibility. The finding indicates growing awareness among librarians of the importance of research productivity for career advancement, institutional recognition, and professional relevance.

The findings also showed that emotional intelligence competencies such as self-awareness, empathy, and social skills exerted strong influence on research productivity among academic librarians. Social skills emerged as one of the strongest contributors to scholarly networking, academic collaboration, and effective communication during research activities. This implies that librarians who are emotionally intelligent are more likely to sustain research motivation, manage research-related stress, and maintain productive academic relationships that support scholarly output. The finding agrees with the work of Yaya and Opeke (2016), who established that emotional intelligence contributed positively to job effectiveness and productivity among librarians in Nigerian universities. The result is equally supported by Afolabi and Abidoeye (2022), who noted that emotionally intelligent professionals often

demonstrate greater resilience, adaptability, and commitment toward professional responsibilities and scholarly engagement. The implication is that emotional intelligence competencies can serve as important psychological resources for improving librarians' research participation and publication performance.

Finally, the study established a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and research productivity among academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria. The significant correlation obtained indicates that higher levels of emotional intelligence are associated with increased scholarly productivity among librarians. This finding lends support to the Ability Model of Emotional Intelligence developed by Mayer and Salovey (1997), which emphasizes that the ability to perceive, understand, and regulate emotions enhances professional effectiveness and performance outcomes. The result also aligns with studies conducted in organizational and educational contexts which found that emotional intelligence significantly predicts workplace productivity, motivation, and collaborative performance (Afolabi & Abidoye, 2022; Rahman & Batubara, 2025). The finding therefore, underscores the importance of emotional intelligence as a critical factor in strengthening research culture and scholarly productivity among academic librarians in Nigerian universities.

Conclusion

The study examined emotional intelligence as a determinant of research productivity among academic librarians in federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria with particular emphasis on self-awareness, empathy, and social skills. The findings revealed that academic librarians possessed high levels of emotional intelligence and demonstrated appreciable engagement in research and scholarly activities. The study further established that emotional intelligence competencies positively influenced research productivity by enhancing motivation, collaboration, communication, and the ability to manage research-related stress. In addition, the study found a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and research productivity, indicating that librarians with higher emotional intelligence competencies were more likely to demonstrate greater scholarly output and research engagement.

The study therefore concludes that emotional intelligence constitutes an important psychological factor in improving research productivity among academic librarians. Competencies such as self-awareness, empathy, and social skills not only strengthen interpersonal relationships and workplace effectiveness but also contribute significantly to librarians' scholarly participation and publication performance.

Consequently, strengthening emotional intelligence among academic librarians may enhance research culture, professional effectiveness, and sustainable scholarly development within federal university libraries in North-Central Nigeria.

Recommendations

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

1. University management and library administrators should organise regular workshops, seminars, and training programmes aimed at developing emotional intelligence competencies among academic librarians.
2. Academic librarians should be encouraged to strengthen interpersonal relationships, collaborative research networks, and professional communication skills in order to improve their research productivity.
3. University libraries should establish supportive research environments through mentorship programmes, research grants, and institutional encouragement that promote scholarly engagement among librarians.
4. Professional library associations and institutions should integrate emotional intelligence development into capacity-building initiatives and continuing professional development programmes for librarians.
5. Academic librarians should consciously develop self-awareness, empathy, and social skills as essential competencies for improving workplace effectiveness and sustaining long-term research productivity.

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