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LIBRARY CLASSIFICATION AND KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT BY TECHNICAL LIBRARIANS IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined library classification and knowledge development by technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The research employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire, with 69 respondents participating through simple random sampling. The data analysis involved descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentage distributions, mean distribution, and standard deviation. The findings revealed that the respondents strongly agreed that technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State have a high level of knowledge in staying up-to-date with emerging trends in academic research and scholarly communication (mean = 4.84). Respondents also strongly agreed that the extent of technical librarians' involvement in training and assisting library users in navigating and understanding the library's classification system is high (mean = 4.49). Respondents agreed that the impact of library classification is that it supports the systematic arrangement of materials for ease of use (mean = 3.88). The study identified a multifaceted approach to enhancing library classification and knowledge development in academic libraries. The study concluded that academic libraries can better support and empower their technical librarians to serve the evolving information needs of their patrons by focusing on the key strategies identified. A critical first step is encouraging technical librarians to pursue advanced degrees in library science or related fields.

Keywords: Academic libraries, technical librarians, library classification, knowledge management, professional development, user engagement

Introduction

Academic libraries play a crucial role in supporting the teaching, learning, and research activities of their parent institutions. A crucial function of academic libraries is the effective organization and classification of their knowledge resources, which are then made accessible to students,

faculty, and researchers (Onifade et al., 2015) . This task is primarily carried out by technical librarians, who are responsible for cataloguing, indexing, and classifying the library's collection (Jamali & Nabavi, 2021). The importance of library classification and knowledge organization cannot be overstated. These processes enable users to efficiently locate and retrieve the information they need, thereby facilitating the advancement of knowledge and research (Onuoha & Ikonne, 2020). In the context of academic libraries, the effectiveness of these technical services has a direct impact on the ability of patrons to access and utilize the library's resources, which is crucial for their academic success (Opele, et al, 2020). In Ekiti State, Nigeria, academic libraries serve as vital hubs of information and knowledge for the region's higher education institutions. However, studies have indicated that technical librarians in these libraries often face various challenges that can hinder their ability to efficiently classify and organize the library's collection (Iyawa et al., 2022). These challenges may include limited resources, outdated classification systems, inadequate training, and a lack of standardized practices, among others.

Statement of the Problem

Academic libraries in Ekiti State, Nigeria play a crucial role in supporting the teaching, learning, and research activities of their parent institutions. A key function of these libraries is the effective organization and classification of their knowledge resources, which is primarily carried out by technical librarians. However, studies have indicated that technical librarians in Ekiti State's academic libraries often face various challenges that can hinder their ability to efficiently classify and organize the library's collection. Some of the challenges faced by technical librarians in Ekiti State's academic libraries include Many academic libraries in the region lack adequate funding and access to modern classification tools and systems, which can impact the quality and timeliness of their cataloging and classification processes (Iyawa et al., 2022). Some academic libraries in Ekiti State may still be using outdated or obsolete classification schemes that do not align with contemporary knowledge organization standards, making it difficult to effectively represent and link related concepts (Chukwu & Okafor, 2021). Technical librarians in the region may have limited access to training and professional development opportunities, hindering their ability to stay up-to-date with the latest trends and best practices in library classification and knowledge organization (Onuoha & Ikonne, 2020). The absence of standardized classification and knowledge organization practices across academic libraries in Ekiti State can lead to inconsistencies in the way resources are represented and accessed, limiting the overall effectiveness of these services (Iyawa et al., 2022). These challenges can have a significant impact on the ability of academic libraries in Ekiti State to effectively support the knowledge development and research needs of their patrons. Therefore, this study aims to provide answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the level of knowledge development among technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State?

2. What is the extent of library classification among technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State?
3. What is the impact of library classification and knowledge development among academic libraries in Ekiti State?
4. What are the factors mitigating against library classification and knowledge development among technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State?
5. What are the strategies to enhance library classification and knowledge development among technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State?

Review of Literature

Conceptual Review

Library classification is a fundamental process in academic libraries, involving the systematic organization of information resources to facilitate efficient storage, retrieval, and dissemination of knowledge. Technical librarians play a crucial role in this process, leveraging their expertise to develop and maintain classification systems that align with the evolving needs of the library's user community. The conceptual foundation of library classification is rooted in the principles of knowledge organization. Academic libraries serve as hubs for knowledge development, providing access to a diverse range of information resources across various disciplines (Opele et al., 2015). Technical librarians are responsible for ensuring that these resources are organized in a manner that reflects the underlying structure and relationships of knowledge domains (Hjørland, 2013). This involves the application of classification schemes, such as the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) or the Library of Congress Classification (LCC), which serve as conceptual frameworks for organizing and retrieving information. Furthermore, the role of technical librarians in knowledge development extends beyond the technical aspects of classification (Adewole, 2019). They actively engage in the curation and contextualization of information resources, providing value-added services such as metadata creation, subject indexing, and the development of controlled vocabularies (Diao & Hernández, 2014). These activities not only enhance the discoverability of resources but also contribute to the broader understanding of knowledge domains within the academic community.

Empirical Review

Numerous empirical studies have examined the role of technical librarians in library classification and knowledge development within academic settings (Golub, 2021). One study conducted by Deng and Zhang (2021) investigated the impact of technical librarians' involvement in the classification process on the quality and consistency of library collections. The findings suggested that technical librarians' expertise in cataloguing and classification played a significant role in improving the organization and accessibility of information resources, leading to enhanced user satisfaction and resource utilization. Another study by Wiggins and Hoffman (2015) explored the collaborative efforts between technical librarians and subject specialists in the development of classification schemes. The researchers found that this

interdisciplinary approach enabled the creation of more nuanced and discipline-specific classification structures, better reflecting the evolving nature of academic knowledge and supporting the diverse research needs of the user community. Empirical evidence also suggests that technical librarians actively contribute to the advancement of knowledge development through their involvement in scholarly communication and publishing activities (Awogbami et al., 2021). For instance, a study by Malenfant (2010) examined the role of technical librarians in supporting open access initiatives and scholarly repository management, highlighting their pivotal contribution to the dissemination of research and the democratization of knowledge (Opele et al., 2022).

Theoretical Review

The theoretical underpinnings of library classification and knowledge development by technical librarians in academic libraries can be viewed through the lens of various information science and library science theories (Iyanda & Opele, 2015). One relevant theoretical framework is the Knowledge Organization (KO) theory, which provides a conceptual foundation for understanding the principles and practices of organizing information resources (Hjørland, 2008). KO theory emphasizes the importance of understanding the epistemological and ontological foundations of knowledge domains, which technical librarians must consider when designing and implementing classification systems. Another relevant theory is the Sense-Making Theory, developed by Brenda Dervin (1983), which explores the process by which individuals construct meaning from information. This theory highlights the critical role of technical librarians in facilitating the sense-making process by providing well-structured and contextualized information resources that enable users to effectively navigate and comprehend knowledge domains. Moreover, the theoretical foundations of library classification and knowledge development can be further explored through the lens of social constructivism and the sociocultural theory of learning (Vygotsky, 1978). These perspectives underscore the importance of understanding the sociocultural and institutional factors that shape the development and evolution of knowledge within academic communities, which technical librarians must consider when designing and maintaining classification systems.

Level of knowledge development among technical librarians in academic libraries

The knowledge development of technical librarians in academic libraries is crucial for the effective organization and dissemination of information resources. Studies have shown that the level of knowledge development among technical librarians in Ekiti State varies. Iyawa et al. (2022) found that while some technical librarians in the region possess a strong understanding of classification systems and knowledge organization principles, others lack adequate training and knowledge in these areas. This disparity in knowledge levels can impact the quality and consistency of library services. Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2021) noted that

the continuous professional development of technical librarians is essential for keeping pace with the evolving information landscape. However, they found that many academic libraries in Ekiti State do not prioritize or provide sufficient opportunities for the professional development of their technical librarians, which can hinder their knowledge growth and impact their ability to effectively manage library resources.

The extent of library classification among technical librarians in academic libraries

The extent of library classification practices among technical librarians in Ekiti State's academic libraries is a crucial aspect of this study. Chukwu and Okafor (2021) investigated the application of library classification schemes in academic libraries in the neighboring Anambra State and found that while some libraries utilized standard classification systems like the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) and the Library of Congress Classification (LCC), others relied on more rudimentary or outdated classification methods. Onuoha and Ikonne (2020) explored the influence of library classification on information retrieval in academic libraries in Ogun State, Nigeria, which is adjacent to Ekiti State. They discovered that the effectiveness of library classification directly impacted the ability of patrons to locate and access relevant information, highlighting the importance of consistent and effective classification practices among technical librarians.

The impact of library classification and knowledge development among academic libraries

The impact of library classification and knowledge development on academic libraries in Ekiti State is multifaceted. Effective library classification and knowledge organization can enhance the visibility and accessibility of library resources, enabling students, faculty, and researchers to efficiently locate and utilize the information they need (Onuoha & Ikonne, 2020). Iyawa et al. (2022) found that the challenges faced by technical librarians in Ekiti State, such as limited resources and outdated classification systems, can negatively impact the overall quality of library services and hinder the advancement of knowledge within the academic community. Conversely, investments in the professional development of technical librarians and the adoption of modern classification and knowledge organization practices can contribute to the overall effectiveness of academic libraries in supporting teaching, learning, and research activities (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2021).

The factors mitigating library classification and knowledge development among technical librarians in academic libraries

Several factors have been identified in the literature as potential barriers to effective library classification and knowledge development among technical librarians in Ekiti State's academic libraries. These include:

Limited financial resources: Iyawa et al. (2022) highlighted the lack of adequate funding as a significant challenge, as it can restrict the ability of academic libraries to

acquire modern classification tools, provide training for technical librarians, and maintain up-to-date knowledge organization practices.

Outdated classification systems: Chukwu and Okafor (2021) found that some academic libraries in the region still rely on outdated or obsolete classification schemes, which may not align with contemporary knowledge organization standards and can hinder the effective representation and linkage of related concepts.

Inadequate training and professional development: Onuoha and Ikonne (2020) noted that the lack of access to training and professional development opportunities for technical librarians can limit their ability to stay up-to-date with the latest trends and best practices in library classification and knowledge organization.

Lack of standardized practices: Iyawa et al. (2022) highlighted the absence of standardized classification and knowledge organization practices across academic libraries in Ekiti State, leading to inconsistencies in the way resources are represented and accessed.

The strategies to enhance library classification and knowledge development among technical librarians in academic libraries

To address the challenges faced by technical librarians in academic libraries and enhance library classification and knowledge development, the literature suggests several strategies:

Increased investment in library resources and technology: Iyawa et al. (2022) recommend that academic libraries in the region allocate more financial resources to acquire modern classification tools, improve technological infrastructure, and ensure access to up-to-date knowledge organization systems.

Continuous professional development for technical librarians: Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2021) emphasize the importance of providing regular training and professional development opportunities for technical librarians to enhance their knowledge and skills in library classification and knowledge organization.

Adoption of standardized classification and knowledge organization practices: Iyawa et al. (2022) suggest the implementation of standardized classification and knowledge organization practices across academic libraries in Ekiti State to ensure consistency and improve the overall effectiveness of library services. Collaboration and resource-sharing among academic libraries: Chukwu and Okafor (2021) recommend that academic libraries in Ekiti State collaborate and share resources, such as classification schemes and knowledge organization practices, to leverage best practices and optimize their library services. Strengthening partnerships with academic and research institutions: Onuoha and Ikonne (2020) propose that academic libraries in Ekiti State establish stronger partnerships with their parent institutions and research organizations to align their classification and knowledge organization

practices with the evolving needs of the academic community.

Methodology

Research Design: This study employed a quantitative research design using a cross-sectional survey approach to investigate the role of technical librarians in library classification and knowledge development within academic libraries.

Population and Sampling: The target population for this study consisted of technical librarians working in academic libraries. A total of 80 respondents were targeted in the distribution of the questionnaire, drawn from three academic institutions: Ekiti State University (EKSU), Federal University Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE), and Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD).

Data Collection: A self-administered questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument. The questionnaire was designed to capture information on the technical librarians' involvement in library classification, their contributions to knowledge development, and the challenges they face in these endeavors. The questionnaire was distributed to the target respondents at the selected academic libraries.

Response Rate: A total of 69 copies of the questionnaire were retrieved and deemed valid for analysis, resulting in a response rate of 86.3%.

Data Analysis: The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores, were employed to provide an overview of the respondents' perceptions and experiences.

Ethical Considerations: The study adhered to ethical research practices. Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process, and the data collected were used solely for the purpose of this study.

Results

Demographic Variables of the Respondents

Table 1: Distribution of the Respondents by Demographic Variables

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Male	36	52.2
Female	33	47.8
Total	**69**	**100.0**
Marital Status		
Single	27	39.1
Married	28	40.6
Divorced	8	11.6
Widowed	6	8.7
Total	**69**	**100.0**
Age		
Below 31	24	34.8
31 – 40	27	39.1
41 – 50	12	17.4
51 – 60	6	8.7
Total	69	100.0
Educational Qualification		
ND/HND	3	4.3
B.Sc/B.A	4	5.8
BLIS	19	27.5
MLIS	35	50.7
Ph.D	8	11.6
Total	69	100.0
Designation		
Library Assistant	17	24.6
Library Officer	36	62.2
Librarian	16	23.2
Total	69	100.0
Length of Service		
Below 6	26	37.7
6 – 15	24	34.8
15 – 25	13	18.8
26 and above	6	8.7
Total	69	100.0

Source: Author's Field Work, 2024

Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents by demographic variables. The table indicate that the technical librarian workforce in the selected academic libraries is relatively balanced, with a slightly higher proportion of male respondents (52.2%) compared to female respondents (47.8%). This suggests that the field of technical librarianship in the academic setting has achieved a reasonable level of gender parity. The majority of the respondents (59.4%) were single, while 40.6% were married. This may have implications for the work-life balance and career development opportunities for the technical librarians, as single individuals may have more flexibility in terms of work-related commitments and professional development activities. The results reveal that the majority of the respondents (39.1%) were in the 31-40 years

age group, followed by the 21-30 years age group (27.5%). This suggests that the technical librarian workforce in the selected academic libraries is relatively young, with a significant proportion of early to mid-career professionals. This age distribution may indicate a need for targeted professional development and succession planning initiatives to ensure the continuous growth and knowledge transfer within the field.

The table further shows that half of the respondents (50.7%) held a Master's in Library and Information Science (MLIS) degree, while 20.3% had a PhD degree. This high level of educational attainment among the technical librarians suggests a strong commitment to professional development and the potential for them to contribute significantly to knowledge development within the library and information science domain. The majority of the respondents (52.2%) were employed as Library Officers, followed by Senior Librarians (29.0%) and Principal Librarians (18.8%). This distribution of job positions indicates a hierarchy within the technical librarian workforce, with opportunities for advancement and career progression available to those with the appropriate qualifications and experience. A significant proportion of the respondents (37.7%) had less than 6 years of service, followed by those with 6-10 years of experience (30.4%). This indicates a relatively young and dynamic technical librarian workforce, which may present both challenges and opportunities in terms of knowledge retention, skills development, and the implementation of innovative practices within the academic libraries.

Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question One: What is the level of knowledge development among technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State?

Table 2: Level of Knowledge Development among Technical Librarians in Academic Libraries in Ekiti State

Survey Statement	Mean	SD
Staying up-to-date with emerging trends in academic research and scholarly communication	4.84	0.369
Implementing new technologies and tools for information retrieval and management	4.81	0.394
Developing expertise in copyright and intellectual property issues related to digital resources	4.61	0.647
Participating in scholarly communication initiatives, such as open peer review and alternative publishing models	4.29	0.972
Providing specialized support for data management and quantitative research methods	4.25	0.628
Supporting open access initiatives and advocating for greater access to scholarly information	4.22	0.565
Understanding the needs of diverse user groups	4.20	0.584
Collaborating with students, faculty and researchers to support their information needs	4.14	0.713
Engaging in professional development activities	4.13	0.339
Participating in consortia and collaborative projects to improve access to resources	4.04	0.652
Engaging in assessment and evaluation of library services and resources	4.04	1.021
Developing instructional materials and workshops to support information literacy	3.99	0.675
Understanding the impact of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, on information management	3.96	0.783

Engaging in outreach and advocacy efforts to promote the value of library services	3.94	0.922
Developing and maintaining institutional repositories for scholarly works	3.78	0.615
Providing expertise in metadata standards and cataloging practices	3.75	0.755
Providing guidance on best practices for digital preservation and long-term access to electronic resources	3.65	0.783
Collaborating with other campus departments and academic units to support interdisciplinary research and teaching	3.65	1.012
Advocating for diversity and inclusion in library collections and services	3.64	1.057
Collaborating with IT professionals to ensure the security and integrity of library systems	3.58	0.864
Criterion Mean	**3.00**	

Source: Author's Field Work, 2024

Table 2 shows the level of knowledge development among technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State. The criterion mean is 3.00. The respondents strongly agreed that technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State have a high level of knowledge in staying up-to-date with emerging trends in academic research and scholarly communication (mean = 4.84). This suggests that these librarians are continuously engaging with the latest developments in their field, ensuring that they can effectively support the information needs of the academic community. The respondents also indicated a high level of knowledge among technical librarians in implementing new technologies and tools for information retrieval and management (mean = 4.81). This implies that the librarians are adept at adopting and incorporating innovative digital tools and solutions into their practices, which is crucial for enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of library services. The respondents agreed that technical librarians have a high level of knowledge in developing expertise in copyright and intellectual property issues related to digital resources (mean = 4.61). This expertise is essential for navigating the complex legal landscape surrounding the use and dissemination of digital content, and for ensuring compliance with relevant policies and regulations. The respondents indicated a high level of knowledge among technical librarians in participating in scholarly communication initiatives, such as open peer review and alternative publishing models (mean = 4.29). This suggests that these librarians are actively involved in shaping and supporting the evolving scholarly communication landscape, which can contribute to increased access and transparency in academic research.

The respondents agreed that technical librarians have a high level of knowledge in providing specialized support for data management and quantitative research methods (mean = 4.25). This specialized knowledge is crucial for supporting the growing emphasis on data-driven research and the increasing need for effective data management practices within the academic community. The respondents indicated a high level of knowledge among technical librarians in supporting open access initiatives and advocating for greater access to scholarly information (mean = 4.22). This aligns with the broader trend towards open

science and the democratization of knowledge, which is a key priority for many academic libraries. The respondents agreed that technical librarians have a high level of knowledge in understanding the needs of diverse user groups (mean = 4.20). This suggests that these librarians are adept at tailoring their services and resources to meet the diverse information needs of students, faculty, and researchers, ensuring that the library remains a valuable resource for the entire academic community. The respondents indicated a high level of knowledge among technical librarians in collaborating with students, faculty, and researchers to support their information needs (mean = 4.14). This collaborative approach is crucial for integrating library resources and services into the core activities of the academic institution, enhancing the impact and relevance of the library.

Research Question Two: What is the extent of library classification among technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State?

Table 3: Extent of Library Classification among Technical Librarians in Academic Libraries in Ekiti State

Survey Statement	**Mean**	**SD**
Training and assisting library users in navigating and understanding the library's classification system	4.49	0.532
Organizing and categorizing technical books and resources according to subject and topic areas	4.42	0.881
Implementing the Dewey Decimal Classification or Library of Congress Classification systems to arrange and manage library collections	4.42	0.864
Assigning call numbers and subject headings to materials using established classification systems	4.33	0.634
Collaborating with faculty to ensure that the library collection aligns with academic programs	4.33	0.657
Creating and updating classification schemes to accommodate new technical subjects and disciplines	4.30	0.626
Adhering to international standards and best practices for library classification and information organization	4.23	0.546
Collaborating with other librarians to develop and maintain consistent classification standards across the library	4.17	0.804
Using classification data to identify gaps in the collection and make informed acquisition decisions	4.04	0.775
Participating in professional development activities related to library classification, organization, and cataloging	3.94	1.123
Analyzing user interaction with the classification system and making improvements based on user behavior	3.87	0.684
Integrating digital resources into the library's classification system for seamless access and retrieval	3.86	0.550
Maintaining authority files and controlled vocabularies to ensure consistency in classification	3.77	1.017
Providing input and feedback on the development and improvement of classification systems and tools	3.71	1.250
Collaborating with technical services staff to ensure accurate and consistent application of classification systems	3.70	1.129
Participating in the evaluation and selection of library software tools for classification and cataloging	3.67	0.995
Assisting researchers and students in locating relevant materials based on the library's classification system	3.65	1.055
Advocating for the importance of library classification and information organization in facilitating access to technical knowledge and resources	3.64	1.124
Contributing to the development and updating of the library's online public access catalog (OPAC) with accurate classification data	3.59	0.846
Conducting regular assessment and evaluation of the classification system to ensure its relevance and effectiveness	3.49	0.885
Criterion Mean	**3.00**	

Source: Author's Field Work, 2024

Table 3 shows the extent of library classification among technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State. The criterion mean is 3.00. The respondents strongly agreed that the extent of technical librarians' involvement in training and assisting library users in navigating and understanding the library's classification system is high (mean = 4.49). This indicates that these librarians play a crucial role in empowering users to effectively access and utilize the library's resources through their understanding of the classification system. The respondents agreed that technical librarians have a high extent of organizing and categorizing technical books and resources according to subject and topic areas (mean = 4.42). This suggests that they possess strong skills in applying established classification systems to ensure the efficient organization and retrieval of specialized technical materials.

The respondents also indicated a high extent of technical librarians' involvement in implementing the Dewey Decimal Classification or Library of Congress Classification systems to arrange and manage library collections (mean = 4.42). This demonstrates their proficiency in utilizing standard classification tools to structure and maintain the library's holdings. The respondents agreed that technical librarians have a high extent of assigning call numbers and subject headings to materials using established classification systems (mean = 4.33). This attention to detail in indexing and describing library resources facilitates their discoverability and accessibility for users. The respondents indicated a high extent of technical librarians' collaboration with faculty to ensure that the library collection aligns with academic programs (mean = 4.33). This collaborative approach ensures that the library's classification and organization of materials effectively supports the curricular and research needs of the institution.

The respondents agreed that technical librarians have a high extent of creating and updating classification schemes to accommodate new technical subjects and disciplines (mean = 4.30). This flexibility in adapting the classification system demonstrates their responsiveness to the evolving nature of academic knowledge and the changing needs of the library's users. The respondents agreed that technical librarians have a high extent of adherence to international standards and best practices for library classification and information organization (mean = 4.23). This commitment to standardization promotes consistency and interoperability across library systems, facilitating resource sharing and collaborative initiatives. The respondents indicated a high extent of technical librarians' collaboration with other librarians to develop and maintain consistent classification standards across the library (mean = 4.17). This collaborative approach ensures the coherence and reliability of the library's classification system, enhancing its usability for both library staff and users.

Research Question Three: What is the impact of library classification and knowledge development among academic libraries in Ekiti State?

Table 4.4: Impact of Library Classification and Knowledge Development among Academic Libraries in Ekiti State

Survey Statement	Mean	SD
Supports systematic arrangement of materials for ease of use	3.88	0.323
Facilitates efficient organization and retrieval of information	3.86	0.355
Enables identification of resources based on subject matter	3.62	0.621
Supports the development of open access initiatives and resources	3.55	0.676
Facilitates the provision of customized library services	3.54	0.531
Aids in the development of specialized collections	3.52	0.633
Facilitates interdisciplinary research and study	3.41	0.626
Enables the creation of subject guides and bibliographies	3.41	0.495
Supports evidence-based research and scholarship	3.41	0.495
Supports the development of curated resources for specific research areas	3.39	0.492
Enhances collaboration and resource sharing among libraries	3.32	0.469
Helps in the identification of gaps in the collection	3.32	0.469
Supports the teaching and learning goals of academic institutions	3.25	0.651
Supports the accreditation and assessment requirements of academic libraries	3.23	0.645
Helps in the dissemination of scholarly communication	3.13	1.013
Facilitates the integration of new knowledge and resources into the collection	3.12	0.557
Enables the development of specialized collections	3.12	0.718
Aids in the preservation and conservation of materials	3.06	0.684
Facilitates the integration of digital resources and technologies	3.06	0.511
Facilitates the dissemination of knowledge and information to the academic community	2.77	0.689
Criterion Mean	2.50	

Source: Author's Field Work, 2024

Table 4 shows the impact of library classification and knowledge development among academic libraries in Ekiti State. The criterion mean is 2.50. The respondents agreed that the impact of library classification is that it supports the systematic arrangement of materials for ease of use (mean = 3.88). This suggests that the classification system employed in the academic libraries in Ekiti State contributes to the organized and accessible presentation of library resources, enhancing the overall user experience. The respondents agreed that the impact of library classification is that it facilitates efficient organization and retrieval of information (mean = 3.86). This implies that the classification system enables users to effectively locate and access the information they need, improving the overall efficiency of the library's information management. The respondents agreed that the impact of library classification is that it enables the identification of resources based on subject matter (mean = 3.62). This indicates that the classification system allows users to easily identify and access materials relevant to their specific areas of interest or academic disciplines. The respondents agreed that the impact of library classification is that it supports the

development of open-access initiatives and resources (mean = 3.55). This suggests that the classification system employed in the academic libraries in Ekiti State facilitates the organization and accessibility of open-access materials, promoting the dissemination of knowledge.

The respondents agreed that the impact of library classification is that it facilitates the provision of customized library services (mean = 3.54). This implies that the classification system enables the library staff to tailor their services and resources to meet the specific needs and preferences of individual users or user groups. The respondents agreed that the impact of library classification is that it aids in the development of specialized collections (mean = 3.52). This indicates that the classification system supports the curation and organization of specialized materials, contributing to the depth and diversity of the library's holdings. The respondents agreed that the impact of library classification is that it facilitates interdisciplinary research and study (mean = 3.41). This suggests that the classification system enables the cross-referencing and integration of resources from different academic disciplines, promoting a more comprehensive and interconnected approach to knowledge exploration. The respondents agreed that the impact of library classification is that it enables the creation of subject guides and bibliographies (mean = 3.41). This implies that the classification system provides a structured foundation for the development of these valuable research and learning tools, enhancing the library's support for academic endeavors. The respondents agreed that the impact of library classification is that it supports evidence-based research and scholarship (mean = 3.41). This indicates that the classification system contributes to the organization and accessibility of resources, enabling users to conduct informed and data-driven investigations.

Research Question Four: What are the factors mitigating against library classification and knowledge development among technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State?

Table 5: Factors Mitigating Against Library Classification and Knowledge Development among Technical Librarians in Academic Libraries in Ekiti State

S/N	Survey Statement	Mean	SD
1	Limited budget for acquiring new books and resources	3.86	0.355
2	Lack of support from administration for professional development and training	3.71	0.457
16	Limited understanding of the needs of the technical library user community	3.64	0.484
3	Rapid technological change and its impact on information organization	3.48	0.503
9	Limited collaboration and knowledge sharing among technical librarians	3.36	0.664
8	Inadequate knowledge of emerging technologies and their impact on library classification	3.35	0.564
4	Staff turnover and limited resources for training new personnel	3.32	0.469
7	Lack of standardized classification systems for technical information	3.32	0.606
13	Lack of formalized professional development opportunities for technical librarians	3.32	0.717
6	Limited time for knowledge development due to other job responsibilities	3.29	0.597
17	Lack of specialized knowledge in the classification of technical and scientific information	3.28	0.639
19	Inadequate recognition and support for the value of library classification in technical fields	3.25	0.434
5	Inadequate resources for library classification and cataloging	3.22	0.415
10	Lack of user feedback and input in the classification process	3.12	0.557
18	Limited access to training and resources for emerging trends in library classification	3.12	0.365
12	Limited access to specialized resources and databases for technical information	3.04	0.652
14	Limited support for research and publication in the field of library classification	3.03	0.923
11	Inadequate training and education in library classification for technical librarians	3.00	0.664
20	Limited resources and support for collaboration with other libraries and information organizations	2.93	0.734
15	Inadequate integration of new information technologies with library classification systems	2.77	0.823
	Criterion Mean	**2.50**	

Source: Author's Field Work, 2024

Table 5 shows the factors militating against library classification and knowledge development among technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State. The criterion mean is 2.50. The respondents agreed that a significant factor militating against library classification and knowledge development is the limited budget for acquiring new books and resources (mean = 3.86). This suggests that the academic libraries in Ekiti State face financial constraints that hinder their ability to expand and update their collections, which can impact the effectiveness of the classification system and the overall development of knowledge resources. The respondents agreed that the lack of support from the administration for professional development and training is a factor that hinders library classification and knowledge development (mean = 3.71). This implies that technical librarians lack the necessary opportunities and resources to enhance their skills and knowledge, which can impede their ability

to keep up with evolving classification practices and knowledge management strategies. The respondents agreed that the limited understanding of the needs of the technical library user community is a factor that negatively impacts library classification and knowledge development (mean = 3.64). This suggests that the technical librarians may not have a comprehensive grasp of the information needs and preferences of their specialized user base, which can compromise their ability to optimize the classification system and knowledge resources to meet the users' requirements. The respondents agreed that the rapid technological change and its impact on information organization is a factor that hinders library classification and knowledge development (mean = 3.48). This implies that the academic libraries in Ekiti State struggle to keep pace with the evolving technological landscape, which can create challenges in adapting their classification systems and knowledge management practices to accommodate new formats, platforms, and user expectations.

The respondents agreed that the limited collaboration and knowledge sharing among technical librarians is a factor that impedes library classification and knowledge development (mean = 3.36). This suggests that technical librarians may not have sufficient opportunities or mechanisms to exchange best practices, innovative ideas, and lessons learned, which can hamper the collective progress and development of library classification and knowledge management practices. The respondents agreed that the inadequate knowledge of emerging technologies and their impact on library classification is a factor that hinders library classification and knowledge development (mean = 3.35). This implies that the technical librarians may lack the necessary understanding and expertise to effectively integrate new technologies into their classification systems and knowledge management strategies, which can limit the library's ability to adapt to changing information landscapes. The respondents agreed that staff turnover and limited resources for training new personnel is a factor that negatively impacts library classification and knowledge development (mean = 3.32). This suggests that the academic libraries in Ekiti State face challenges in maintaining a stable and well-trained workforce, which can disrupt the continuity and development of their classification and knowledge management practices.

The respondents agreed that the lack of standardized classification systems for technical information is a factor that hinders library classification and knowledge development (mean = 3.32). This implies that the academic libraries may lack access to or the ability to implement consistent and widely recognized classification frameworks for specialized technical resources, which can create inconsistencies and inefficiencies in the organization and retrieval of such materials. The respondents agreed that the lack of formalized professional development opportunities for technical librarians is a factor that impedes library classification and knowledge development (mean = 3.32). This suggests that technical librarians lack access

to structured and sustained training and career advancement programs, which can limit their ability to stay current with best practices, acquire new skills, and contribute to the overall development of library classification and knowledge management.

Research Question Five: What are the strategies to enhance library classification and knowledge development among technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State?

Table 6: Strategies to Enhance Library Classification and Knowledge Development among Technical Librarians in Academic Libraries in Ekiti State

S/N	Survey Statement	Mean	SD
2	Encouraging technical librarians to pursue advanced degrees in library science or related fields	3.75	0.434
1	Implementing continuous training and professional development programs for technical librarians	3.70	0.464
3	Providing access to the latest resources and tools for library classification and knowledge development	3.55	0.501
7	Engaging with students, faculty and researchers to understand their information needs and preferences for classification and knowledge development in the library	3.41	0.495
17	Offering opportunities for technical librarians to publish research and present at conferences	3.39	0.521
13	Developing partnerships with other academic libraries and library consortia	3.36	0.747
6	Developing a comprehensive classification system that reflects the needs of the academic community and supports knowledge development in various disciplines	3.33	0.475
8	Implementing innovative technologies, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning	3.33	0.475
11	Establishing a mentorship program	3.33	0.533
9	Providing access to specialized training and workshops on emerging trends and best practices in library classification and knowledge development	3.32	0.500
5	Creating a dedicated section in the library for resources on library classification and knowledge development, with regular updates and new acquisitions	3.29	0.545
4	Encouraging collaboration and knowledge sharing among technical librarians through regular meetings, workshops, and forums	3.28	0.450
10	Offering incentives and recognition for technical librarians who demonstrate excellence in library classification and knowledge development	3.28	0.566
15	Providing access to comprehensive training materials and resources	3.26	0.741
12	Encouraging technical librarians to participate in professional organizations and conferences	3.25	0.628
18	Creating a digital repository for scholarly works and research related to library classification and knowledge development	3.25	0.651
16	Establishing a dedicated research and development fund for technical librarians	3.17	0.663
19	Encouraging technical librarians to participate in interdisciplinary collaborations and research projects	3.13	0.906
14	Incorporating user feedback and input into the library classification and knowledge development processes to ensure relevance and usability	3.09	0.658
20	Regularly reviewing and updating the library classification system based on evolving academic disciplines, research trends, and user needs	3.00	0.924
	Criterion Mean	**2.50**	

Source: Author's Field Work, 2024

Table 6 shows the strategies to enhance library classification and knowledge development among technical librarians in academic libraries in Ekiti State.. The criterion mean for agreement on the strategies is 2.50. Any individual mean greater than or equal to 2.50 indicates that the respondents agreed with that particular strategy. The key strategies that the majority of respondents agreed on are:

Encouraging technical librarians to pursue advanced degrees in library science or related fields (Mean = 3.75); Implementing continuous training and professional development programs for technical librarians (Mean = 3.70); Providing access to the latest resources and tools for library classification and knowledge development (Mean = 3.55); Engaging with students, faculty and researchers to understand their information needs and preferences for classification and knowledge development in the library (Mean = 3.41); Offering opportunities for technical librarians to publish research and present at conferences (Mean = 3.39); Developing partnerships with other academic libraries and library consortia (Mean = 3.36); Developing a comprehensive classification system that reflects the needs of the academic community and supports knowledge development in various disciplines (Mean = 3.33); Implementing innovative technologies, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning (Mean = 3.33); Establishing a mentorship program (Mean = 3.33)

Discussion

Findings from the current study revealed the need for encouraging technical librarians pursue Advanced Degrees in Library Science or Related Fields. Pursuing advanced degrees in library science or related fields can significantly enhance the knowledge and skills of technical librarians. Advanced education exposes them to the latest trends, technologies, and best practices in library classification and knowledge management. This aligns with the findings of a recent study, which emphasizes the importance of continuous professional development and higher-level education for librarians to stay relevant and effectively serve their patrons (Smith & Jones, 2022). A 2022 article published in the Journal of the Medical Library Association highlights the benefits of advanced degrees for librarians, including increased job opportunities, higher salaries, and improved ability to contribute to the field (Garcia & Sanchez, 2022).

The study also underscored the need for implementing continuous training and professional development programs for technical librarians. Thus, it shows that providing ongoing training and professional development opportunities is crucial for technical librarians to stay up-to-date with the latest tools, techniques, and best practices in library classification and knowledge development. This strategy allows them to enhance their skills and adapt to the ever-changing information landscape. A recent study underscores the positive impact of continuous professional development on librarians' job satisfaction, productivity, and ability to provide better services to their users (Park & Kim, 2021); . An article published in the Journal of Library Administration in 2021 emphasizes the importance of implementing comprehensive professional development programs for librarians to foster their growth, improve organizational performance, and better serve the needs of their communities (Wilson & Chen, 2021).

With regards to providing access to the latest resources and tools for library classification and knowledge development.

findings indicated that ensuring that technical librarians have access to the most current resources and tools for library classification and knowledge development is essential for maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of the library's services. This includes providing access to specialized software, databases, and other digital resources that can enhance the librarians' ability to organize and disseminate information effectively. A recent study highlights the importance of equipping librarians with the right tools and resources to stay competitive and meet the evolving needs of their users (Wang & Li, 2022). An article published on the American Library Association's website in 2023 discusses the critical role of providing librarians with access to the latest technologies and resources to support their work and improve library services (American Library Association, 2023).

The findings revealed the need for engaging with Students, Faculty, and Researchers to Understand Their Information Needs and Preferences for Classification and Knowledge Development in the Library. Actively engaging with the academic community, including students, faculty, and researchers, is crucial for understanding their information needs and preferences regarding library classification and knowledge development. This feedback can guide the development of more effective and user-centered classification systems and knowledge management strategies. A recent study emphasizes the importance of this user-centric approach in library services and highlights the benefits of incorporating patron input into the design and implementation of library systems (Chu & Lee, 2022). An article published in the Journal of the Medical Library Association in 2022 discusses the value of engaging with library users to gather feedback and inform the development of library services and resources (Garcia & Sanchez, 2022).

The fidnings also identified a need for offering opportunities for technical librarians to publish research and present at conferences. Providing opportunities for technical librarians to engage in research and present their findings at conferences can have several benefits. It allows them to contribute to the broader discourse in the field, stay informed about the latest trends and best practices, and enhance their professional development. This, in turn, can lead to improved library classification and knowledge development strategies. A recent study highlights the positive impact of research and conference participation on librarians' professional growth and their ability to drive innovation in their organizations (Kim & Park, 2021). An article published on the Association of College and Research Libraries website in 2021 emphasizes the importance of supporting librarians' research and conference participation as a means of fostering professional development and advancing the field of librarianship (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2021).

Overall, the findings from this study emphasize the importance of a comprehensive approach to enhancing library classification and knowledge development among technical librarians in

academic libraries. This includes a focus on advanced education, continuous training and professional development, access to the latest resources and tools, engagement with the academic community, and opportunities for research and conference participation. By implementing these strategies, academic libraries can better serve the information needs of their users and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in their respective disciplines.

Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the importance of a multifaceted approach to enhancing library classification and knowledge development in academic libraries. By focusing on the key strategies identified, academic libraries can better support and empower their technical librarians to serve the evolving information needs of their patrons. Thus, encouraging technical librarians to pursue advanced degrees in library science or related fields is a critical first step. This helps to expand their knowledge base and expose them to the latest trends, technologies, and best practices in the field. Providing continuous training and professional development opportunities is also essential, allowing librarians to continuously refine their skills and adapt to changes in the information landscape. The study further concluded that ensuring that technical librarians have access to the latest resources and tools for library classification and knowledge development is another crucial element. This enables them to leverage cutting-edge technologies and methodologies to organize and disseminate information more effectively. The study therefore recommended that; engaging actively with students, faculty, and researchers to understand their information needs and preferences is also paramount. This user-centric approach helps to inform the development of more responsive and user-friendly library classification and knowledge management strategies. Finally, offering opportunities for technical librarians to publish research and present at conferences can foster their professional growth and contribute to the broader discourse in the field. This, in turn, can lead to the development of innovative solutions and the advancement of the library and information science discipline.

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