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2022

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Ugwuanyi, Christian S. PhD; Okeke, Charity C. M.Ed; and Okeke, Chinedu I.O. Prof, "Influence of Preschool Librarians' Demographic Characteristics on their Library Discipline Practices: An Ex-post Facto Research" (2022). *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 6758.

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# **Influence of Preschool Librarians' Demographic Characteristics on their Library Discipline Practices: An Ex-post Facto Research**

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## ***Abstract***

The success of various discipline practices in controlling children's behavior in the classroom has been a major source of concern among preschool librarians. Despite the relevance of library discipline in managing disruptive conduct in children, there appears to be a knowledge gap regarding the impact of preschool librarians' demographic features on their discipline practices. As a result, this study measured the influence/impact of preschool librarians' demographic factors on their library disciplinary practices using authoritarian behavioural theory. With a sample of 156 preschool librarians in Enugu State's Nsukka Education Zone, the study used an ex-post facto research design. The researchers developed and validated a preschool librarians' discipline practices questionnaire, which was used to collect data. The internal consistency reliability index of the questionnaire items was found to be 0.89 using the Cronbach alpha method. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data collected. The study's findings revealed that the age and marital status of preschool librarians had significant ( $p = .05$ ) impacts on their library discipline practices. As a result, it was suggested that the Local Government Education Authority prioritize librarians' age and marital status while recruiting preschool librarians.

**Keywords:** Library discipline, Library management, Discipline practices, Demographic characteristics, Quantitative research, Preschool Librarians

## **Introduction**

### ***Conceptual clarifications and statement of the problem***

Discipline in schools has long been a source of concern for early childhood educators around the world, notably in preschools and primary schools (Okeke, Ugwuanyi, Okeke, Ugwu, Ngwoke, Ifelunni, Aye & Nnamdi, 2021). Since the use of corporal punishment in the discipline of in-school children was outlawed, this has been the reality (Okeke et al., 2021). It has been noted that library discipline is one of the issues of international concern about which librarians are trained on how and why children's behavior should be regulated in their classes (Ho, Grieshaber & Walsh, 2017). Most schools have librarians who use detentions and suspensions as punishment methods, despite

the fact that they have been shown to be ineffective in reducing classroom misconduct (Fadus, Valadez, Bryant, Garcia, Neelon, Tomko & Squeglia, 2021).

### ***Theoretical Background of the Study***

Classroom management can be improved, according to Canter (1976), by employing the forceful discipline technique and authoritarian behavioural theory. This can be done by developing a classroom environment that promotes mutual respect and equality between the teacher and the students. The core of this strategy is for librarians to devise preventative strategies to keep students from engaging in disciplinary or unruly conduct. This is commonly done by librarians offering instructions depending on the learners' initial expectations. This strategy, according to Canter, unintentionally enhances classroom management of disruptive and concentration issues. Assertive discipline also includes an emphasis on classroom standards, efforts to provide positive feedback based on respect for the librarians' directions, and a consistent application of discipline procedures to decrease disciplinary difficulties in the classroom. The researchers intended to learn about preschool librarians' library disciplinary procedures in the post-corporal punishment phase, therefore this hypothesis was significant to them.

### ***Review of related empirical studies***

In-school children's experiences with a variety of behavior management strategies employed by preschool librarians in response to their behavior were investigated in a study (Gansen, 2020). Positive discipline as a disciplinary practice/culture at the school level has been found to help reduce disciplinary inequity in some preschool classrooms (Gansen, 2020). Applying prejudice and exclusionary discipline, according to Garro, Giordano, Gubi, and Shortway (2021), can be troublesome, whereas embracing consultative discipline can result in excellent classroom

behavior management. Evidence suggests that politicians, educators, and academics prefer restorative disciplinary practices that focus on repairing harm rather than punishing wrongdoing (Lustick, 2017).

According to Kennedy, Hirsch, Rodgers, Bruce, and Lloyd, librarians who use positive behavior intervention and support, such as providing opportunities to respond to children's classroom behavior, using behavior specific praise, and using pre-corrections, among other things, produce superior learning environments (2017). Most librarians, according to Gregory and Roberts (2017), will issue official punishment referrals to disruptive students, who will then be asked to leave the classroom and report to the administration offices for any appropriate discipline proceedings. According to Gansen (2019), disciplinary interactions in the classroom have a significant impact on children's early socialization. Gendered disciplinary responses to children's misconduct in preschool classes have been connected to gendered ideas among preschool librarians, in a similar vein (Gansen, 2019). Monnat, Lounsbery, Mckenzie, and Faye (2016) discovered that school-level demographic characteristics such as racial/ethnic makeup, socioeconomic status, and urban-rural status influenced children's school physical activity. According to the findings, librarians' disciplinary techniques are influenced by their attitudes toward harsh discipline, instructors' teaching experiences, stress, and other demographic factors (Masath, Hindze, Nkuba & Hecker, 2021).

Regardless of race, librarians' expectations were found to have a significant impact on their school discipline procedures, with students who were held to lower standards by their librarians receiving more punishment than those who were held to higher standards by their librarians (Santiago-rosario, Whitcomb, Pearlman & Mcintosh, 2021). Family structure and race have been demonstrated to have a major impact on the types of disciplinary strategies used on school kids

(Fadus et al., 2021). Children of color, particularly Black students, experienced much higher rates of school discipline than White students, according to the research (Girvan, McIntosh & Santiago-Rosario, 2021).

The preceding established that demographic considerations have an impact on how librarians and learners employ library discipline procedures. However, a review of the literature indicated that there have been few research on the subject, with the most of them taking place in the United States of America. It was distressing to see that none of these studies had been carried out in Africa, much less Nigeria. A gap in the literature sparked this research. The impact of preschool librarians' demographic factors on their library discipline procedures was investigated in this study.

### **Hypotheses**

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** Age of preschool Librarians had no significant influence on their library discipline practices.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** Marital status of preschool Librarians had no significant influence on their library discipline practices.

## **Method**

### **Design of the study**

An ex-post facto research design, a sort of quantitative research, was employed for this investigation. Because the independent variables (age and marital status) were not altered, the researchers were able to study the causal relationships between them and the dependent variable using this method. Because they existed prior to the study, the independent variables in this instance cannot be modified. Nworgu et al. (2013), Benson et al. (2020), Ugwuanyi et al. (2020) have adopted similar design.

## **Participants**

The survey included 156 preschool librarians from the Nsukka Education Zone in Enugu State, Nigeria. This sample was generated from a population of 1,768 preschool librarians in the Nsukka Education Zone using a simple random sampling process. A simple random selection approach was used in the first stage to select 24 primary schools from the entire population of primary schools in the study area. Then, using a simple random selection technique, preschool librarians from the sampled schools were randomly picked. This method of sampling was used to ensure that every preschool instructor in the study had an equal chance of participation.

## **Measure**

The information was acquired through a questionnaire about preschool librarian discipline practices created by the researchers. The survey included 34 questions that gathered data on the participants' demographics as well as library discipline practices. To put it another way, there were two portions to the questionnaire: section A and section B. In Section A, the researchers were able to obtain demographic data from the participants, and in Section B, they were able to collect information on the preschool librarians' library discipline practices. The questionnaire's items were weighted on a 4-point Likert scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

## **Validity and reliability of measure**

The instrument/measure was validated by two experts in early childhood care and education, as well as one expert in educational research, measurement, and evaluation, all from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka's Faculty of Education. The experts were in charge of verifying the instrument's items in light of the study's objectives. Prior to trial testing, the validators' feedback was used to make adjustments to the instrument. Following that, copies of the instrument were given to 20 preschool librarians who were not involved in the study. The data were subjected

to a Cronbach alpha reliability estimate to determine the internal consistency dependability of the instrument's items. The investigation yielded a dependability index of 0.89 as a result of the findings.

### **Ethical consideration statement**

The study's conduct was approved by the University of Nigeria's research ethics committee. Participants were also given informed consent forms to sign prior to data collection.

### **Data collection procedure**

The Headteachers of each of the schools participated in the study provided timely permission letters to access the study locations. Data were collected during visits to each of the schools participated in the study. As a result, a technique for administering the device on the spot was chosen. In other words, participants received copies of the instrument at their individual schools and were given 30 minutes to reply before being collected.

### **Data analysis**

The data was analyzed using mean and analysis of variance to answer the study questions and evaluate the related hypotheses. The mean was used to answer the study questions, while analysis of variance at 5% probability levels was used to test the hypotheses.

### **Results**

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Age of preschool Librarians had no significant influence on their library discipline practices.

***Table 1***

*Mean analysis of the discipline practices scores of preschool Librarians based on their age*

Age	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
20-26 years	30	95.33	24.47
27-30 years	48	99.00	23.20
31-35 years	34	108.32	15.82
36 years and above	53	102.83	16.61

Table 1 shows that 20-26-year-old preschool librarians had a mean score of ( $M = 95.33$ ,  $SD = 24.47$ ), 27-30-year-old preschool librarians had a mean score of ( $M = 99.00$ ,  $SD = 23.20$ ), 31-35-year-old preschool Librarians had a mean score of ( $M = 108.32$ ,  $SD = 15.82$ ), and 36-year-old preschool Librarians had a mean score of ( $M = 102.83$ ,  $SD = 16.61$ ). This revealed that preschool librarians between the ages of 31 and 35 had the most common discipline practices, followed by those between the ages of 36 and above.

**Table 2**

*Analysis of variance of the influence of age of preschool Librarians on their library discipline practices*

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3178.202	3	1059.401	2.612	.050
Within Groups	65309.580	161	405.650		
Total	68487.782	164			

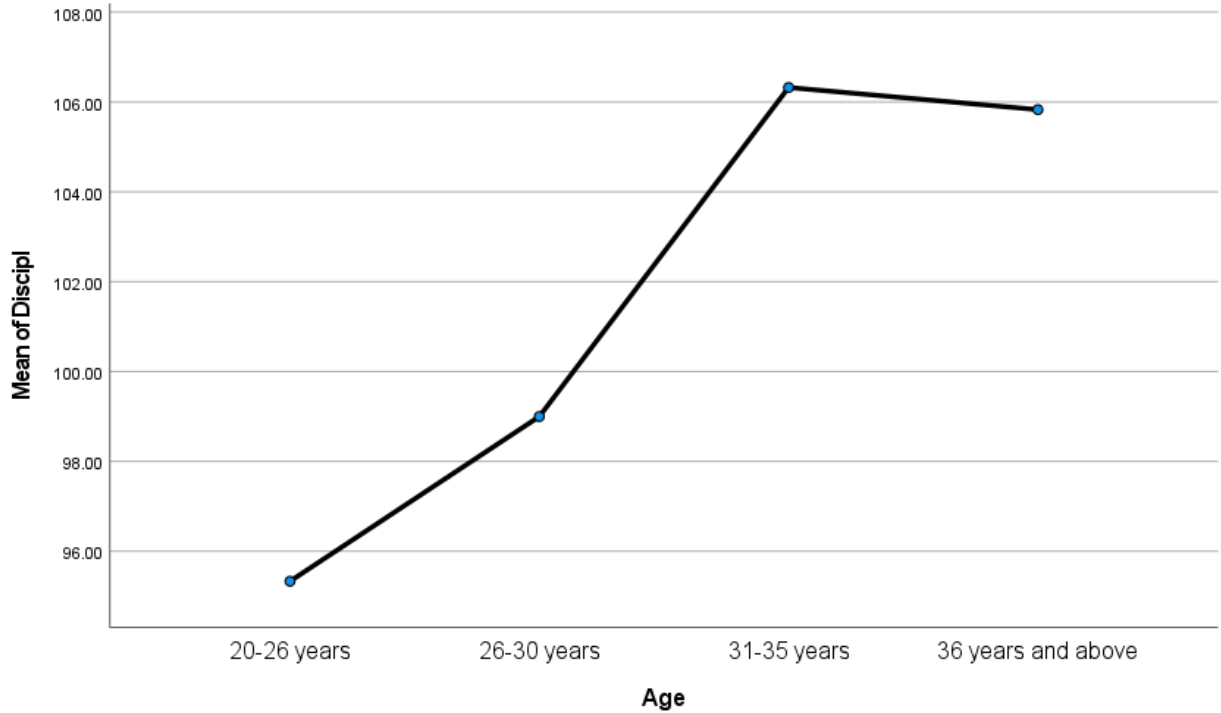
Table 2 demonstrated that the librarians' age had a significant impact on their library discipline practices,  $F(3,161) = 2.612$ ,  $p = .050$ . As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected, with a p value of .05. Furthermore, Table 3 revealed that the mean difference between the mean scores of the 31-35 year old preschool librarians and the 20-26 year old preschool librarians was the most significant factor influencing their library discipline methods. The mean plot for Librarians' discipline practices based on age is shown in Figure 1.



**Table 3**

*Post Hoc pairwise comparison tests for the significant influence of age*

(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference		
		(I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
20-26 years	27-30 years	-3.66667	4.68750	.968
	31-35 years	-10.99020	5.04505	.171
	36 years and above	-10.49686	4.60168	.135
27-30 years	20-26 years	3.66667	4.68750	.968
	31-35 years	-7.32353	4.51463	.492
	36 years and above	-6.83019	4.01308	.435
31-35 years	20-26 years	10.99020	5.04505	.171
	27-30 years	7.32353	4.51463	.492
	36 years and above	.49334	4.42545	1.000
36 years and above	20-26 years	10.49686	4.60168	.135
	27-30 years	6.83019	4.01308	.435
	31-35 years	-.49334	4.42545	1.000



**Figure 1:** Mean plot for the Librarians' Discipline Practices based on age

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Marital status of preschool Librarians had no significant influence on their library discipline practices.

**Table 4**

*Mean analysis of the discipline practices scores of preschool Librarians based on their marital status*

Marital status	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
Single	47	94.17	27.30
Married	109	110.96	14.11
Divorced	9	95.55	31.06

Table 4 shows that single preschool librarians had a mean score of ( $M = 94.17, SD = 27.30$ ), married preschool librarians had a mean score of ( $M = 110.96, SD = 14.11$ ), and divorced preschool librarians had a mean score of ( $M = 95.55, SD = 31.06$ ). This means that, among other things, married preschool librarians had the highest mean discipline practices.

**Table 5**

*Analysis of variance of the influence of marital status of preschool Librarians on their library discipline practices*

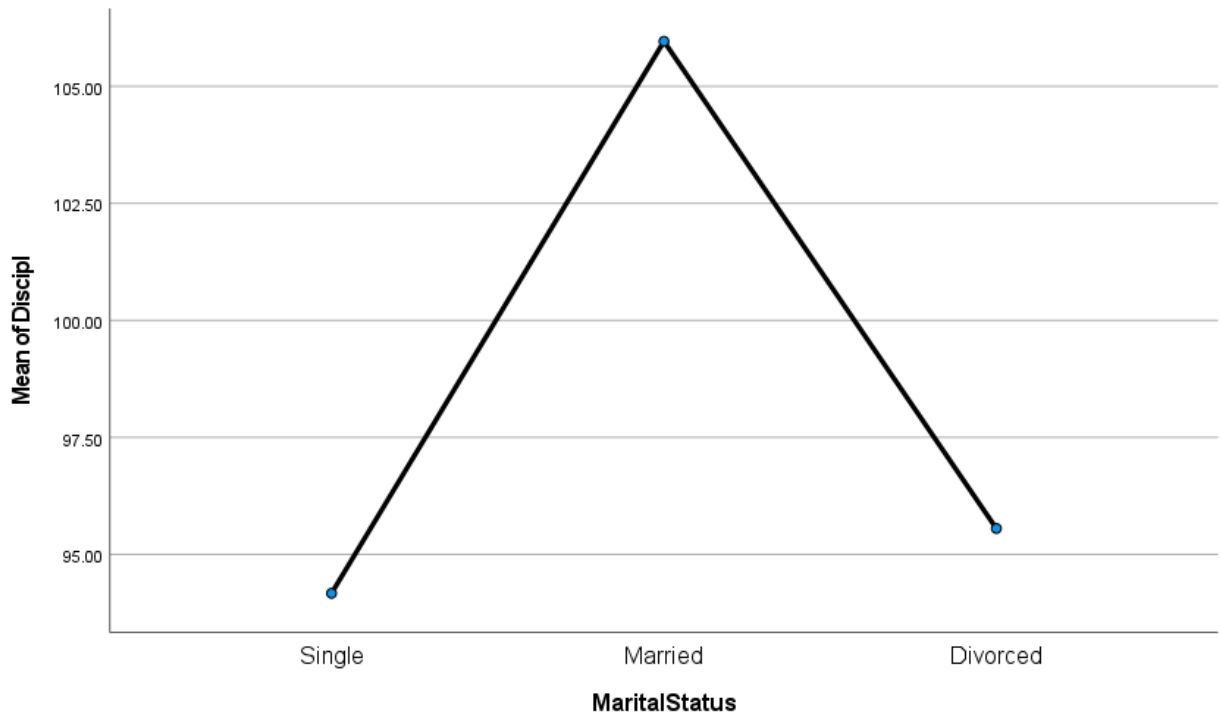
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4967.068	2	2483.534	6.334	.002
Within Groups	63520.714	162	392.103		
Total	68487.782	164			

Table 5 demonstrated that preschool librarians' marital status had a substantial impact on their library discipline practices, with  $F(3,161) = 6.334, p = .002$ . As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected at a  $p$  value of .002. Furthermore, Table 6 revealed that the mean difference between the mean scores of married and divorced preschool librarians contributed the most to the substantial influence of marital status on their library discipline methods. The mean plot for Librarians' discipline practices based on marital status is shown in Figure 2.

**Table 6**

*Post Hoc pairwise comparison tests for the significant influence of marital status*

(I) Marital Status	(J) Marital Status	Mean Difference		
		(I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Single	Married	-11.79309*	3.45542	.002
	Divorced	-1.38534	7.20483	.996
Married	Single	11.79309*	3.45542	.002
	Divorced	10.40775	6.86763	.345
Divorced	Single	1.38534	7.20483	.996
	Married	-10.40775	6.86763	.345



**Figure 2:** *Mean plot for the Librarians' Discipline Practices based on marital status*

### **Discussion**

This study looked into the influence of preschool librarians' age and marital status on their library discipline practices. This inquiry was necessary because no such study had been conducted in the research area or for the majority of the African countries. The outcomes of the study demonstrated that the age and marital status of preschool librarians had a significant influence/impact on their library disciplinary practices. It was found that younger preschool librarians do not apply library discipline practices as efficiently as older preschool librarians in this situation. Similarly, married

preschool librarians were shown to be more effective at using library discipline procedures than single or divorced preschool librarians. These findings support prior study that found that learners' and librarians' demographics have an impact on librarians' library disciplinary strategies.

Masath et al. (2021) backed up these findings by proving that librarians' disciplinary methods are influenced by positive attitudes toward tough discipline, instructors' teaching experiences, stress, and other demographic factors. Monnat et al. (2016) discovered that school-level demographic characteristics such as racial/ethnic makeup, socioeconomic status, and urban-rural status influenced children's school physical activity. Gendered beliefs among preschool librarians are linked to gendered disciplinary reactions to children's misbehavior in the classroom (Gansen, 2019). The expectations of librarians were found to have a significant impact on their disciplinary procedures in school, regardless of race, with students who were held to lower standards receiving more punishment than their counterparts who were held to higher standards (Santiago-rosario et al., 2021). Family structure and race have been demonstrated to have a major impact on the types of disciplinary strategies used on school kids (Fadus et al., 2021). A comparable study found that children of color, particularly Black kids, had much higher rates of school discipline than White students (Girvan et al., 2021).

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

Based on the findings of this study, the researchers discovered that the age and marital status of preschool librarians are important factors in their library disciplinary practices. As a result, it's vital that the Local Government Education Authority prioritizes those factors when hiring preschool librarians. This will go a long way toward attracting preschool librarians who can successfully and efficiently implement library discipline practices.

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