Sokoine University of Agriculture



PhD. Thesis

Ethical Practices in Library Service Delivery by Information Professionals in Selected Public Universities in Tanzania

Beth Kachota

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ETHICAL PRACTICES IN LIBRARY SERVICE DELIVERY BY INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS IN SELECTED PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN TANZANIA

Thesis Submitted to the Sokoine University of Agriculture in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By
Beth Kachota

Supervisors
Dr. Ronald Benard Tarimo
Dr. Silver Hokororo

Department of Informatics and Information Technology (DIIT)
College of Natural and Applied Sciences (CoNAS)
Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Ethical practice is a crucial for effective service delivery by information professionals, as it safeguards fair access to information, protects users' rights to privacy and intellectual freedom, and upholds professional integrity. Ethical practices globally emerged from social responsibility debates and have since evolved in response to legal, technological and professional challenges, particularly in the digital era. Despite the existence of international ethical frameworks developed by professional bodies such as the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and the American Library Association (ALA), empirical evidence suggests persistent ethical challenges in academic library service delivery, including weak enforcement mechanisms, unfair treatment of users, breaches of confidentiality, and inconsistent application of ethical guidelines. Basically, ethical practices related to equal access of information, accuracy of information provided, protection of privacy, and intellectual property remain prevalent, yet scholarly attention to contextualized ethical practices is limited. In Tanzania, initiatives such as the Tanzania Network for Information Ethics (TANIE), the Tanzania Library Association (TLA), and the Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB) have promoted ethical practices among information professionals. However, existing studies indicate that research focusing specifically on ethical practices in Tanzanian academic libraries is scarce, creating a significant knowledge gap regarding ethical based on these aspects i. assess the ethical practices performed by information professionals on service delivery among selected academic libraries in Tanzania, ii. determine the perception of information professionals on ethical practices in service delivery among selected academic libraries in Tanzania, investigate ethical practices and professional responsibilities in upholding confidentiality during service delivery among information professionals and iv. analyze factors influencing ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in selected academic libraries in Tanzania. The study is guided by a multi-theoretical framework integrating the Theory of Planned Behaviour, Professionalism Theory, Duty-Based Theory, and Mason's PAPA

(Privacy, Accuracy, Property, and Accessibility) model, enabling a comprehensive understanding of ethical practices during service delivery in academic libraries. Methodologically, the study adopted a cross-sectional design. Data were collected from academic libraries at the University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Mzumbe University, and the University of Dodoma. Quantitative data were obtained through structured questionnaires administered to information professionals, while qualitative data were collected through focus group discussions and key informant interviews with library directors. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS through descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, ANOVA, correlation analysis, linear regression and ordinal logistic regression, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically through content analysis. The quantitative analysis examined the extent to which ethical practices influence service delivery in academic libraries, with service delivery treated as the dependent variable and measured using mean scores (3.43–3.81) and five-point Likert scales across dimensions such as access, communication, approachability, satisfaction, reliability, accountability, confidentiality and core library services. Results from One-Way ANOVA ($p < 0.05$) revealed significant differences in adherence to ethical practices, particularly in the protection of privacy and intellectual property, with privacy recording the highest mean score (3.81) and intellectual property emerging as one of the most frequently practiced ethical aspects. Awareness of ethical practices also differed significantly across ethical dimensions ($\chi^2 = 117.9$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.000$). Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, and mean scores) showed generally positive perceptions of ethical practices, while linear and multiple regression analyses confirmed that ethical practices significantly predicted service delivery outcomes, with protecting intellectual property, confidentiality, assisting users, resolving queries and assurance of ethical conduct contributing positively. Pearson's correlation analysis further demonstrated positive relationships between services and perceptions of ethical practices ($r = 0.260$, $p < 0.01$), ethical guidelines and services ($r = 0.210$, $p < 0.05$), and assurance with both services ($r = 0.277$, $p < 0.01$) and perceptions ($r = 0.183$, $p < 0.05$), although ethical guidelines showed a negative correlation

with perceptions ($r = -0.194$, $p < 0.05$), reflecting inconsistent application of existing policies such as library rules, service policies and ALA/IFLA guidelines. The findings reveal that ethical practices are influenced more by educational attainment, management enforcement, ethical training, clear guidelines, and positive staff morale than by age, gender, or work experience. Confidentiality practices, assessed through indicators such as limiting access to user records, preventing unauthorized access, monitoring user activities, and securing data, were rated from good to very good, reinforcing their central role in ethical service delivery. Thus, the findings indicate that ethical service delivery in academic libraries is driven more by organizational support, enforcement mechanisms, training, morale and continuous professional development than by individual demographic characteristics. The study contributes both practically and academically. Practically, it provides evidence-based insights to policymakers, library management and professional associations to strengthen ethical enforcement, training and policy development. Academically, it improves the body of knowledge on ethical practices in academic libraries, particularly within the Tanzanian context. The findings also align with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4 and SDG 16) by promoting equitable access to quality education, transparency, accountability and trust during service delivery. Thus, the study recommends strengthening ethical practices by establishing library ethics committees and developing a nationally national code of ethics led by TLSB and TLA.

Keyword: Ethical practices, Information professionals, Perception, Professional responsibility, Services delivery, Academica libraries, Public universities.

IKISIRI KUU

Utendaji wa kimaadili ni muhimu kwa utoaji bora wa huduma kwa wataalamu wa habari, kwa kuwa unalinda upatikanaji wa taarifa kwa usawa, unahifadhi haki za watumiaji kuhusu faragha na uhuru wa kiakili, na kudumisha uadilifu wa kitaaluma. Kwa kiwango cha kimataifa, maadili ya kitaaluma yaliibuka kutokana na mijadala kuhusu uwajibikaji wa kijamii na yameendelea kubadilika kutokana na changamoto za kisheria, kiteknolojia na kitaaluma, hususan katika zama za kidijitali. Licha ya kuwepo kwa mifumo ya kimataifa ya maadili iliyoandaliwa na vyama vya kitaaluma kama vile International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) na American Library Association (ALA), ushahidi wa kitaalamu unaonesha kuendelea kuwepo kwa changamoto za kimaadili katika utoaji wa huduma katika maktaba za kitaaluma. Changamoto hizo ni pamoja na udhaifu wa mifumo ya usimamizi na utekelezaji wa maadili, kutendewa kwa watumiaji bila usawa, ukiukwaji wa usiri, na kutotekelezwa kwa miongozo ya kimaadili kwa uthabiti. Kwa ujumla, masuala ya kimaadili yanayohusiana na upatikanaji sawa wa taarifa, usahihi wa taarifa zinazotolewa, ulinzi wa faragha na haki miliki bado ni muhimu, lakini tafiti zinazochunguza kwa kina utendaji wa kimaadili kulingana na mazingira husika bado ni chache.

Nchini Tanzania, jitihada mbalimbali kama vile Tanzania Network for Information Ethics (TANIE), Tanzania Library Association (TLA), na Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB) zimekuwa zikihamasisha utendaji wa kimaadili miongoni mwa wataalamu wa habari. Hata hivyo, tafiti zilizopo zinaonesha kuwa tafiti zinazolenga moja kwa moja utendaji wa kimaadili katika maktaba za kitaaluma nchini Tanzania bado ni chache, hivyo kuacha pengo kubwa la maarifa. Kwa msingi huo, utafiti huu ulikuwa na malengo yafuatayo: (i) kutathmini utendaji wa kimaadili unaofanywa na wataalamu wa habari katika utoaji wa huduma katika maktaba teule za kitaaluma nchini Tanzania; (ii) kubaini mitazamo ya wataalamu wa habari kuhusu utendaji wa kimaadili katika utoaji wa huduma katika maktaba teule za kitaaluma nchini Tanzania; (iii) kuchunguza utendaji wa kimaadili na wajibu wa kitaaluma katika kudumisha usiri wakati wa utoaji wa huduma

miongoni mwa wataalamu wa habari; na (iv) kuchanganua mambo yanayoathiri utendaji wa kimaadili katika utoaji wa huduma miongoni mwa wataalamu wa habari katika maktaba teule za kitaaluma nchini Tanzania. Utafiti uliongozwa na mfumo wa nadharia nyingi unaounganisha Nadharia ya Tabia Iliyopangwa (Theory of Planned Behaviour), Nadharia ya Utaalamu (Professionalism Theory), Nadharia ya Wajibu (Duty-Based Theory), pamoja na modeli ya Mason ya PAPA: Faragha, Usahihi, Umiliki na Upatikanaji (Privacy, Accuracy, Property and Accessibility). Muunganiko huo uliwezesha uelewa mpana wa utendaji wa kimaadili wakati wa utoaji wa huduma katika maktaba za kitaaluma.

Kimethodolojia, utafiti ulitumia muundo wa utafiti wa mkato (cross-sectional design). Data zilikusanywa kutoka katika maktaba za kitaaluma za Chuo Kikuu cha Dar es Salaam, Chuo Kikuu cha Sokoine cha Kilimo, Chuo Kikuu Mzumbe, na Chuo Kikuu cha Dodoma. Data za kiasi zilikusanywa kwa kutumia dodoso zilizoundwa kwa mpangilio maalumu na kujazwa na wataalamu wa habari, wakati data za ubora zilikusanywa kupitia majadiliano ya vikundi lengwa na mahojiano na watoa taarifa muhimu, wakiwemo wakurugenzi wa maktaba. Data za kiasi zilichanganuliwa kwa kutumia SPSS kupitia takwimu elekezi, vipimo vya Chi-square, ANOVA, uchanganuzi wa uhusiano, linear regression, na ordinal logistic regression, wakati data za ubora zilichanganuliwa kwa mada kwa kutumia uchanganuzi wa maudhui. Uchanganuzi wa kiasi ulichunguza kiwango ambacho utendaji wa kimaadili unaathiri utoaji wa huduma katika maktaba za kitaaluma, ambapo utoaji wa huduma ulitumika kama kigeu tegemezi na kupimwa kwa kutumia wastani wa alama (3.43–3.81) na vipimo vya Likert vya ngazi tano katika vipengele mbalimbali, vikiwemo upatikanaji wa huduma, mawasiliano, urahisi wa kuwafikia watoa huduma, kuridhika, uaminifu wa huduma, uwajibikaji, usiri, na huduma za msingi za maktaba.

Matokeo ya One-Way ANOVA ($p < 0.05$) yalionesha tofauti kubwa za kitakwimu katika uzingatiaji wa utendaji wa kimaadili, hususan katika ulinzi wa faragha na haki miliki. Faragha ilikuwa na wastani

wa juu zaidi wa alama (3.81), huku ulinzi wa haki miliki ukiibuka kuwa mojawapo ya vipengele vya kimaadili vilivyotekelezwa mara nyingi zaidi. Uelewa kuhusu utendaji wa kimaadili pia ulitofautiana kwa kiasi kikubwa katika vipengele mbalimbali vya maadili ($\chi^2 = 117.9$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.000$). Takwimu elekezi, zikiwemo marudio, asilimia na wastani wa alama, zilionesha mitazamo chanya kwa ujumla kuhusu utendaji wa kimaadili. Aidha, uchanganuzi wa linear regression na multiple regression ulithibitisha kuwa utendaji wa kimaadili ulitabiri kwa kiwango kikubwa matokeo ya utoaji wa huduma. Ulinzi wa haki miliki, usiri, kuwasaidia watumiaji, kutatua hoja au maswali ya watumiaji, pamoja na uhakikisho wa mwenendo wa kimaadili vilichangia kwa njia chanya katika utoaji wa huduma.

Uchanganuzi wa uhusiano wa Pearson ulionesha pia kuwepo kwa uhusiano chanya kati ya huduma na mitazamo kuhusu utendaji wa kimaadili ($r = 0.260$, $p < 0.01$), miongozo ya kimaadili na huduma ($r = 0.210$, $p < 0.05$), na uhakikisho wa huduma na huduma zenyewe ($r = 0.277$, $p < 0.01$) pamoja na mitazamo ($r = 0.183$, $p < 0.05$). Hata hivyo, miongozo ya kimaadili ilikuwa na uhusiano hasi na mitazamo ($r = -0.194$, $p < 0.05$), hali inayoonesha kutokuwepo kwa uthabiti katika utekelezaji wa sera zilizopo, kama vile kanuni za maktaba, sera za huduma, na miongozo ya ALA/IFLA.

Sababu za kidemografia, zikiwemo jinsia, umri, kiwango cha elimu na uzoefu wa kazi, hazikuwa viashiria muhimu vya kitakwimu vya utendaji wa kimaadili. Kinyume chake, sababu za kitaasisi na kiutawala, zikiwemo usimamizi na utekelezaji wa maadili na menejimenti, mafunzo ya kimaadili, upatikanaji wa miongozo, umahiri wa kitaaluma, morali ya wafanyakazi, haki na usawa, pamoja na ulinganifu wa maadili binafsi na maadili ya kitaaluma, zilihusishwa kwa kiwango kikubwa na viwango vya juu vya utendaji wa kimaadili.

Utendaji wa usiri, uliotathminiwa kupitia viashiria kama vile kudhibiti upatikanaji wa kumbukumbu za watumiaji, kuzuia upatikanaji usioidhinishwa, kufuatilia shughuli za watumiaji, na kulinda data, ulipimwa kuwa kutoka kiwango kizuri hadi kizuri sana. Matokeo

hayo yanathibitisha nafasi kuu ya usiri katika utoaji wa huduma unaozingatia maadili. Kwa hiyo, matokeo ya utafiti yanaonesha kuwa utoaji wa huduma unaozingatia maadili katika maktaba za kitaaluma unaathiriwa zaidi na msaada wa kitaasisi, mifumo ya usimamizi na utekelezaji wa maadili, mafunzo, morali ya wafanyakazi, na maendeleo endelevu ya kitaaluma kuliko sifa binafsi za kidemografia.

Utafiti huu una mchango wa kiutendaji na kitaaluma. Kwa upande wa kiutendaji, unatoa ushahidi unaoweza kutumiwa na watunga sera, menejimenti za maktaba na vyama vya kitaaluma katika kuimarisha utekelezaji wa maadili, mafunzo na uandaaji wa sera. Kwa upande wa kitaaluma, unaongeza maarifa kuhusu utendaji wa kimaadili katika maktaba za kitaaluma, hususan katika muktadha wa Tanzania. Matokeo pia yanaendana na Malengo ya Maendeleo Endelevu (SDG 4 na SDG 16) kwa kuhimiza upatikanaji sawa wa elimu bora, uwazi, uwajibikaji na uaminifu katika utoaji wa huduma. Kwa hiyo, utafiti unapendekeza kuimarishwa kwa utendaji wa kimaadili kwa kuanzisha kamati za maadili katika maktaba na kuandaa kanuni ya kitaifa ya maadili ya taaluma, itakayoongozwa na TLSB na TLA.

Maneno muhimu: Utendaji wa kimaadili, Wataalamu wa habari, Mtazamo, Wajibu wa kitaaluma, Utoaji wa huduma, Maktaba za kitaaluma.

DECLARATION

I, **Beth Kachota**, do hereby declare to the Senate of Sokoine University of Agriculture that this thesis is my original workdone within the period of registration and that it has not been submitted and is not being concurrently submitted to any other institution for any academic award.

_____ _____

Beth Kachota Date
(PhD Candidate)

The declaration above is confirmed by;

_____ _____

Dr. Ronald Benard Tarimo Date
(Supervisor)

_____ _____

Dr. Silver Hokororo Date
(Supervisor)

LIST OF PUBLISHED PAPERS/MANUSCRIPTS

PAPER I: Kachota, B., Benard, R., & Hokororo, S. (2025). Ethical practices in library service delivery among information professionals: Insights from academic libraries in Tanzania. Published by *Journal of Access Services*, 22(1–3), 54–80. Taylor & Francis Group access link https://doi.org/10.1080/15836767.2025.2544717

PAPER II: Kachota, B., Bernard, R., & Hokororo, S. (2025). Perceptions of ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania. Published by *Public Services Quarterly,* 21(4), 251–277. Taylor & Francis Group access link https://doi.org/10.1080/15228959.2025.2561869

PAPER III: Kachota, B., Ronald, B., & Hokororo, S. (2025). Ethical practices and professional responsibilities in upholding confidentiality in academic libraries in Tanzania. Published by *IFLA Journal*, *0*(0). Sage. https://doi.org/10.1177/03400352251378764

PAPER IV: Kachota, B., Ronald, B., & Hokororo, S. (2025). Factors Influencing Ethical Practices in Service Delivery among Information Professionals in Tanzanian Academic Libraries. *Published by Journal of Library Administration.* Taylor & Francis Group access link https://doi - 10.1080/01930826.2025.2597156

PAPER V: Role of Ethical Practices in Enhancing Library Service Delivery among Information Professionals in Academic Libraries, Tanzania. Accepted; International Information & Library Review.Taylor & Francis Group.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God, the provider of guidance throughout my life, my beloved father Elia Jacob Kachota and my late beloved mother Aghata Makasi, who tirelessly laid the foundation of my education through great sacrifices and efforts. May the Almighty God grant her eternal peace, AMEN. To my beloved husband, Dr. Ferdinand Marcel Temba and my children, Ryan, Robin and Raelynn, for their understanding during my long absence while I pursued my PhD. May the Almighty God bless you forever, AMEN.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

ALA	American Library Association
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
DMRT	Duncan's Multiple Range Test
EFA	Exploratory factor analysis
EP	Ethical Practices
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
HTMT	Heterotrait-Monotrait
INFLA	International Federation of Library Associations
INFLAI	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
IPs	Information Professionals
KIIs	Key Informant Interviews
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
LIS	Library and information science
MU	Mzumbe University
PAPA Model	Privacy, Accuracy, Property, Access
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PR	Professional Responsibilities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SUA	Sokoine University of Agriculture
TCEL	Tanzania Code of Ethics for Library Professionals
TLA	Tanzania Library Association
TLSB	Tanzania Library Services Board
TPB	Theory of Planned Behaviour
UD	University of Dar es Salaam
UDOM	University of Dodoma
UDSM	University of Dar es Salaam
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Ethical practices refer to the application of professional standards governing access to and use of information in service delivery, particularly within academic libraries (Nabbosa *et al.,* 2025). These practices include ensuring equal access to information, which requires information professionals to provide fair, unbiased and inclusive services to all users regardless of social, economic, or academic status, thereby promoting equity and social justice in information provision (Yusuf, 2021). Also, ethical practices involve in maintaining the accuracy of information, as professionals are obligated to provide reliable, current and verified information to support informed decision-making and avoid misinformation or professional negligence (Kaddu *et al.,* 2023; Phillips & Oyewole, 2024). Moreover, in addressing privacy issues is crucial for ethical responsibility, requiring information professionals to protect users' personal data, search histories and intellectual inquiries from unauthorized access or disclosure, during service delivery in academic libraries (Yap *et al.,* 2024). Perhaps, safeguarding intellectual property involves respecting copyright laws, proper attribution, and lawful use of information resources, ensuring that both creators' rights and users' ethical obligations are upheld by information professionals during service delivery (Michael & Oleyomi, 2023).

In today's rapidly evolving information landscape, ethical practices have become a central concern in the delivery of library and information services, particularly within academic libraries. Information professionals are increasingly expected to uphold ethical standards that ensure equitable access to information, accuracy in information provision, protection of user privacy, and respect for intellectual property rights (Nonthacumjane, 2021; Afolayan, 2022; Hranchak, 2022; Corey, Corey & Callanan, 2024). These ethical responsibilities are inseparable from the core mission of academic libraries, which is to advance knowledge, support teaching and learning, and foster intellectual development within higher education institutions (War, 2019). By adhering to ethical

principles, information professionals enhance trust, promote fairness, and ensure that library services remain relevant, equitable and impactful in the digital age (Pérez-Pulido & Teruel, 2022).

The emphasis on ethical practices in the information profession can be traced back to social responsibility debates of the 1960s, which highlighted the need for libraries to address users' information needs without bias, fear, censorship, or plagiarism (DuMont, 1991; Omigie, 2018). During this period, ethical conduct became essential for ensuring high-quality service delivery and safeguarding intellectual freedom. Since then, the professional role of information professionals has expanded significantly, requiring them to navigate complex legal, technological and ethical challenges while maintaining professional integrity and sustainability in service delivery (Albee, Campbell & Martincick, 2019; Omigie, 2020; Tweve, 2023).

Historically, information professionals were largely custodians of knowledge, focusing on the preservation and organization of information resources (Kumar, 2016; Saffady, 2021). Ethical concerns during this era centered on accurate transmission and controlled access to information (Lawrent, 2022; Igbinovia, 2022). However, from the eighteenth century onward, the profession evolved to address broader ethical issues such as censorship, users' rights to information, and the balance between professional standards and user needs (Burgess, 2019; Fordjour & Entsua-Mensah, 2023). This transformation marked a shift from passive custodianship to active ethical engagement in service delivery.

The professionalization of librarianship in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries further formalized ethical practices through the establishment of professional bodies such as the American Library Association (ALA), which introduced codes of ethics to guide professional conduct (Shachaf, 2005; Hoq, 2012; Yusuf, 2021). These codes positioned information professionals as ethical stewards responsible for fairness, confidentiality, integrity and accountability. Nevertheless, scholars acknowledge that personal values, emotions and institutional cultures often influence how

ethical principles are interpreted and applied in practice, leading to variations in service delivery (Blessing, FNLA & Mercy, 2019; Otulugbu & Ogunobo, 2022).

In the contemporary digital environment, information professionals face emerging ethical challenges related to privacy protection, equitable access to digital resources, misinformation, copyright compliance, and responsible use of technology (Ocholla, 2009; Onoyeyan, 2014; Ondieki, 2023). Addressing these challenges requires heightened ethical awareness, continuous professional development and a strong commitment to professional responsibility (Yusuf, 2021; Moonasar, 2024; Singh, 2024). Consequently, information professionals are no longer viewed solely as custodians of information but as service providers whose ethical decisions directly affect the quality and credibility of academic library services.

Globally and regionally, several studies have revealed that inadequate emphasis on ethical practices contributes to unethical behavior and poor service delivery in libraries (Igun, 2013; Phillips, Oyewole & Akinbo, 2018; Matyana & Sibiya, 2024). Challenges such as favoritism, lack of confidentiality, inconsistent service provision, and limited awareness of professional codes of ethics persist despite the presence of trained professionals (McMenemy, Poulter & Burton, 2014; Samek, 2017; Mahadevagouda & MS, 2023). These findings suggest that professional competence alone is insufficient without a strong ethical foundation guiding daily practice.

In Africa, ethical practices are widely recognized as fundamental to professional integrity and quality service delivery in academic libraries (Atanda, Owolabi & Ugbala, 2021; Yusuf, 2021; Mamo here, Musitha & Netshidzivhani, 2022). Professional bodies such as the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) emphasize ethical service delivery and the responsibility of information professionals to support access to information and knowledge development (Ejedafiru & Chukwuma, 2020; Raju, Chu & Cunningham, 2023). However, ethical practice

in librarianship remains an emerging and evolving field in many African countries, characterized by varying perceptions, inconsistent application of ethical standards, and limited institutional support (Adebayo & Mabawonku, 2017; Prasanth & Vasudevan, 2019; Nambobi, 2021).

In Tanzania, library services have traditionally been guided by values of integrity, respect, and trust (Tsompanakis, 2014; Mfaume & Bilinga, 2024). Academic libraries play a crucial role in supporting teaching, learning, and research within higher education institutions and have expanded alongside the growth of universities since the 1960s (Mubofu, 2022; Mushi *et al.,* 2023). While ethical principles are often embedded in professional training and institutional policies, studies indicate persistent challenges such as resource constraints, inadequate ethical training, weak enforcement of ethical guidelines, and limited awareness of professional codes of conduct (Mwatimwa *et al.,* 2023; Ashiq *et al.,* 2021; Ondieki, 2023).

Perceptions of ethical practices significantly influence how information professionals interpret and apply moral standards in academic library service delivery (Onwubiko, 2019; Ashiq, Rehman & Mujtaba, 2021). Positive perceptions are associated with respectful user engagement, equitable access to information and improved service quality, while negative perceptions contribute to poor responsiveness, declining service standards and user dissatisfaction (Tweve, 2022; Nnko, 2023). Despite the existence of ethical guidelines, codes of conduct and service standards, limited empirical research has examined how information professionals in Tanzanian academic libraries perceive, apply and adhere to these ethical frameworks in their daily practices.

Furthermore, ethical practices in academic libraries are shaped by both individual and organizational factors. Individual factors include personal values, beliefs, professional competence and experience, while organizational factors encompass leadership commitment, ethical training, enforcement of guidelines and institutional culture (Ackim *et al.,* 2023; Kahumba *et al.,* 2024). Weak management support, low staff morale, insufficient training, and unclear ethical

policies have been shown to undermine ethical practice, whereas supportive leadership and strong ethical cultures promote professional integrity and quality service delivery (Tweve, 2023; Mwilongo *et al.,* 2024).

Understanding ethical practices among information professionals is therefore essential not only for improving service delivery but also for aligning academic library services with broader development agendas such as Sustainable Development Goal 4 (quality education) and Sustainable Development Goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions). By promoting transparency, accountability and equitable access to information, ethical library services contribute to institutional effectiveness and public trust.

Thus, in this background, there remains a significant knowledge gap regarding how information professionals in Tanzanian academic libraries perceive, apply and are influenced by ethical practices in service delivery. Addressing this gap is critical for strengthening professional integrity, enhancing user satisfaction and ensuring that academic libraries effectively fulfill their mandate in supporting higher education and national development.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Ethical practices in academic libraries are fundamental to shaping a positive professional image of information professionals and ensuring the delivery of high-quality, equitable, and reliable library services (Ailakhu, Ugonna & Vivian, 2022; Hossain, Celik & Hertel, 2024). Information professionals are entrusted with the responsibility of facilitating access to information while upholding ethical standards related to accuracy, confidentiality, intellectual property protection, fairness and respect for users' rights (Dutta, 2023; Adeyemi *et al.,* 2024). When effectively applied, these ethical principles enhance user trust, institutional credibility and overall service effectiveness within academic libraries.

Despite their importance, the implementation of ethical practices in academic libraries is often constrained by limited financial resources, inadequate infrastructure and insufficient access to

modern information technologies. These challenges are further compounded by inadequate training and limited opportunities for continuous professional development, which prevent information professionals from keeping pace with emerging ethical challenges associated with digital resources, copyright management, data privacy and misinformation (Kaddu & Ssekitto, 2023; Azubogu, Madu & Nwaigwe, 2023; Rana & Sharma, 2024). Consequently, these limitations adversely affect the quality-of-service delivery and undermine professional integrity and user confidence in academic libraries.

Furthermore, information professionals' perceptions of ethical practices significantly influence how ethical principles are interpreted and applied during service delivery. These perceptions are shaped by factors such as educational background, professional training, work environment, skills, and work experience (Lizazi-Mbanga & Mapulanga, 2021; Schopfel & Azeroual, 2023). Positive perceptions of ethical values such as fairness, confidentiality, respect for intellectual property and accuracy have been associated with improved performance, stronger user trust and better service outcomes (Adebayo & Mabawonku, 2017; Kaddu & Ssekitto, 2023). Conversely, weak ethical awareness or inconsistent application of ethical principles may lead to compromised service quality.

Empirical studies continue to report persistent challenges in professional conduct within academic libraries. Michael and Oleyomi (2023) identify negative professional attitudes such as lack of initiative and unwelcoming behavior toward users, while other studies associate poor service delivery with inadequate user support, insufficient guidance in information retrieval, and neglect of intellectual property rights (Yap *et al*., 2024; Phillips & Oyewole, 2024). These findings suggest a disconnect between established ethical standards and actual professional practice in academic library environments.

In Tanzania, scholarly attention to ethics has largely focused on sectors such as healthcare, education, procurement, and public

administration, with minimal emphasis on academic libraries (Mtatita *et al.,* 2021; Mwagike & Changalima, 2022; Milanzi, Heman & Mtangi, 2023). Existing studies addressing ethics in the information field primarily concentrate on teachers' professional conduct, media ethics, records management, or general public service ethics (Ndumbaro, 2018; Tweve, 2019, 2022, 2023). Research specifically examining ethical practices among information professionals in Tanzanian academic libraries remains limited, and ethical practices within libraries are not yet widely recognized or systematically assessed (Ndumbaro, 2018; Ndumbaro & Mutula, 2020).

Although some academic libraries in Tanzania have introduced ethical guidelines and professional development initiatives aimed at enhancing ethical awareness, studies indicate persistent challenges in translating these efforts into consistent ethical behavior and practice (Oliveira, 2023; Rehman *et al*., 2024). This situation reveals a significant knowledge gap regarding how information professionals perceive ethical practices, how these perceptions influence service delivery and the extent to which ethical standards are integrated into daily professional activities within Tanzanian academic libraries.

Failure to address this gap risks continued inconsistencies in service quality, weakened professional accountability and declining user trust. Therefore, there is a critical need to investigate adherence to ethical practices in academic library service delivery in Tanzania, with particular emphasis on information professionals' perceptions and the factors influencing ethical behavior. Addressing this problem is essential for strengthening ethical culture, improving user satisfaction, and ensuring that academic libraries effectively support teaching, learning and research within Tanzanian higher education institutions.

1.3 Justification of the Study

The study is justified with several reasons. First, the study will help in addressing unethical practices to uphold the standards of service delivery in academic libraries which align with Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs4) on ensuring equitable access to quality education through confidential, during service delivery. Second, the study will emphasize the role of upholding confidentiality as a core ethical practice that protects user privacy and ensure trust between information professionals and library users. By safeguarding sensitive information, confidentiality supports an environment where users feel secure to access information freely and responsibly which align with (SDG16) on ensuring transparent and accountable institutional that respects rules and build trust. Third, there is a clear knowledge gap. While, most of studies conducted on the area based on other professionals such as health, procurement, teachers and records management. Limited studies conducted on library professionals' highlights that the issue of ethical practices was not widely recognized. This study aims to fill the gap.

Additionally, the study provides both practical and academic contributions. Practically, the study offers evidence-based recommendations to policymakers, library management and information professionals on having professional code of ethics. This will ensure standard during service delivery on issues related to privacy, equitable access, intellectual freedom, confidentiality and professional integrity. In academics context, the study improves the body of knowledge on ethical practices by extending understanding of how ethical principles are applied within academic library, how they influence service delivery and how information professionals navigate ethical dilemmas during service delivery.

The study will help to increase knowledge of ethical practices, resolve ethical dilemmas arising from the on-going development and digital transformation of academic libraries, and define best practices guided by professional norms and principles. The study will also assist policymakers in developing effective policies that promote increased ethical behavior among information professionals in academic libraries. Furthermore, it will provide valuable insights to information professionals, enabling them to navigate ethical guidelines and principles effectively in service delivery and prevent unethical practices within the field.

1.4 Objectives of the study

1.4.1 General Objective

This research aims to investigate ethical practices in service delivery by information professionals in selected academic libraries in Tanzania.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are to:

i. Assess the ethical practices performed by information professionals on service delivery among selected academic libraries in Tanzania
ii. Determine the perception of information professionals on ethical practices in service delivery among selected academic libraries in Tanzania;
iii. Analyze factors influencing ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in selected academic libraries in Tanzania.

1.5 General Research Question

How are ethical practices implemented and upheld by information professionals in service delivery among selected academic libraries in Tanzania?

1.5.1 Specific Research Questions

i. What ethical practices are performed by information professionals in delivering services in selected academic libraries in Tanzania?
ii. What are the perceptions of information professionals regarding ethical practices in service delivery in selected academic libraries in Tanzania?
iii. What factors influence the ethical practices of information professionals in service delivery within selected academic libraries in Tanzania?

1.6 Scope and Delimitation of the study

This study was geographically delimited to selected academic libraries located in Morogoro, Dar es Salaam and Dodoma.The selection of these regions was influenced by practical

considerations, including accessibility of the study sites, availability of respondents, time constraints, and financial limitations. Limiting the study to these regions made it possible to conduct an in-depth and manageable investigation while still generating findings that are relevant and informative for academic libraries in Tanzania. Thematically, the study focused on four core ethical practices that guide service delivery in academic libraries including accuracy of information provided, equal access to information resources, protection of users' privacy and respect for intellectual property rights. The study examined how these ethical practices are implemented, the challenges encountered and the extent to which they shape the quality of library service delivery.

Methodologically, the study was limited to a cross-sectional research design, using both qualitative and quantitative data collected within a defined period. The study did not include other types of libraries except for academic libraries only within selected regions. These delimitations were necessary to maintain manageable coverage, ensure contextual relevance, and allow for an in-depth analysis of ethical practices within academic libraries in Tanzania.

While this study emphasizes ethical practices among information professionals, it does not assume uniform behavior or capacity among all practitioners. The variation in professional training, institutional policies, resource availability and technological infrastructure may influence how information professionals understand and implement ethical principles. For instance, some librarians may face system limitations that compromise user privacy or restrict access, while others may have better institutional support enabling higher implementation of ethical practices. Although such variations exist, the primary focus of the study remains on the collective implementation of ethical practices within academic libraries.

Additionally, the study focused ethical practices in service delivery such as accuracy of information provided, equitable access to print and digital resources, protection of privacy and intellectual

property. It did not cover broader areas of library ethics such as professional conduct outside service delivery, collection development ethics, or ethical considerations in research data management. Thus, study focused on how ethical principles implemented within academic libraries and aligned with the study's central objective for effective service delivery by information professionals.

1.7 Definitions of the Concepts

1.7.1 Ethical Practices

Ethical practices are the application of professional moral values in *evaluating the effectiveness of the services delivered* (Bakare, 2018). In this study, the concept is used to observe information professionals exercising moral values in providing services.

1.7.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a fundamental ethical responsibility that ensures the protection of library users' privacy regarding their personally identifiable information (Singh, 2024). In this study is used in maintaining privacy when professionals provide services, particularly in handling database search records and borrowing data.

1.7.3 Code of Ethics

The code of ethics is the document that defines the professions into broad principles that may be used by individuals or members of the information profession as a framework for dealing with situations involving ethical decisions on providing service in academic libraries (Ferguson, Thornley & Gibb, 2016). In the study, the concept will be used as a guiding document for information professionals in ensuring ethical practices are adhered to in service delivery.

1.7.4 Service Delivery

Service delivery involves activities deployed by information professionals to deliver services and resources to library users, to enhance the learning process and efficiency of library users

(Haruna, 2022). In this study, service delivery is used as a routine activity provided by librarians to meet user needs.

1.7.5 Information Professional

An information professional is someone who collects, records, organizes, stores, preserves, retrieves and disseminates online or printed Information (Aslam, 2022). In this study, information professionals are referred to as librarians who work in libraries and assist users with needed information.

1.7.6 Academic Library

An academic library is attached to a higher education institution to support universities and colleges' teaching, learning, and research (Umoh, 2017). In this study, academic libraries refer to repositories of knowledge that consider and promote ethical standards to support scholars and researchers.

1.8 Theoretical and Conceptual framework of the Study

1.8.1 Theoretical Framework

The study used a multi-theoretical framework that combines the Theory of Planned Behaviour, Professionalism and Duty Based Theory. The use of multiple theory allows research to comprehensively investigate ethical practices performed by information professionals, perception of ethical practices in service delivery, ethical and professional responsibilities in upholding confidentiality and factors influencing ethical practices during service delivery in academic libraries.

1.8.1.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), developed by Ajzen (1991), offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how information professionals perceive and act upon ethical practices in academic library. The theory emphasizes that an individual’s behavior is influenced by three key components: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control (Bosnjak *et al.,* 2020).

In the context of this study, the perceived behavioral used toward ethical practices such as confidentiality, fairness and intellectual honesty directly impacts their willingness to implement these principles during service delivery among information professionals (Afolayan, 2022). Subjective norms, including library management expectations and adherence to professional standards, also shape their ethical perceptions and guide their behavior. Furthermore, perceived behavioral control, referring to professionals' beliefs about their capacity to act ethically within their work environment, plays a crucial role. Roszkowska and Mele (2021) noted that factors such as the nature of services provided, access to training, organizational support and the clarity of ethical guidelines can either facilitate or hinder ethical behavior.

However, a weakness of the TPB is its focus on individual intentions, with limited attention to external factors such as organizational culture, leadership dynamics and systemic constraints, which significantly influence ethical practices in professional environments like academic libraries (Glusker *et al.,* 2022). In this study, while addressing the limitations of the theoretical framework, the Manson's PAPA Model framework which stands for (Privacy, Accuracy, Property and Accessibility) emphasizes ethical practices that information professionals are expected to uphold, rather than relying solely on individual perception.

1.8.1.2 Professionalism Theory

The second theoretical is Professionalism Theory, which was developed in the 20th Century through the work of two sociologists, namely Eliot Freidson and Talcott Parsons. The theory defines values, standards and behaviours that characterize a professional. It emphasizes adherence to ethical practices, being responsible and commitment to services. The theory is appropriate as it contains components relevant to this study, including ethics and integrity, which guide honest and principled conduct; responsibility and accountability, emphasizing ownership of professional actions; and confidentiality, which involves safeguarding sensitive information trusted by users (Shrestha, 2024). These elements

provide a framework for assessing how information professionals uphold ethical practices and maintain confidentiality during service delivery, which directly aligns with the objectives of the study, namely, to evaluate ethical practices and protection of user privacy in academic libraries. However, the weakness of the Professionalism Theory is the challenge of ensuring accountability among information professionals, especially in the absence of specific and clear ethical practices. In addressing this weakness, it is essential to promote transparency and integrity by encouraging professionals to be honest and accurate in their work, avoid misleading claims, and consistently maintain confidentiality during service delivery.

1.8.1.3 Duty Based Theory

Third theory is Duty-Based Theory as it provides a strong foundation for understanding the moral obligations of information professionals in fulfilling their roles. The theory emphasizes that ethical practices in libraries, such as providing equal access to information, protecting users' privacy and intellectual property, ensuring accuracy in information services, and treating users with fairness and respect are duties that should be upheld regardless of external pressures or outcomes (Udayakumar & Babu, 2021; Okpo, 2023). These principles directly align with the core responsibilities of information professionals and serve as benchmarks for ethical service delivery. However, the theory's application has certain limitations in this study's context, as it tends to assume uniform adherence to these duties without fully accounting for the complex and dynamic factors such as age, education level, work experience, institutional culture and technological changes that influence ethical behavior in practice.

Therefore, while Duty-Based Theory provides a useful ethical framework for defining what constitutes good professional practice, the study also recognizes the need to integrate this theory with models (such as Manson's Conceptual Model) that introduce flexibility by considering intervening variables. This combined approach ensures that the study can adequately address both the

principles of duty and the practical realities that shape ethical practices in academic library service delivery.

Thus, the reason of using a multi-theoretical framework is that each theory addresses distinct but complementary aspects essential for a comprehensive understanding of ethical practices in service delivery by information professionals in academic libraries (Canova & Manganelli, 2020; Álvarez Agüí *et al.* (2023). TPB explains how individual attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control influence professionals' ethical intentions and actions, such as upholding confidentiality and fairness in service delivery, highlighting the psychological and social determinants of behavior. Professionalism Theory brings in the dimension of established professional values, standards and behaviors such as ethics, responsibility and accountability, which guide consistent and principled conduct in librarian roles. Duty-Based Theory provides a moral foundation by emphasizing that ethical duties like protecting privacy and providing equal access must be adhered to regardless of outcomes or external pressures, reflecting the fundamental obligations of information professionals. Together, these theories enable a more holistic understanding of ethical practices by integrating individual, professional and moral dimensions and by considering contextual factors such as organizational culture and institutional support, which are crucial in the Tanzanian academic library context. Hence, applying these theories together allows the study to assess ethical practices in service delivery by professionals while upholding confidentiality, accountability and reliability during service delivery.

1.8.2 Applicability of Theory and Model to Tanzanian Context

The application of the theories was found to be applicable in explaining the relationship among the variables in the Tanzania context.

1.8.2.1 Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) is applicable in Tanzanian context based on various social and behavioral studies which shown strength in prediction behaviours based on altitudes,

subjective norm and perceived behavioral control. For instance, the theory seems to be applicable as it shown a positive attitude, a high perceived subjective norm, and positively perceived behavioral control towards other professionals such as health professionals and information communication as indicated in a study of Kaula *et al*. (2024) and Danda *et al*. (2025). This highlight that TPB theory is more likely for explaining ethical practices among information professionals in Tanzanian academic libraries by considering how their attitudes towards ethics, social expectations from management and peers and confidence in their ability to uphold ethical standards that influence their service delivery behaviors.

1.8.2.2 Professionalism Theory

Professionalism theory is highly applicable in Tanzanian context particularly in the academic libraries and information services due to challenges faced by information professional such as limited resources and training (Muneja *et al.,* 2024). Thus, by upholding key element from professionalism theory such as confidentiality, accountability and integrity are very important for maintaining ethical practices for effective service delivery. Studies such as Gembe (2020) and Kibona *et al.* (2025) shows that professionalism theory highlight positive aspects in other field for Tanzania context and thus this is significant to this study as it emphasizes the duty for professionals to act ethically, take their responsibility for action and follow the established standard in service delivery.

1.8.2.3 Duty Based Theory

In the Tanzanian context, the applicability of duty-based theory (deontology) is a foundation of ethical practices for library professionals, guiding their behavior through adherence of moral duties during services delivery, regardless of the consequences (Kasonyi & Monchena, 2025). Based on library professionals the duty-based theory provides a strong philosophical foundation for promoting accountability, fairness, confidentiality, and professional integrity. Studies shows duty-based theory is applicable in library professionals as it provides general understanding of information ethics to library professional practice **(**Nambobi *et al.* (2023);

Phillips (2024). Likewise a study of Ndumbaro (2018) and Yusuf (2021) noted that the duty based theory is appropriate for guiding library professional practice, because it emphasizes obligations and moral duties which align with that application of ethical practices in providing equitable access, ensuring accuracy, protecting user privacy and intellectual property. Thus, based on the nature of the study the theory will be applicable in Tanzania context since it aligns with a study theme.

1.8.2.4 Literature Gap

The reviewed literature indicates several gaps regarding ethical practices in academic library service delivery. First, although most of the scholars emphasize the importance of awareness of ethical practices among information professionals (Cassell & Hiremath, 2023; Azubogu, Madu & Nwaigwe, 2023; Singh, 2024; Nabossa, 2025). Those studies show a disconnection between awareness and implementation of ethical practices (Teke, 2021; Hakbilen & Ozgonul, 2023; Rahman, 2023). However, inadequate research such as a study of (Ndumbaro & Mutula, 2020; Tweve, 2022, 2024) failed to indicate whether high awareness leads to consistent application of ethical practices, particularly within Tanzania.

Second, while ethical practices such as equitable access, accuracy, privacy and intellectual property protection are well-documented as shown by Nambobi (2022) and Ankrah *et al*., (2023) their practical implementation remains inconsistent due to institutional gaps, inadequate training and weak enforcement mechanisms (Roszkowska & Mele, 2021; Ailakhu & Kingsley, 2022). Hence, existing studies do not provide sufficient empirical evidence on how these practices are applied in day-to-day service delivery in Tanzanian academic libraries (Yusuf, 2021; Mtasigazya, 2024).

Third, while the perceptions of ethical practices are shaped by demographic and professional factors (Adebayo & Mambokwu, 2017; Ali, Habibu & Dawha, 2019; Dunmade & Tella, 2023), current research does not adequately explain how these perceptions influence actual service delivery or how negative perceptions

undermine implementation of ethical practices in academic libraries (Ndumbaro, 2018; Henjewele, 2020; Tweve, 2023). Additionally, despite the availability of international and institutional ethical guidelines (Omigie, 2020; Jaeger & Taylor, 2020; Chu *et al.,* 2022), there is limited understanding of how these guidelines are interpreted, applied, or enforced by information professionals. Studies acknowledge awareness gaps and outdated policies (Goswami, 2023; Tokarz, 2024) but fail to explore the real-world operationalization of these guidelines during service delivery (Contreras, Hoffmann & Slocum, 2021; Johnston *et al.,* 2022).

On the other hand, while scholars recognize the importance of fulfilling both ethical practices and professional responsibilities (Ejedafiru & Chukwuma, 2020; McMenemy, 2023; Tweve, 2023; Nambobi *et al.,* 2023). Some of the few studies analyze the practical challenges faced by information professionals in upholding both obligations (Adewojo, Esan & Aleem, 2024; Ghosh *et al.,* 2025).

Moreover, the global research identifies strategies such as training, policy development, and ethics committees to support ethical compliance (Shiferaw, 2018; Jain & Shonhe, 2020; Rehman *et al.,* 2024), the literature reveals no documented strategies specific to Tanzanian academic libraries (Tweve, 2022). Therefore, this creates a gap regarding application of ethical practices for efficient and effective service delivery.

Perhaps, the methodological gap shows that most studies conducted on ethical practices rely heavily on quantitative methods, potentially overlooking qualitative insights that could enrich the findings (Ankrah *et al.,* 2023; Jones & Hinchliffe, 2023 and Philips, 2024). Perhaps most of the studies conducted in this area are based on descriptive method and literary approach, which focus primarily on presenting existing conditions rather than exploring the underlying reasons, perceptions, and contextual factors influencing ethical practices (Mahadeva gouda & MS,2023; Ghour, 2024; Philips, 2024 & Evans *et al.,* 2025). Thus, the current study used a mixed method approach which allow to collect both

qualitative and quantitative findings which provide a fuller picture of complex phenomena on ethical practices in libraries.

In theoretical gap it's noted that most studies on ethical practices by information professions rely on duty-based theory and virtue theory (e.g., Ndumbaro, 2018; Yusuf, 2021; Nambobi *et al.,* 2023). These theories are criticized for being rigid and rule-focused, offering limited flexibility to address complex, context-specific ethical dilemmas and neglecting the consequences of actions and professional judgment. On the other hand, virtue-based theories highlight personal character and moral virtues, but they lack clear guidelines for decision-making, making empirical measurement and consistent application across diverse cultures and institutions difficult (Ankrah *et al.,* 2023; Jones & Hinchliffe, 2023).

Thus, the current study, uses a multi-theoretical framework combining the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), Professionalism Theory and Duty-Based Theory to examine ethical practices among information professionals in Tanzanian academic libraries. TPB explains behavior through attitudes, social norms and perceived control, influencing intentions and actions like confidentiality and fairness in service delivery. Professionalism Theory highlights core values such as ethics, accountability and confidentiality essential for library practice. Duty-Based Theory stresses unconditional moral duties to protect user privacy, ensure equal access and maintain ethical standards in information services. This integrated approach captures individual behaviors, professional values and moral obligations in ethical practices in library.

In the Tanzanian context, there have been a limited number of studies conducted on ethical practices, albeit with different focuses. Previous studies, including those by Anangisye (2017), Tweve (2018), LaFrentz (2022), Mindel (2022) and Mwambuli (2023) have examined the role of ethical practices in relation to teachers, records managers, media bloggers and procurement professionals but they have not focused on how information professionals in libraries engage in ethical practices when providing library services.

The limited number of studies conducted on information professionals, such as Tweve (2018), Ndumbaro (2018), Ndumbaro & Mutula (2020) and Tweve & Malyi (2022), have highlighted that the issue of ethical practices remains ambiguous and continues to be a concern for professionals and scholars. As a result, a current study investigates ethical practices on service delivery by information professionals in selected academic libraries in Tanzania.

1.8.3 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework was formulated from Mason's PAPA Model Framework, Duty based Theory, Theory of Planned Behaviour and Professionalism Theory to guide the study. The framework constructed three independent variable including ethical practices performed with four indicators, perception of ethical practices with six indicator and factors influencing ethical practices with six indicators and four indicators in intervening variable. The conceptual framework shows the relationship between independent and dependent variables.

The independent variable show that adherence of ethical practices are core indicators of the whole process and indicated by the provision of accurate information, ensuring access to information, protection of privacy issues and intellectual property and their corresponding influence the perception of ethical practices during service delivery. Perception tends to influence ethical practices in terms of approaching user politely, ensuring, ensuring effective communication, ensuring user satisfaction, perceiving transparency while ensuring the use of ethical guidelines such as general library guide, International Federation of Library Associations (INFLA), American Library Association (ALA) and Collection Development Policy. On the other hand, factors influencing ethical practices such as morale, adequate enforcement by library management, adequate ethical training, fair treatment of users, awareness of ethical issues and individual values and beliefs may either positively or negatively influence effectiveness of service delivery by information professionals in academic libraries and the demographic characteristics such as age, sex, experience and

education level may strengthen or weaken the relationship between ethical practices and library service delivery, resulting in differences in the quality, accessibility, confidentiality and reliability of services .

The assumption is that when information professional adheres to the ethical practices, they are more likely to improve service delivery in terms of confidentiality, reliability, accessibility and timing. However, intervening variable such as age, sex and experience and education level may moderate the relationship between independent variable and dependent variable of the study for effective service delivery.

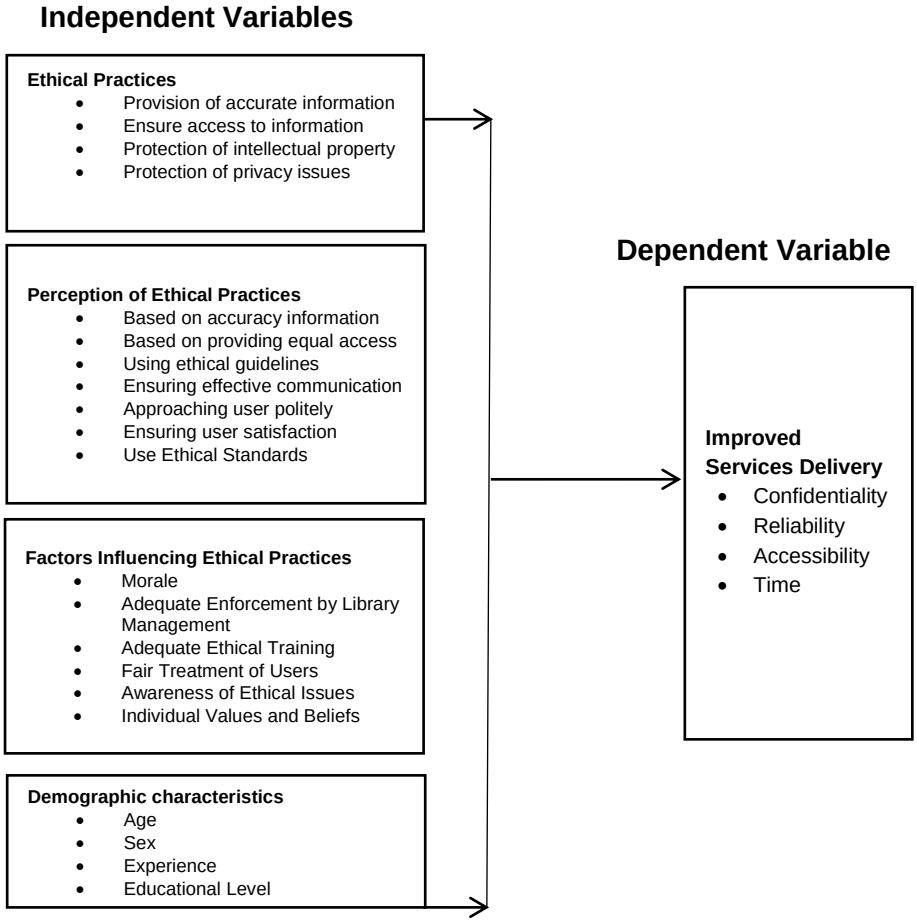


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework (Modified PAPA Model)

1.8.4 Measurement Constructs

The study employed a PAPA model based on the variable of privacy, accuracy, property and accessibility which are directly linked with ethical practices by information professionals such as providing equal access, accuracy of information, privacy issues and protection of intellectual property. The study used three theories based on the relevancy of the study such as Duty-Based-Theory, Professionalism Theory and Theory of Planned Behaviour in which the variable was useful and relevancy for the study of ethical practices in service delivery by information professionals in academic libraries.

1.9 General Methodology

This section provides the methodological aspects for all manuscripts and published papers. The section includes research approach, research design, area of the study, study population sampling technique and sample size. Data collection methods, statistical data analysis and measurement of construct.

1.9.1 Research Paradigm of the Study

This study is guided by a pragmatic research paradigm**,** with support from positivist and interpretivist perspectives (Aramide, & Adigun, 2025). The choice of this paradigm is informed by the nature of the research objectives, research questions, and the mixed methods approach adopted. The study seeks to understand ethical practices in service delivery by information professionals in academic libraries, focusing on what is practiced, how it is perceived, and which factors influence those practices (Pandey *et al.,*2023). Such a focus requires both measurable evidence and in-depth understanding of human experiences.

The pragmatic paradigm is most suitable for this study because it emphasizes practical problem-solving and the use of methods that best address the research questions (Sim *et al.,*2024). Ethical practices in academic libraries are complex and cannot be fully explained using a single approach. Pragmatism allows the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. In this study,

pragmatism supports the collection of numerical data to measure ethical practices and perceptions, while also allowing qualitative data to explain the real-life experiences and professional judgments of information professionals (Ali *et al.,* 2025).

The positivist paradigm underpins the quantitative component of the study. Positivism assumes that reality can be observed, measured, and analyzed objectively. This paradigm is reflected in the use of structured questionnaires, Likert-scale items, and statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, correlation, and regression analysis (William, 2024). Through this approach, ethical practices are treated as observable and measurable variables, enabling the researcher to assess the level of ethical practice and examine relationships between ethical practices and influencing factors across selected academic libraries.

At the same time, the study is informed by the interpretivist paradigm**,** particularly in the qualitative component. Interpretivism recognizes that ethical practices are socially constructed and influenced by individual experiences, professional values, and institutional contexts (Acharya, 2025). Through focus group discussions and key informant interviews, the study captures the perceptions, experiences, and interpretations of information professionals regarding ethical practices in service delivery. This paradigm allows the researcher to understand how ethical guidelines are applied in practice and how organizational culture and leadership shape ethical behavior.

Therefore, the combination of pragmatic, positivist and interpretivist paradigms provides a strong philosophical foundation for the study. This integrated approach enhances the credibility and depth of the findings by linking measurable outcomes with professional experiences. It also ensures that the results are both academically sound and practically relevant for improving ethical service delivery in academic libraries in Tanzania.

1.9.2 Research Design

The study adopted a cross-sectional research design to collect data from a population at a single time, making it an efficient and cost-effective method. This design was chosen because it allows a researcher to collect data at a single time which is more usefully in terms of time and cost-effective (Creswell, 2014). The design is beneficial for descriptive analysis, enabling researchers to assess the prevalence of characteristics or outcomes and examine multiple variables simultaneously to identify relationships and correlations (Magigi, 2016). On the other hand, it assists as a foundation for future longitudinal studies that may examine how these dynamics change.

1.9.3 Research Approach

The study employed the mixed methods approach, whereby both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to provide a better understanding of ethical practices in service delivery by information professionals in selected academic libraries in Tanzania. Studies such as Watkins & Gioia (2015) and Strijker *et al.* (2020) noted that the mixed methods approach usually improves understanding of complex phenomena due to the recognition that reality cannot be fully understood through a single-dimensional approach. Thus, the approach also enables one to minimize the limitations and weaknesses occurred in using a single approach, enabling better insights and generalization of outcomes.

1.9.4 Area of the Study

The study area included the selected academic libraries from the University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Mzumbe University and the University of Dodoma. These libraries were purposively selected due to their central role in supporting teaching, learning, and research activities, as well as their responsibility to provide high-quality services while upholding ethical standards. The libraries were selected because they serve diverse user groups, including students, academic staff and researchers and are tasked with ensuring equitable access to information, accuracy of information provided, protection of user privacy and intellectual property rights (Mosha & Ngulube, 2024).

The selection of these universities enables the study to capture a representative understanding of how ethical practices are implemented across different types of academic libraries in Tanzania, considering their unique institutional policies, service environments and user populations.

1.9.5 Study Population

The population for the study included all information professionals from the academic libraries of the University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Mzumbe University, and the University of Dodoma. These information professionals form part of the workforce responsible for delivering library services while upholding ethical standards in their institutions. A total of 265 information professionals were identified as the study population. Stratified sampling was applied in the quantitative component to ensure fair representation across different universities and job roles, thereby reducing sampling bias and enhancing the generalizability of the findings. For the qualitative component, purposeful sampling was used to select respondents for interviews and focus group discussions, targeting individuals with relevant experience. Key informants were also purposively selected and included four directors, one from each academic library, as they are part of the management team responsible for ensuring ethical practices.

1.9.6 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The study used four sampling stages including a combination of non-probability and probability sampling techniques. The first stage involved selecting the study area, which comprised the academic libraries of the University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Mzumbe University, and the University of Dodoma. They were purposively selected due to their fundamental role in universities including teaching, learning, and research, as well as their responsibility for providing library services. In the second stage, library staff were stratified into professional categories, such as librarians, library assistants, and other service provider in academic libraries. In the third stage, specific participants were selected from each category to ensure a representative sample

across different professional roles. In the fourth stage, participants were further stratified by gender to capture diverse perspectives on ethical practices, and a simple random sampling technique was employed where applicable.

In a qualitative data, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) were involved. FGD participants and Key Informants (KIs) were purposively selected based on their extensive knowledge and experience in library service delivery. The study conducted seven groups three from Dodoma University, two from University of Dar es salaam and one group from Sokoine University and Mzumbe Universities and each FGDs included six participants with a total of 42 participants. The key informants the library directors from each selected academic library.

The sample size (n) will be obtained using a mathematical formula suggested by Yamane (1967) to determine the sample size of each stratum as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + (N)e^2} = \frac{265}{1 + 265 * 0.05^2} = 159$$

Where;
n = Required sample size;
N = Population size; and
e = sampling error (5% = 0.05).
Therefore, the sample size will be n=159 sampling units; the procedure of selecting information professionals will be selected based total number using probability proportion to size (PPS) as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Sampling Frame of the Study

SN	University	Total population per university	Proportion	Sample size	Selected Sample (n)= (n*h)/N
1.	Mzumbe University	42	0.16	159	25
2.	SUA University	30	0.11	159	18
3.	University of Dar es Salaam	90	0.34	159	54
4.	University of Dodoma	103	0.39	159	62
5.	**TOTAL**	**265**	1		**159**

Source: Research data (2024)

The study will use a sample of 159 information professionals who will be randomly selected from the earlier described population. It is obvious that before the selection of a sampling technique researcher will first determine the size of the sample. The sample was determined based using a mathematical formula suggested by Yamane (1967) to get 159 respondents from the sample of two hundred and sixty-five (265) of information professionals from selected academic libraries. The study will include four library directors from the selected academic libraries. Therefore, overall, the study will have a total of 163 respondents.

1.9.7 Data Collection Methods and Instruments

The study employs multiple data collection methods to gain a thorough understanding of ethical practices by information professionals in selected academic libraries. These methods include questionnaires, focus group discussions (FGDs) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). The questionnaire consists of both open and closed-ended questions, with the closed questions primarily using a 5-point Likert scale to assess perceptions of ethical practices and service delivery. A total of 42 FGDs were conducted involved 7groups across the selected libraries. Three at the University of Dodoma, two at the University of Dar es Salaam, and one each at Mzumbe University and Sokoine University of Agriculture. Each group comprising up to six participants selected based on gender, age, education and service area to ensure

diverse perspectives. Additionally, four directors, one from each library, were purposively selected and interviewed as key informants due to their managerial roles in upholding ethical standards. FGDs were conducted to obtains their views of participant in sharing their experiences, while KIIs provided in-depth insights from well-informed individuals on ethical practices in academic libraries. Both sessions were recorded using telephone, accompanied by field notebooks and diaries to ensure accurate documentation.

Documentary review provides supplementary secondary data. The instruments were pre-tested with 15 respondents at Jordan University, yielding a reliable Cronbach's alpha of 0.79. A total of 159 questionnaires were administered, with 136 valid responses used for analysis, representing an acceptable response rate. Qualitative data collection involved 42 participants in FGDs and interviews with key informants, where participants freely expressed their views, enriching the dataset. This mixed-method design ensures comprehensive coverage of qualitative and quantitative data, enhancing the depth and reliability of findings.

1.9.8 Data Analysis

The study employed a mixed-methods approach mixing both quantitative and qualitative analyses to comprehensively examine ethical practices during service delivery in academic libraries. Quantitative data from questionnaires were processed using SPSS version 22 and analyzed through Descriptive statistics, Chi-square tests, ANOVA, Pearson correlation, Linear regression and Ordinal logistic regression. Descriptive analyses (frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations) summarized respondents demographic characteristics, levels of awareness, perceptions of ethical practices, and adherence to ethical guidelines. Awareness of ethical practices was measured using a five-point Likert scale, with total scores categorized into levels ranging from low to high. Ethical practice indicators such as accuracy of information, protection of intellectual property, equal access, and privacy were scored using means, where values above 3 indicated frequent practice.

Inferential analysis included chi-square tests to determine associations between categorical variables such as demographic characteristics and ethical practice levels. ANOVA and Duncan's Multiple Range Test assessed differences in mean practice scores across various ethical dimensions, while Pearson's correlations examined interrelationships among perceptions, service delivery, guideline adherence and assurance of ethical practices. Linear regression models evaluated the influence of variables such as intellectual property protection, user assistance and query resolution on service delivery outcomes, with diagnostic tests ensuring model reliability. Additionally, ordinal logistic regression was applied to examine how ordered levels of ethical practice (low, moderate, high) were predicted by demographic and professional variables.

Qualitative data from key informant interviews and focus group discussions were analyzed through content analysis, supported by direct quotations to enhance authenticity. These insights provided contextual explanations for quantitative findings and highlighted the practical use of ethical guidelines, library policies and professional standards (ALA, IFLA) in shaping service delivery. Together, the integrated analysis offered a robust understanding of ethical practice, professional responsibilities, perception and factors of ethical practices in academic library service delivery.

1.9.9 Ethical Consideration

The research adhered to all ethical procedures, including obtaining relevant permits, securing informed consent, informing respondents of the research objectives, and maintaining confidentiality throughout the research and thereafter (Creswell, 2012). Additionally, the researchers strictly followed all guidelines regarding data integrity, refraining from any form of data forgery and ensuring confidentiality at every stage of the study. In presenting the qualitative findings, the universities involved will be referred to as university 1, university 2, university 3, and university 4 instead of using their actual names to protect the identity of the institutions and participants (Khoa *et al.,* 2023). This measure

ensured that the identity of the institutions remained confidential, thereby upholding ethical practices in reporting the findings.

1.10 Validity and Reliability

The study ensured the validity and reliability of the findings through several measures employed across the quantitative and qualitative method. For the quantitative data, the questionnaire was developed based on existing literature and similar studies conducted in academic libraries. Then the developed instrument was reviewed by experts in Library and Information Science to ensure completeness, clarity and relevance to the research objectives. Additionally, a pilot test was conducted for 15 respondents at Jordan University before full data collection to determine reliability and refine ambiguous items.

The qualitative method was achieved through credibility, dependability and confirmability. The credibility was strengthened through triangulation by using three methods of data collection including questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions. Dependability was ensured by maintaining detailed documentation of data collection and analysis procedures. Confirmability was achieved by presenting respondents' views accurately without researcher bias and without changing any information.

1.11 Study Limitation

The study provides valuable insights of ethical practices among information professionals in Tanzanian academic libraries, subject to several limitations. First, the study is limited to selected academic libraries in Tanzania; therefore, the findings may not fully represent all academic libraries across the country and left public, special, or school libraries.

Second, the cross-sectional design captures a cross-sectional design, it captured ethical practices at single point in time, limiting the ability to assess temporal changes. Additionally, the study relies on self-reported data obtained through questionnaires, focus group discussions and interviews, which may be influenced by social attraction bias, where respondents present themselves as

more ethical than they actually sense. This may affect the accuracy of reporting on sensitive ethical issues such as confidentiality, fairness, intellectual honesty and adherence to professional guidelines. Moreover, the study involves librarians who provide service delivery and left other information professionals such as archivists and records managers. As a reason, the findings may not fully represent the ethical practices and experiences of all categories of information professionals within library professionals.

Finally, the study depends on the availability and willingness of information professionals to provide their views and experience. Thus, non-response or incomplete responses may have limited the depth of analysis in some areas. Therefore, despite these limitations, the study provides a strong foundation for understanding ethical practices in service delivery by information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania.

1.12 Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is structured in a publishable manuscript setup. This thesis is organized into eight chapters. The first chapter serves as an introduction to the study that establishes the overall theme of the research and methodology. It contains background information, a problem statement and justification, research objectives, questions, scope and limitation of the study, definitions of key concepts, the theoretical and conceptual framework and general methodology, including a description of the study area, the research design, the study population, the sampling methods, sample size and data collection methods and tools, and analysis methods. Then followed by four chapters (Chapters 2 to 5) presenting four manuscripts originating from the specific objectives of the study. Chapter two presents the first manuscript on ethical practices in library service delivery among information professionals' insight from academic libraries in Tanzania. Chapter three presents the second manuscript, on perception of ethical practices in service delivery. Chapter four present third manuscript on ethical practices and professional responsibilities in upholding confidentiality. The fifth chapter presents the fourth manuscripts on factors influencing ethical practices in service delivery. The sixth

cover integrated discussion that summarizes the main findings and discussion of key findings, while chapter seven presents the conclusions and provides overall recommendations, contributions of the study, theoretical implications, suggestions for further research and limitations.

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CHAPTER TWO
PAPER I



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Beth Kachota, Ronald Benard & Silver Hokororo

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Ethical practices in library service delivery among information professionals: Insights from academic libraries in Tanzania

Beth Kachota[a], Ronald Benard[a] and Silver Hokororo[b]

[a]Department of Informatics and Information Technology, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania; [b]Department of Business Management, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania

ABSTRACT

Ethical practices among information professionals in academic libraries are vital for effective and equitable service delivery. Such practices involve ensuring equal access to information, maintaining data accuracy, protecting user privacy, and safeguarding intellectual property. However, gaps remain due to limited resources and insufficient training, resulting in inconsistent ethical standards. This study investigated the awareness and implementation of ethical practices in academic libraries through a cross-sectional design involving 136 respondents. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed across selected libraries. Results showed that most information professionals exhibited high awareness of equal user treatment, data protection, and adherence to service standards. Nonetheless, there was limited awareness regarding advising users on the difference between accessible and restricted resources, indicating areas needing targeted attention. One-way ANOVA further revealed notable differences in the extent of ethical practice execution ($p<0.05$). The study concludes that while overall awareness is strong, specific aspects like verifying information accuracy and intellectual property protection require enhanced focus. It recommends that library management develop clear ethical guidelines and implement ongoing training to standardize and strengthen ethical practices.

KEYWORDS
Academic libraries; Ethical practices; Information professional; Service delivery; Tanzania

Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving information landscape, information professionals, particularly in academic libraries, are characterized by a range of ethical practices and services provided (Corey et al., 2024; Nonthacumjane, 2021). These professionals are encouraged to adhere to ethical practices by

CONTACT Beth Kachota b.kachota@gmail.com; bkachota@mzumbe.ac.tz Department of Informatics and Information Technology, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania.
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ensuring equal access to information, maintaining accuracy of provided information, addressing privacy issues and protecting intellectual property (Afolayan, 2022; Hranchak, 2022). Their ethical practices and professional duties are inseparable from their overarching mission of advancing knowledge, supporting learning and nurturing intellectual issues in service delivery (War, 2019). By upholding ethical practices, information professionals promote and ensure their services remain ethical, equitable and impactful in the digital age (Pérez-Pulido & González-Teruel, 2022). Thus, through abiding by ethical practices academic libraries meet their users' needs, aspirations and expectations to achieve their goals.

The emphasis on ethical practices in the information profession originated from the social responsibility debates of the 1960s (Du Mont, 1991). During that time, the core mission of libraries globally was to effectively address patrons' information needs, requiring adherence to ethical principles to avoid bias, fear and plagiarism. As a result, worldwide ethical practices among information professionals were crucial for ensuring high-quality service delivery (Tweve, 2023). Based on this background, information professionals are expected to navigate an increasingly complex landscape of legal and ethical issues, requiring heightened flexibility and higher ethical practices to connect resources and maintain sustainable service delivery (Albee, Campbell & Martincick, 2019; Omigie, 2020). Despite their expected role, information professionals are unaware of the ethical implications of their actions, with their behavior often shaped more by customs and habits than by ethical considerations (Ankrah et al., 2023).

Studies of scholars such as Igun (2013) have shown that a lack of emphasis on ethical practices in many libraries leads to unethical practices in service delivery. Despite the presence of qualified professionals to deliver effective and efficient services, but still an inconsistent application of ethical practices in service delivery is still a problem (Matyana & Sibiya, 2024). Studies of McMenemy et al. (2014), Samek (2017) and Mahadevagouda and Pavithrabai (2023), among others, are of the view that challenges in service delivery exist primarily due to professionals' lack of focus on ethical practices.

Professional associations worldwide advocate for the need of ethical practices in library and information science (LIS). The associations outline professional values and ethical conduct and LIS programs that include ethical practices as part of their curricula (Smith, 2009; Luo & Trott, 2016; Perez-Pulido & González-Teruel, 2022). Despite this, there is still limited research specifically targeting ethical practices in librarianship realm. Researchers such as Froehlich (1997), Hansson (2017) and Young (2020) have advocated for the need of exploring and defining the shared ethical values of IPs worldwide. Nevertheless, misunderstanding continue to arise

between IPs and users regarding service delivery, indicating a persistent need of addressing ethical practices in the profession of librarianship.

In Africa, ethical practices are essential for professional integrity and quality service delivery (Atanda, Owolabi & Ugbala, 2021; Mamokhere et al., 2022; Yusuf, 2021). Organizations like the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) put emphasis on ethical service delivery (Ndumbaro, 2018; Raju et al., 2023). In this endeavor, Ejedafiru and Chukwuma (2020) noted that the IFLA underscores the pivotal role of ethical practices by information professionals, emphasizing their responsibility to facilitate service delivery.

In Tanzania, library services have traditionally been guided by integrity, respect and trust (Mfaume & Bilinga, 2024; Tsompanakis, 2014). Studies such as Kipasika (2023), and Ligalawike et al. (2024) hold that ethical practices in service delivery within the Tanzanian context encompass various sectors, including healthcare, procurement and public service integrity. While these studies underscore the importance of ethical practices, challenges such as resource scarcity and lack of adherence to ethical training persist across various sectors, including the library profession in Tanzania. These challenges highlight the need to investigate the awareness and ethical practices in academic libraries.

Statement of the problem

Ethical practices in academic libraries are fundamental for shaping a positive image of information professionals and ensuring the delivery of high-quality services (Ailakhu & Vivian, 2022; Hossain, Çelik, & Hertel, 2024). These professionals are entrusted with the responsibility of upholding ethical standards in accessing and disseminating information, ensuring accuracy and safeguarding users' privacy and intellectual property (Adeyemi et al., 2024; Dutta, 2023).

However, the effective implementation of ethical practices in academic libraries is often hindered by limited resources such as budget constraints and inadequate infrastructures. Furthermore, lack of sufficient training and professional development opportunities prevents information professionals from keeping up with emerging ethical challenges (Azubogu et al., 2023; Kaddu & Ssekitto, 2023; Rana & Sharma, 2024). These limitations negatively impact the quality-of-service delivery and undermine the professional integrity and trustworthiness of academic libraries. Perhaps a review of the literature on ethical practices in library services reveals that limited studies have been conducted in the Tanzanian context (Ndumbaro, 2018; Ndumbaro & Mutula, 2020; Tweve, 2019). Similarly, research specifically focusing on ethical practices in Tanzanian academic libraries remains limited. Existing studies, such as those by Tweve (2023), primarily

address ethical practices related to teachers' conduct, media bloggers and records management. Likewise, research by Ndumbaro (2018) highlights that ethical practices in libraries are not widely recognized. Therefore, the present study sought to investigate the adherence to ethical practices in delivering library services in academic libraries in Tanzania.

General objectives

The general objective of this study was to examine ethical practices in library service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries.

Specific objectives

Specifically, the study aimed to address the following objectives:

i. To assess level of awareness of ethical practices in library service delivery among information professionals; and
ii. To analyze various ethical practices implemented by information professionals in library service delivery.

Research questions

i. What is the level of awareness of ethical practices in library service delivery among information professionals?
ii. What are the various ethical practices implemented by information professionals in library service delivery?

Literature review

Level of awareness of ethical practices in library service delivery

Service delivery is the core function of academic libraries, ensuring that teaching, learning, and research are effectively supported while upholding ethical practices (Cassell & Hiremath, 2023). Awareness of ethical practices in library service delivery is crucial for information professionals to provide high-quality and trustworthy services (Azubogu et al., 2023; Singh, 2024). According to Phillips (2024) and Nambobi et al. (2023), such awareness enables professionals to adhere to moral principles, institutional policies, and professional codes of conduct, thereby ensuring integrity and accountability. Ghour further emphasizes that ethical practices in service delivery encompass principles such as integrity, transparency, accountability, respect for user privacy, and fairness. However, the reviewed literature reveals a significant gap between awareness and the actual implementation of ethical practices. While many studies emphasize ethical practices to be

adhered to during service delivery, they also indicate challenges in consistently applying these principles in everyday service delivery.

Empirical studies from outside Tanzania, such as research by Musoke et al. (2020), Namaganda (2020), Yusuf (2021), and Kaddu and Ssekitto (2023), reveal that information professionals generally possess a reasonable level of ethical awareness. However, contrasting findings by Teke (2021), Hakbilen et al. (2023), and Rahmani et al. (2023) highlight that awareness alone is often insufficient to maintain ethical practices in meeting users' needs.

To address this gap, scholars such as Prendeville & Kinsella (2022) and Moonasar (2024) advocate for ongoing professional development and ethics-based training to strengthen both awareness and implementation of ethical practices in libraries. Moreover, most existing studies do not explore the underlying factors influencing ethical awareness nor evaluate whether awareness of ethical practice may lead to implementation during service delivery.

In the Tanzanian context, ethical awareness has been examined across several professional sectors, including healthcare, procurement, legal services, and education (Boniface & Ngalawa, 2021; Gembe, 2020; Mussie et al., 2022; Mwambuli, 2023; Paschal, 2023). These studies highlight the importance of ethics and reveal varying levels of awareness. However, limited research has focused specifically on ethical awareness within the library and records management sectors. The few studies conducted, by Ndumbaro and Mutula (2020), suggest that ethical practices in academic libraries are under-researched, resulting in inconsistent awareness of ethical practices among information professionals. Thus, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining the level of awareness of ethical practices among information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania.

Ethical practices implemented by information professionals in service delivery

Ethical practices play a critical role in ensuring quality service delivery across various institutions, including academic libraries. Deol and Kaur (2020) emphasize that adherence to ethical practices by information professionals is essential for ensuring trust and maintaining high standards in service delivery. Within academic libraries, professionals are mandated to perform their duties in accordance with ethical standards and professional codes of conduct (Azubogu et al., 2023). Such ethical practices encompass providing equitable access to information, ensuring the accuracy and reliability of resources, safeguarding user privacy, and protecting intellectual property rights (Ankrah et al., 2023).

The significance of these ethical practices is supported by some of the studies across different national contexts. For instance, Roszkowska and Melé (2021) and Ailakhu and Kingsley (2022) highlight that the effective implementation of ethical practices depends largely on the awareness, personal commitment of information professionals, and the presence of institutional accountability and support mechanisms. However, the implementation of ethical practices remains inconsistent across institutions, attributable to variations in institutional policies, enforcement, and levels of staff training.

Further, research by Lamanna (2019), Wang et al. (2023), and Zakir et al. (2024) noted that ethical practices, including equitable access to information, data accuracy, user privacy protection, and respect for intellectual property, differ depending on the type, size, and nature of the library services. Thus, while most information professionals recognize the importance of ethical practices in their roles, actual implementation is frequently hindered by external factors such as institutional constraints, insufficient training, and weak enforcement of policy frameworks. Studies such as Yusuf (2021) and Mtasigazya (2024) observe that although ethical practices are crucial for effective service delivery, their practical application is often irregular. Band and Butler (2023) further contend that maintaining ethical practices is vital for protecting user rights, fostering trust, and ensuring equitable access to information resources.

Despite broad acknowledgment of these ethical practices, a gap exists in the literature regarding their practical application during day-to-day service delivery by information professionals. Addressing this gap, the present study seeks to evaluate the practical application of ethical practices among information professionals, with particular focus on academic libraries in Tanzania.

Methodology

This study adopted a cross-sectional research design to collect data from a population at a single time, making it an efficient and cost-effective method. This design is beneficial for descriptive analysis, enabling researchers to assess the prevalence of characteristics or outcomes and examine multiple variables simultaneously to identify relationships and correlations. The study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches. It involved academic libraries located at the University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Mzumbe University and the University of Dodoma. These universities support teaching, learning and research; thus, their libraries are often upholding the task of disseminating knowledge to users while adhering to ethical practices in access, accuracy and protection of privacy and intellectual property. The population of the study included all information professionals at the mentioned universities. Stratified sampling was justified for the quantitative component as it

ensured representation from the selected universities and job roles, reducing sampling bias and increasing the generalizability of the results. Purposeful sampling was used to obtain respondents for interviews and focus group discussions to get detailed and specific information from individuals with experience relevant to the research. A total of seven (07) groups with a maximum of six (06) respondents were at the selected academic libraries were involved. Three focus group discussions were conducted at the University of Dodoma, two at the University of Dar es Salaam and at Mzumbe University and Sokoine University of Agriculture, one focus group discussion was done respectively. Key informants were purposively selected to include four (4) directors, one from each academic library, as they were part of the management team and responsible for upholding ethical practices in their institutions.

The total population for the study was 265. The sample size of 159 was obtained using Yamane's formula for sample size calculation. Proportional samples were calculated and drawn from each institution. This sample size was determined using the proposed formula by Yamane as presented below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = required sample size; N = population size; and e = sampling error (5% = 0.05).

Then:

$$n = \frac{265}{1 + 265(0.05)^2} = 159$$

A cross-sectional survey method was used to involve both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative methods involved questions for information professionals, while qualitative methods were used for interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) methods were employed to collect data for the study. The instruments were pre-tested using 15 respondents drawn at Jordan University before the actual study to determine reliability. The Spearman-Brown split-half Cronbach's alpha of the instrument was found to be 0.79, which is considered reliable (Hair et al., 2010). A questionnaire guide with open and closed-ended questions was administered to 159 information professionals at the UDSM, SUA, MU and UDOM. A total of 136 questionnaires were correctly filled, returned and used in this study, which is an acceptable return rate. Qualitative data were collected through interviews involving four (4) key informants, including one director in each academic library. A total of 42 respondents were included in focus group discussions: three at the UDSM, two at UDOM

and one at SUA and MU respectively, each containing six information professionals. During the discussions, respondents were free to express their views, as the researcher recorded their opinions.

Statistical data analysis

The study used both quantitative and qualitative data to analyze the collected data. The quantitative analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22, presenting the role of ethical practices in service delivery using tables with frequencies and percentages, while the content analysis was used to analyze qualitative data from key informant interviews and FGDs with direct quotes from respondents enhanced the authenticity of the research.

The quantitative analysis allowed a researcher to measure awareness of ethical practices in library service delivery among information professionals. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of awareness on six (6) aspects of ethical practices. A five-point Likert scale (1 = Not aware, 2 = slightly aware, 3 = somewhat aware, 4 = moderately aware, 5 = Very aware) was used to gauge their awareness. Each respondent's awareness score was obtained by summing up all the aspects. The lowest total score was calculated by multiplying 1 and 6 to get 6, while the maximum score was calculated by multiplying 5 and 6 to get 30. The total score was then categorized as follows: 6 = Not aware, 7–23 = Low, 24 = Moderate, and 25–30 = High awareness. In addition, Chi-square was used to determine whether the level of awareness varies across the different aspects of awareness at a 95% confidence interval.

To measure the ethical practices performed by the respondents, they were presented with various aspects of each ethical practice and asked to indicate the extent to which they adhered to each practice using a five-point Likert scale: 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Always, and 5 = Often. Each practice had several indicators: accuracy of provided information (7), protection of intellectual property (7), equal access to information (7), and protection of privacy issues (6). The mean score is expected to range from 1 to 5, where a score of 1 implies that the ethical issues were not practiced, and a score of 5 indicates frequent practice. An average score above 3 implies that the ethical issues were practiced frequently. Furthermore, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine significant differences in ethical practices. In addition, Duncan's Multiple Range Test (DMRT) was used for the mean separation of the ethical practices at a 95% confidence interval.

Prior to calculating the mean, factor analysis was used to assess the validity of the items for each construct through exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation to determine the pattern of correlations within a set of observed variables.

Additionally, data was suppressed at 0.49 to display only those items with high correlation, while the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure was used to assess the adequacy of the sampling process.

Ethical considerations

The study ensured adherence to ethical practices by obtaining permits from relevant authorities. The researchers obtained an introduction letter at Sokoine University of Agriculture to collect data at four academic libraries, namely the University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Mzumbe University and the University of Dodoma. During data collection, the researcher informed the respondents about the purpose of the study and obtained their consent, as suggested by Kaewkungwal and Adams (2019). The study followed all ethical procedures, including obtaining relevant permits, securing consent, informing respondents of the research objectives, maintaining their anonymity and ensuring confidentiality throughout the study and afterward (Leavy, 2022). To maintain confidentiality (Subedi, 2025), the universities were referred to as university 1, 2, 3 and 4 instead of mentioning their names.

Measurement of construct

In testing the various ethical practices in this study, service delivery was measured as the dependent variable by assessing the extent to which ethical practices are performed by information professionals. The measurement is based on mean scores ranging from 3.43 to 3.81, which indicate how frequently different ethical practices are applied in service delivery. In statistical analysis, One-Way ANOVA ($p<0.05$) was used and confirmed that there are significant differences in how professionals adhere to ethical practices in the protection of intellectual property and the protection of privacy issues. The highest mean scores (3.81) were observed in the protection of privacy issues, and intellectual property was the most frequently practiced. In assessing the level of awareness of ethical practices in service delivery.

Findings and discussion

Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

To capture socio-demographic characteristics, respondents were asked to indicate their sex, age group, education level, professional work and

Table 1. Respondents' socio-demographic characteristics ($n = 136$).

Variable	Category	n	%
Sex	Male	55	40.4
	Female	81	59.6
Age	Less than 30 years	33	24.3
	30–34 years	45	33.1
	35–39 years	24	17.6
	40–44 years	20	14.7
	45 years and above	14	10.3
Education level	PhD	10	7.4
	Master	20	14.7
	First degree	53	39.0
	Diploma	53	39.0
Professional work	Library Officer	42	30.9
	Principal Library Assistant	22	16.2
	Library Assistant	33	24.3
	Librarian Trainee/Tutorial Assistant	9	6.6
	Assistant Librarian	9	6.6
	Librarian	4	2.9
	Senior Librarian	17	12.5
Working experience	Less than 2 years	17	12.5
	2–5 years	20	14.7
	6–10 years	33	24.3
	11–15 years	45	33.1
	Above 15 years	21	15.4

Source: Field Data.

working experience. Their socio-demographic characteristics were as presented in Table 1:

Results in Table 1 indicate that a significant percentage (59.6%) of respondents who participated in this study were females. This is suggesting that many service providers in the surveyed academic libraries were women. In contrast, males accounted for a smaller proportion (40.4%). These results imply that there is a large number of female professionals compared to males. In service delivery, gender representation might affect user engagement and interaction; some users feel comfortable seeking assistance from a specific gender (Ogunbanjo & Bakare, 2024). The findings further indicate that the majority (75%) of respondents were between the ages of 30 and 40 years, while the remaining (25%) were 45 years and above. Findings suggest that a significant proportion of information professionals are in their active working years, making them more likely to stay updated on best practices and play a key role in ethical decision-making in service delivery.

Furthermore, the results also indicate that a large percentage of the respondents (78%) have completed a diploma and a bachelor degree. At the same time, a few (22%) had only completed master's and PhD degrees. The results propose that these educational qualifications equip information professionals with knowledge, critical thinking and practical skills necessary to deliver services responsibly. Moreover, the results mean that a large percentage of respondents (72.8%) had working experience of more than 10 years, while only 27.2% had working experience of between 1

and 5 years. The findings highlight that most respondents had a reasonable working experience in providing services capable of adhering to ethical practices. These findings align with the current research of Philips and Oyewale, which found that demographic factors influence ethical practices. Therefore, these findings highlight that while educational qualifications provide the foundation, the combination of education and working experience leads to a deep commitment to ethical practices in service delivery.

Level of awareness of ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals

Table 2 shows the distribution of the level of awareness of ethical practices among 136 individuals, categorized into four Likert scales: "Not aware", "low", "moderately aware", and "highly aware". A five-point Likert scale was as follows: 1 = not aware, 2 = low, 3 = somewhat aware, 4 = moderately aware, 5 = very aware.

The findings in Table 2 indicate that 50% of respondents demonstrated a high positive awareness, suggesting that a large portion of the respondents were well-informed and likely to follow ethical practices closely. Meanwhile, 30.9% had low awareness, 14% had moderate awareness, and 5.1% were not aware at all. These results signify that there is high awareness of ethical practices, likely due to effective training programs and a strong organizational culture that prioritizes ethical practices. Some studies support these findings. For instance, Muktamar (2023) concur that organizational culture and effective training play a crucial role in shaping employees' ethical practices, attitudes and behavior in service delivery. However, the low and moderate awareness implies that respondents might have some knowledge of ethical practices, but their application in service delivery is limited, and suggests the need for some more technical skills in ethical practices during service delivery. As indicated by Jebur et al. (2024) that unethical behavior is influenced by minimal awareness and a weak culture of service provision.

On the other hand, the findings are in line with a study by Ndumbaro and Mutula (2020), which indicated high awareness of ethical practices

Table 2. Level of awareness of ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals.

Category	*n*	%
Not aware	7	5.1
Low	42	30.9
Moderate	19	14.0
High	68	50.0
Total	136	100.0

Source: Field Data.

by information professionals during service delivery. Despite this high awareness, the present study observed varying levels of ethical awareness among professionals. Thus, the study highlights the need to implement continuous training programs focused on ethical practices to strengthen understanding and application. These programs should specifically target groups with low and moderate awareness to bridge knowledge gaps effectively.

Additionally, through qualitative findings, one key informant at Sokoine University of Agriculture claimed that raising the level of awareness of ethical practices is as follows:

> Ethical awareness is maintained through in-house and external training workshops. The library provides training on how to serve users and act professionally, including raising awareness of what others expect from us. (Respondent, University 1)

The findings align with a previous study by Okanda (2024), which emphasizes that continuous professional training is a crucial tool for shaping ethical practices and equipping professionals with the knowledge and moral clarity needed to make sound decisions. This highlights the importance of integrating ethical education into ongoing professional development programs in academic libraries. Developing a sustained culture of integrity and accountability requires the reinforcement of ethical practices through structured learning and peer engagement. While the evidence demonstrates a generally positive awareness of ethical practices among respondents, a gap remains in the consistent application of this knowledge across all professionals. This calls for strengthened and regular training initiatives, a more deliberate culture of knowledge sharing and improved strategies for embedding ethical practices into daily service delivery. Therefore, continuous professional education must be prioritized as a core strategy for enhancing ethical practices competence and ensuring quality service delivery in academic libraries.

Aspects of awareness in service delivery among information professionals

To assess awareness of various aspects of ethical practices in service delivery, the following Likert scale was used: 1 = not aware, 2 = slightly aware, 3 = somewhat aware, 4 = moderately aware, and 5 = very aware. Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they are aware of ethical practices in service delivery. The findings are as depicted in Table 3:

The results in Table 3 indicated that most respondents (44.9%) were very aware of the importance of providing equal materials and services to all users, treating them with fairness and respect, as well as keeping data safe against improper access. These results suggest a generally strong understanding among professionals of the importance of equity, respect

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Table 3. Aspects of awareness in service delivery.

	Not aware		Slightly aware		Somewhat aware		Moderately aware		Very aware	
Aspect	*n*	%	*N*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Disclosing any personal information	15	11.0	9	6.6	22	16.2	40	29.4	50	36.8
Providing equal material and services to all users	10	7.4	8	5.9	24	17.6	33	24.3	61	44.9
Respecting the present standards in providing services	10	7.4	11	8.1	23	16.9	35	25.7	57	41.9
Advising on accessible and restricted resources for library users	11	8.1	8	5.9	26	19.1	48	35.3	43	31.6
Treating library users with fairness and respect during service delivery	10	7.4	9	6.6	23	16.9	33	24.3	61	44.9
Keeping data safe against improper access	10	7.4	13	9.6	19	14.0	33	24.3	61	44.9

Source: Field Data.

and data privacy in service delivery. Likewise, they respect the present standards in providing services (41.9%), disclosing any personal information (36.8%), and advising on using accessible and restricted resources for library users (31.6%). The study found areas where professionals are more cognizant of keeping data safe against improper access. This might ensure that there is no loss of property, which can hold them accountable. This is also observed by Badmus and Ogunlana (2022) and Phillips (2024), who found that professionals focus on providing relevant information and safeguarding data due to their understanding of users' needs. Therefore, while the findings reveal encouraging levels of awareness on ethical practices in core areas like fairness, privacy and equitable access, still there is a need of offering continuous training, particularly in less-understood areas such as appropriate advisory practices and adherence to service standards. These findings contradict with the previous study by Ndumbaro (2018), which reported that ethical practices were not widely understood or practiced. During focus group discussions one respondent argued as follows regarding aspects of awareness:

> In our library, we are assigned to train staff and students in faculties and schools on how to search for online materials and how we provide services. As a result, we have been effective in providing equal services and keeping data safe against improper access. (Respondent, University 1)

Another respondent claimed as follows about the same aspect:

> We make sure that all users are treated equally, regardless of their background or status. Fair access to library materials is highly valued as part of our professional integrity. (Respondent, University 2)

The findings indicate the need for developing institutional ethical guidelines. The demonstrated awareness and behavior in areas like fairness, privacy and equal access can serve as pillars for ensuring ethical practices in academic libraries for practical application. Also, these results raise the need of continuous training and professional strengthening. Therefore, the study puts emphasis on institutionalizing ethical practices by developing comprehensive ethical guidelines. These should be complemented by structured, ongoing training programs and supported by internal monitoring mechanisms. This approach will not only ensure ethical practices in libraries but also ensure consistent and high-quality service delivery grounded professionally.

Ethical practices implemented by information professionals in service delivery

To assess the underlying structure of ethical practices in service delivery, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was initially employed to determine whether statistically significant differences existed in awareness levels among different groups of respondents. Following this, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) served as a data reduction technique to identify and validate the core dimensions underlying the observed variables related to ethical practices. PCA effectively summarizes the data by reducing a large set of variables into fewer, interpretable components without losing essential information.

The results on the extraction of communalities ranged from 0.553 to 0.865. The extracted communalities are higher than the minimum recommended communalities of 0.3, as recommended by Pallant. The analysis implies that the communalities in this table are all high, which indicates that the extracted components represent the variables well. This implies that all items fit well with their respective constructs. The outcomes underscore that all items are suitable for further principal component analysis, as shown in Table 4.

The statistical findings presented in Table 4 illustrate the extent to which each practice is represented in the extracted component. In this context, each number is an extraction value derived from Principal Component Analysis (PCA), indicating how much of the variance in each variable (practice) is explained by the underlying factor; in this case, a specific dimension of ethical practices in library service delivery.

Table 4. Ethical practices by information professionals.

Accuracy of information provided	Initial	Extraction
Verification of the accuracy of information by checking valid sources is an ethical practice performed by information professionals in service delivery	1.000	.762
Guiding users in utilizing a relevant database is an ethical practice performed by information professionals in service delivery	1.000	.780
Offering the current list of resources to library users is an ethical practice performed by information professionals in service delivery	1.000	.749
Participation in the exercise of removing inaccurate and outdated materials from the library is an ethical practice performed by information professionals in service delivery	1.000	.553
Reading reference sources of information is an ethical practice performed by information professionals in service delivery	1.000	.741
Assessing the vulnerability of information sources before communicating them to users is an ethical practice performed by information professionals in service delivery	1.000	.736
Reading the 'About Us' section on the website to understand the sources' information is an ethical practice performed by information professionals in service delivery	1.000	.641
Equal access to information		
Guiding users in finding relevant resources/answering inquiries, a level of ethical practice is required to ensure equal access to information	1.000	.799
Provision of information searching skills as a level of ethical practice to ensure equal access to information	1.000	.821
Ensuring the availability of computers with internet connectivity is a level of ethical practice to ensure equal access to information	1.000	.826
Provision of reference services as a level of ethical practice to ensure equal access to information	1.000	.668
Marketing library resources as a level of ethical practice to ensure equal access to information	1.000	.750
Helping users locate information resources is a level of ethical practice to ensure equal access to information	1.000	.777
Protection of privacy issues		
Restricting the sharing of search inquiries as a level of ethical practice in the protection of privacy issues in service delivery	1.000	.605
Restricting the sharing of user name lists to unauthorized personnel is a level of ethical practice in the protection of privacy issues in service delivery	1.000	.771
Restricting the sharing of user name lists is a level of ethical practice in the protection of privacy issues in service delivery	1.000	.848
Restricting the sharing of borrowing records as a level of ethical practice in the protection of privacy issues in service delivery	1.000	.840
Restricting the sharing of circulation records as a level of ethical practice in the protection of privacy issues in service delivery	1.000	.865
Restricting the disclosure of personal ID without the users' consent is a level of ethical practice in the protection of privacy issues in service delivery	1.000	.717
Protection of intellectual property		
Limiting the number of photocopies allowed per book is a level of ethical practice in the protection of IP	1.000	.692
Providing users with clear guidelines and handouts on utilizing library materials as a level of ethical practice in the protection of IP	1.000	.679
Explaining the fair use of materials in the library as a level of ethical practice in the protection of IP	1.000	.709
Provision of workshops on citing materials property by the library as a level of ethical practice in the protection of IP	1.000	.699
Explanation by the library on the policies regarding the use of materials by library users as a level of ethical practice in the protection of IP	1.000	.666
Display by the library copyright warnings in a conspicuous location as a level of ethical practice in the protection of IP	1.000	.561
Help library users with proper citation as a level of ethical practice in the protection of IP	1.000	.629

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .901, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square = 3.616E3, DF = 351, p = .000.

The closer the extraction value is to 1.0, the more the item contributes to and is defined by the identified factor. According to Pallant, extraction values above 7 are considered strong, while values above .3 are acceptable for inclusion. These values help to determine how well each aspect

fits within its category and the degree to which it reflects ethical practices.

The findings indicate the adherence to the accuracy of information in service provision as follows: guiding users in utilizing the relevant database (.780), verification of the accuracy of information by checking valid sources (.762), and offering the current list of resources (.749). These are followed by reading reference sources of information sources (.741), assessing the vulnerability of information sources before communicating them (.736) while reading the 'about us' section on the website to understand the sources (.641) and removing inaccurate and outdated materials from the library (.553) shows moderate practice and advice areas for improvement. The findings point out that users are collectively informed of the essential information source, which enhances the reliability and integrity during service delivery. The findings imply that information professionals are effective in guiding users, verifying sources and maintaining updated resources. Thus, some efforts are needed to remove outdated material that can lower service reliability, as claimed by Külcü (2020), that professionals in service delivery are advised to guide users on relevant and current databases. This is also observed in qualitative data as follows:

> Apart from training users when they come to the library, we also communicate with class representatives to encourage their fellow students to come in groups for training on how to search for and access current information. (Respondent, University 3)

Thus, based on the findings, it is noted that guiding users in utilizing relevant database lists not only ensures informed access but also builds users' confidence in getting accurate and reliable information. Despite this, professionals are advised to maintain updated materials for users to access reliable information.

The findings on the application of equal access to information are as follows: Ensuring the availability of computers with internet connectivity (.826), provision of information searching skills (.821), guiding users in finding relevant resources (.799), helping users to locate information resources (.777), marketing library resources (.750), and the provision of reference services (.668). These show moderate emphasis. The results imply that professionals are strongly committed to providing quality services based on users' needs. Similarly, Tyler et al. (2023) reveal that continuous training and different library guidelines help users to equally access the learning materials. In light of the findings, it is observed that high extraction values for internet connectivity and information searching skills emphasize the importance of infrastructures and user education in ensuring equitable access, while the provision of reference services needs to be considered as part of ethical practices. Therefore, the provision of reference

services needs to be considered as a part of ethical practices. This is also discussed in qualitative findings as follows:

> In our daily activities, we are making sure that students have internet access and know how to search for information. This is just as important as having the materials themselves. We guide them not only to resources but also on how to use them effectively as a part of ethical practices. (Respondent, University 4)

Moreover, findings on the practice of privacy issues show that restricting the sharing of circulation records (.865), restricting the sharing of user name lists (.848), restricting the sharing of borrowing records (.840), restricting the sharing of user name lists (.771), restricting disclosure of personal ID without the users' consent (.717) and restricting sharing search inquiries (.605). The findings are of the view that to a large extent, professionals consider privacy issues as one of the ethical practices in service delivery. This is supported by Taillac (2022), who found that privacy is crucial in safeguarding user information professionally and emphasizing continuous user education. The results imply that while libraries adhered to some ethical practices in service delivery, there is a need to consider reference services and address gaps in privacy practices. Some efforts need to be considered, such as staff training and raising awareness among users on adherence to ethical practices for quality services. During FGDs, one respondent claimed as follows:

> We are very cautious about sharing any user information, whether it is borrowing history or personal IDs. Even within the library, access to such records is strictly limited. Privacy is a serious part of our work. (Respondent, University 4)

The findings on adherence to ethical practices on the protection of intellectual property show that explaining the fair use of materials in the library (.709), provision of workshops on citing materials property (.699), providing users with clear guidelines (679), explanation by the library on the policies (.666), help by the library with proper citation (.629), and display by the library copyright warnings(.561). To some extent, professionals consider the protection of intellectual property, but continuous training in areas of low practice is needed. The findings align with the study by Repanovici et al. (2023), who found that university librarians need continuous education on promoting and protecting innovative results during service delivery. Based on the results, more emphasis needs to be placed on copyright warnings and proper citations to improve ethical practices for effective service delivery.

Based on Table 4, equal access and privacy issues are significantly practiced by information professionals in service delivery compared to other ethical aspects, like moderate practice in the accuracy of the information and lower practice on the protection of intellectual property. The findings align with studies by Barfi et al. (2023) and Maesaroh et al.

(2024), which emphasize the importance of professionals to assess the quality, accuracy and sources of information to effectively meet users' needs and uphold professional responsibility. Moreover, the findings show moderate practice in reviewing the "About Us" section on websites to understand the source, with a rating of 0.641. Additionally, there is low practice observed in removing inaccurate or outdated materials from libraries, with an ethical practice score of 0.553. Findings suggest that some older documents are retained for future reference, which explains why professionals do not always discard them. These findings contrast with Nambobi (2021), who highlights a lower level of enforcement of ethical practices by professionals, particularly in discarding outdated materials.

However, qualitative findings from focus groups conducted at the Mzumbe University on the removal of outdated materials reveal that:

> I don't recall the last time we removed outdated material, as we believe that even older resources provide valuable historical content and contribute to the present knowledge. Therefore, we preserve these materials for users who need to study historical perspectives. (Respondent, University 3)

Therefore, the findings across the four aspects of ethical practices indicate that privacy protection scored the highest, with an extraction value of .865 for restricting the sharing of circulation records. This was followed by equal access to information, with a score of .826 for ensuring the availability of internet-connected computers. The dimension of accuracy of information scored .780 for guiding users in utilizing relevant database lists, while intellectual property protection scored .709 for explaining the fair use of library materials. These results suggest that items with extraction values above .7 represent stronger adherence to ethical practices in service delivery.

The findings align with Kisselburgh and Beever (2022), who emphasize that privacy is a key element in expanding ethical practices in libraries, particularly in safeguarding user confidentiality. Therefore, the findings above have significant implications for professional associations, particularly the Tanzania Library Association (TLA), by providing a foundation to advocate for national ethical guidelines that reflect best practices in privacy, access, accuracy and intellectual property. TLA is encouraged to develop standardized training and certification programs, establish a code of ethics review committee and create platforms for peer exchange to address ethical practices challenges. These insights support the development of a comprehensive, practical and context-specific ethical policy framework, reinforced by continuous professional education and institutional oversight (Table 5).

This section discusses how the mean scores for various ethical practices reflect the level of awareness among information professionals in

Table 5. Relationship of mean scores for ethical practices performed and level of awareness by information professionals on service delivery.

Ethical practice	Mean	Std	Level of awareness
Provision of accurate information	3.43b	1.03	41.9
Provision of access to information	3.54b	0.97	44.9
Protection of privacy issues	3.81a	0.88	44.9
Protection of intellectual property	3.63ab	1.19	31.6

$F = 3.375$, df = 3, 540, $p = 0.018$. Means in the same column with different superscripts are significantly different at $p = 0.05$.

their daily service delivery. A mean score represents the average rating assigned by respondents to a specific ethical practice. Higher mean scores indicate greater awareness and more frequent application of that practice, while lower scores suggest limited awareness or less consistent implementation. The data presents the relationship between the average scores (mean) of ethical practices performed and the level of awareness among information professionals in service delivery. Among the four ethical practices, protection of privacy issues scored the highest mean (3.81) with a relatively low standard deviation (0.88), indicating both strong and consistent application, supported by a high awareness level (44.9%). Protection of intellectual property had a moderately high mean score (3.63) but also the highest standard deviation (1.19), suggesting varied application across professionals and the lowest level of awareness (31.6%), pointing to a potential need for more training in this area. Provision of access to information had a mean of 3.54 and a standard deviation of 0.97, reflecting a good level of practice and awareness (44.9%). Lastly, the provision of accuracy information had the lowest mean score of 3.43 with an awareness level of 41.9%, indicating it is the least consistently applied among the practices despite moderate awareness. Thus, the findings suggest that while privacy protection is well-practiced and understood, other areas, particularly intellectual property and information accuracy, require improved awareness and more consistent application to enhance ethical service delivery. This is observed in the FGDs below: Qualitative data from one of the selected universities shows that:

> In our library, we ensure that users access reports, dissertations and theses without removing the original documents from the premises. We provide photocopies of the necessary sections to protect intellectual property and users' work. (Respondent, University 4)

This leads to a positive trend of ethical practices in protecting intellectual property despite their low level of awareness.

Despite a high awareness level of 44.9%, the mean score for providing access to information is 3.54, indicating that this awareness does not fully translate into practice. This gap may lead to inconsistent information dissemination, potentially affecting service quality. Perhaps the accuracy

of information has the lowest mean score of 3.43) despite a 41.9% awareness level, suggesting that professionals recognize its importance but may struggle to implement it effectively. This difference could result in misleading information, thereby lowering the quality of service. This is observed in the qualitative data through FGDs as follows:

> We are always ready to assist our users as part of our work. However, some users come with the personal belief that we have low education and that we are there only to arrange books, so nothing to assist. Thus, we assist users if they are willing to be assisted. (Respondent, University 3)

These findings emphasize bridging the gap between awareness and practice by providing education, particularly in areas concerning information access and accuracy in academic libraries. Therefore, enhancing training and resources can strengthen ethical practices, ensuring that professionals not only understand ethical principles but also apply them consistently in their service delivery.

Therefore, the findings of this study present a different perspective compared to previous studies such as Ndumbaro and Mutula (2020), Teke (2021), Hakbilen et al. (2023) and Rahmani et al. (2023), which observed that awareness of ethical practices is insufficient for maintaining professional standards and effectively addressing users' needs in service delivery. These studies concluded that ethical awareness is not widely recognized. In contrast, the present study highlights a generally high level of awareness of ethical practices in service provision, despite the variations of ethical awareness among professionals, and emphasizes the need for professional training to increase awareness among information professionals. On the other hand, previous studies on ethical practices in libraries, such as those by Nambobi (2021), Yusuf (2021), Band and Butler (2023) and Mtasigazya (2024), identified a gap in understanding how information professionals practically implement ethical practices during service delivery. However, the findings of this study indicate that information professionals do adhere to ethical practices in service delivery, despite variations in specific practices. This emphasizes the need for continuous training and adequate resources to ensure the effective provision of services.

Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusion

This study examined the awareness and implementation of ethical practices among information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania. The study findings show that most of the information professionals in Tanzanian academic libraries have moderate to high awareness of ethical practices like fairness, privacy, data protection, and equitable access. However, areas

such as verifying information accuracy and protecting intellectual property need stronger attention and implementation. Knowledge gaps among some professionals pose risks for inconsistent ethical service delivery. The findings suggest that library management should develop and enforce clear, relevant ethical guidelines and provide continuous ethics training to address these gaps. Professional associations like the Tanzania Library Association (TLA) can lead efforts in standardizing ethics training, certifying professional conduct, and facilitating capacity-building programs. Thus, strengthening these frameworks will improve the consistency and quality of library services and help institutionalize ethical practices across academic libraries. Therefore, future research should include comparative studies across different types of libraries to gain broader insights into ethical practice implementation in Tanzania.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. The study recommends that the TLA and similar bodies provide ethical practices training in certification processes. The collaborations between academic libraries and associations can ensure the establishment of the national framework for ethical practices and accountability in the profession.
2. The study recommends that library management in academic libraries should establish a library ethics committee for the regular assessment of professionals' awareness of ethical practices in library services. Such committees will serve as internal policy enforcement bodies and facilitate targeted interventions where gaps are identified.
3. The study recommends a need for academic libraries to expand ethical awareness programs through existing communication tools, such as staff email accounts, social media platforms and WhatsApp groups, to share updates, reminders and guidelines on ethical practices. This will lead to consistent ethical practices among information professionals in service delivery.
4. The study recommends that library management in academic libraries should develop clear and comprehensive guidelines to support adherence to ethical practices, particularly in distinguishing between restricted and unrestricted materials. These guidelines will help to reduce confusion and promote responsible access and use of information resources.
5. The study recommends future research across public, private and other academic libraries to assess ethical practices and inform broader national strategies for ethical practices implementation during service delivery.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

ORCID

Beth Kachota http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6910-6901
Ronald Benard http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6398-7541
Silver Hokororo http://orcid.org/0009-0002-4358-1186

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CHAPTER THREE
PAPER II



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Perceptions of ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania

Beth Kachota, Ronald Bernard & Silver Hokororo

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Perceptions of ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania

Beth Kachota[a], Ronald Bernard[a], and Silver Hokororo[b]

[a]Department of Informatics and Information Technology, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania; [b]Department of Business Management, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania

ABSTRACT

This study examined perceptions of ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania. Such perceptions shape how professionals interpret and apply moral standards in providing services. However, varying interpretations of ethical challenges have contributed to inconsistencies in service quality, reliance on outdated practices, and negative staff attitudes. The study specifically aimed to examine information professionals' perceptions of ethical practices, the effectiveness of ethics in influencing service delivery, and the use of existing ethical guidelines in selected academic libraries. A cross-sectional research design was employed, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches, with data analyzed using SPSS. Findings revealed a generally positive perception of ethical practices, with over 60% of respondents acknowledging that ethical standards guide their service delivery. However, neutral responses indicated uncertainty and inconsistent application of ethics, often attributed to inadequate training and weak enforcement of guidelines. Therefore, the study concludes that although ethical practices are widely acknowledged, their application is not always systematic or consistent, largely due to limited training. It recommends regular ethics training, stronger policy enforcement, and continuous professional development to strengthen ethical service delivery while enhancing accessibility, reliability, and accountability.

KEYWORDS

Perception; ethical practices; information professionals; academic libraries; service delivery; Tanzania

Introduction and background of the study

In academic libraries, perception plays a crucial role in shaping ethical practices, as it influences how professionals interpret and apply moral standards in their duties as information providers (Ashiq, Rehman, and Mujtaba 2021; Onwubiko 2019). Ethical practices in library services involve the application of moral principles and professional standards to ensure fairness, integrity, accountability, and respect for library users (Owushi and Anyalebechi 2024). These practices include key aspects such as equitable access to information, accuracy in information delivery, safeguarding user privacy, responsible use of technology, and respect for intellectual property rights (Ankrah, Fordjour, et al. 2023). Emandei (2023) emphasizes that information professionals must understand and internalize ethical principles to facilitate effective and morally sound

CONTACT Beth Kachota bkachota@mzumbe.ac.tz Department of Informatics and Information Technology, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania

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decision-making during service delivery. Such understanding ensures the upholding of these values while maintaining trust and professional responsibility.

Historically, the role of information professionals was largely custodial, focusing on the preservation of texts, manuscripts, and knowledge resources (Kumar 2016; Saffady 2021). Ethical practices during this era were primarily concerned with the accurate transmission of information and access to materials (Igbinovia 2022; Lawrent 2022). However, from the 18th century onwards, their responsibilities expanded to include more dynamic issues such as censorship, the right to access knowledge, and balancing user needs with professional standards (Burgess 2019; Ankrah, Fordjour, et al. 2023). This shift marked a transition from passive custodianship to active ethical engagement in service delivery.

With the professionalization of librarianship in the 19th century, ethical standards were further formalized through the establishment of professional bodies like the American Library Association (ALA), which introduced codes of ethics to guide conduct (Hoq 2012; Shachaf 2005; Yusuf 2021). These codes positioned information professionals as ethical stewards committed to promoting fairness, integrity, and respect in service delivery. Nonetheless, scholars acknowledge that professionals also bring their values and emotions into their work environments, which can result in variations in how ethical principles are applied (Otulugbu and Ogunobo 2022; Tehranineshat, Torabizadeh, and Bijani 2020).

In the current information landscape, the roles of information professionals have grown increasingly complex, shaped by emerging ethical challenges such as privacy concerns, equitable access to digital content, misinformation, and copyright issues (Ocholla 2009; Ondieki 2023; Onoyeyan et al. 2014). These challenges require ongoing reflection and a strong commitment to professional integrity to ensure ethical service delivery (Phillips, Oyewole, and Akinbo 2018; Moonasar 2024). As a result, information professionals are expected to demonstrate heightened ethical awareness and sensitivity in their decision-making processes. This being the case, Yusuf (2021) and Singh (2024) noted that information professionals are not only viewed as custodians of knowledge but also service providers who adhere to ethical practice within academic libraries.

In Africa, various studies, such as by Adebayo and Mabawonku (2017), Rubin (2020), and Oden and Owolabi (2022) indicate that most of the information professionals recognize the importance of ethical practices in enhancing the quality and reliability of service delivery within academic libraries. Ethical practices such as equitable access to information, respect for user privacy, accuracy in information dissemination, and the protection of intellectual property are widely acknowledged as essential. However, varying perceptions and interpretations of these ethical challenges have contributed to inconsistencies in service quality, continued reliance on outdated practices, and negative staff attitudes (Prasanth and Vasudevan 2019). Furthermore, several studies, including those by Adebayo, Akole, and Salau (2016), Amoah and Yeboah (2019), and Nambobi (2021), highlight that while these ethical principles are expected of information professionals, information ethics remains an emerging and evolving field in the African context. This underscores the need for increased awareness, ongoing professional training, and stronger institutional frameworks to support ethical practice in academic libraries.

In the Tanzania, context, positive perceptions of ethical practices have been linked to respectful and equitable user engagement, resulting in improved satisfaction and service

outcomes (Tweve and Malyi 2022; Lawrent 2022). Likewise, negative perceptions have contributed to poor responsiveness and a decline in service quality (Nnko 2023). While these studies demonstrate a general relationship between ethical perceptions and service quality, they primarily focus on broader public service sectors or administrative contexts, with limited attention to academic libraries. Moreover, limited research has examined how information professionals in academic libraries make use of existing ethical guideline such as codes of conduct, service standards, and professional policies in shaping service delivery. This leaves it unclear to what extent academic library staff apply and adhere to such guidelines in their daily practices. Thus, the study aims to fill this gap by examining how library professionals perceive, apply, and implement ethical practices in academic library service delivery.

Statement of the problem

Information professionals' perceptions of ethical practices in academic library service delivery are shaped by factors such as background, education, work environment, skills, and experience (Lizazi-Mbanga and Mapulanga 2021; Schopfel and Azeroual 2023). These perceptions influence how professionals interpret and apply moral standards in their daily responsibilities (Adebayo and Mabawonku 2017; Ejedafiru and Chukwuma 2020). Adherence to ethical principles of fairness, confidentiality, respect for intellectual property, and accuracy has been shown to enhance performance, strengthen user trust, and improve service outcomes (Kaddu and Ssekitto 2023).

Despite this, recent studies highlight persistent challenges in professional conduct within academic libraries. Michael and Oleyomi (2023) report negative attitudes such as a lack of initiative and unwelcoming behavior toward users, while others link service weaknesses to inadequate user support, poor guidance in information retrieval, and neglect of intellectual property rights (Yap, Barátné Hajdu, and Kiszl 2024; Phillips 2024).

In Tanzania, much of the scholarly focus on ethics has concentrated on health, education, and procurement sectors, with limited attention given to academic libraries (Mtaita et al., 2021; Mwagike and Changalima 2022; Millanzi, Herman, and Mtangi 2023). As a result, little is known about how library professionals perceive and apply ethical principles in service delivery. Although some libraries have introduced professional development and training programs to reinforce ethical awareness, studies reveal persistent challenges in shifting professional perceptions and practices (Oliveira 2023; Rehman, Majeed, and Ganaie 2024). Hence, creates a significant knowledge gap regarding the role of professional perceptions in shaping ethical practices in service delivery within Tanzanian academic libraries. Thus, in addressing this gap is critical for strengthening trust in library services, improving user experiences, and promoting more effective integration of ethical standards in academic contexts.

General objective

The general objective of this research was to examine the perceptions of information professionals on ethical practices during service delivery in academic libraries.

Specific objective

Specifically, the study aimed to:

i. Examine the information professionals' perceptions of ethical practices in academic library service delivery
ii. Assess the effectiveness of ethical practices in influencing service delivery by information professionals in academic libraries
iii. Evaluate the information professionals' use of existing ethical guidelines in academic library service delivery

Research questions

i. What are information professionals' perceptions of ethical practices in academic library service delivery?
ii. How effective are ethical practices in influencing service delivery by information professionals in academic libraries?
iii. How do information professionals use existing ethical guidelines in academic library service delivery?

Literature review

The literature review for this study addresses themes aligned with the research objectives. It examines previous studies on service delivery by information professionals, perceptions of information professionals on ethical practices, and existing policies and guidelines used by information professionals during service delivery in academic libraries.

Perceptions of information professionals on ethical practices in service delivery

Dunmade and Tella (2023), indicate that negative perceptions are often shaped by demographic factors such as education level, professional environment, skills, and experience. These issues contribute to a negative perception of ethical practices among information professionals during service delivery. Similarly, Adebayo and Mabawonku (2017), Ali, Habibu, and Dawha (2019), Omigie (2020), and Ailakhu, Ugonna, and Vivian (2025) highlight how limited access to knowledge and skill development opportunities affects professionals' understanding and interpretation of ethical practices. These studies show a gap in the perception and application of ethical practices, resulting in differing understandings of providing services in academic libraries. Additionally, studies by Ndumbaro (2018), Henjewele (2020), Lawrent (2020), and Tweve (2023) also demonstrate varied perceptions of ethics in service delivery, largely influenced by limited ethics education and challenges posed by digital technologies. Likewise, Kaddu and Ssekitto (2023) further note that although professionals value principles such as equitable access and privacy protection, they often face ethical dilemmas due to inadequate institutional guidance. These issues contribute to a negative perception of information professionals, as they are often providing services to different users in academic libraries. This not only leads to negative perceptions but also affects their confidence and undermines academic library services. Therefore, the study highlights the need for

continuous training and the use of policy frameworks for professionals during service delivery. The study suggests the need to implement these measures and improve how they are perceived as ethical practices in service provision.

Effectiveness of ethical practices in service delivery

Service delivery is the fundamental activity of all academic libraries worldwide, aimed at efficiently and effectively meeting users' information needs (Yusuf 2021). In academic libraries, service delivery includes core services such as circulation, reference, and research support, as well as sub-services like organizing materials, updating collections, assisting users, weeding out outdated materials, providing reading references, and responding to user queries (Mcharazo, Olden, and Mkongoro 2022; Kasalu and Ojiambo 2023).

In delivering these services, professionals are expected to adhere to ethical practices, which play a crucial role in guiding their interactions with users, colleagues, and the wider community (Yusniah and Yani 2023). Adhering to ethical standards ensures equitable access to information while promoting integrity and professionalism (Singh 2024).

However, Adebayo, Akole, and Salau (2016) and Jackson (2022) argue that while professionals are aware of core ethical values, a lack of ongoing professional development and inadequate institutional support can negatively impact ethical conduct. Studies by Basil, Ruteyan, and Eghwubare (2016) and Oden and Owolabi (2022) suggest that a professional's understanding of ethical principles shapes their attitude, which in turn significantly influences the quality-of-service delivery. These findings underscore that adherence to ethical practices is a key determinant of service quality in academic libraries, with factors such as professional training and management practices affecting how effectively these ethical standards are implemented. Yap et al. (2022) support this notion, emphasizing that effective service delivery relies on professionals being knowledgeable, responsible, and applying ethical considerations in practice. Yet, insufficient knowledge and a lack of professional commitment can hinder ethical service provision. To uphold ethical standards, professionals must prioritize fairness, transparency, and equitable access in daily service delivery. Kosmicki (2019) and Hu, Yang, and Lee (2022) reinforce this perspective, highlighting that ethical service provision is achievable when professionals consistently apply these principles.

The literature review reveals a significant gap in understanding how ethical practices are specifically implemented in service delivery. The studies analyzed provide limited empirical evidence about the perceptions and experiences of library staff and users regarding ethical challenges in Tanzanian academic libraries. Addressing this gap is crucial for developing context-specific strategies to enhance ethical standards in service delivery.

Use of ethical guidelines in service delivery among information professionals

Ethical practice is a fundamental value across all professions, guiding individuals to uphold standards in service delivery (Phillips, Oyewole, and Akinbo 2018). In academic libraries, ethical guidelines are established to steer the conduct, knowledge, and moral responsibilities of information professionals. These guidelines, developed by institutions such as the American Library Association (ALA) and the International Federation of

Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), address essential issues including user privacy, intellectual freedom, equitable access to information, and professional integrity (Chu et al., 2022; Jaeger and Taylor 2020; Omigie 2020). Such frameworks significantly shape professional perceptions, influencing attitudes and behavior during service delivery (Ankrah, Owusu Fordjour, et al. 2023). However, a notable concern is that many library professionals remain unaware of these guidelines, which can result in inconsistent or ethically questionable practices. This gap in awareness may lead some professionals to rely on personal judgment rather than established ethical standards.

In addition to international frameworks, academic libraries often develop their institutional policies to reinforce ethical practices. These include Library Rules and Regulations, Collection Development Guidelines, Institutional Repository Policies, and Open Educational Resources Guidelines, which are intended to define behavioral expectations and ensure equitable service access (Nambobi et al. 2023). For instance, Goswami (2023) and Tokarz (2024) report that while about 60% of academic libraries maintain publicly accessible Collection Development Policies, many other service-related policies are either outdated or underdeveloped, despite recommendations for regular policy reviews and updates. Likewise, Holan and Bardakh (2024) and Nathania et al. (2025) emphasizes the need for professionals to understand ethical policies but also being effectively to integrate them into daily practices to ensure user rights, service quality, and professional accountability.

Despite growing recognition of the role of ethical guidelines and institutional policies, existing literature shows limited insight into how these documents are practically applied during service provision (Contreras, Hoffmann, and Slocum 2022; Johnston et al. 2022). There is also a lack of investigation into how these policies respond to emerging ethical challenges in academic libraries. This reveals a significant research gap concerning the operationalization of ethical policies and their perceived relevance among professionals. This can cause professionals to fall back on subjective interpretations of ethical practice. The study highlighted for need to evaluate how these guidelines are understood, implemented, and enforced, and how they shape professional behavior and perceptions in real-world library environments.

Theoretical framework

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), developed by Ajzen (1991), offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how information professionals perceive and act upon ethical practices in academic library. The theory emphasizes that an individual's behavior is influenced by three key components: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Bosnjak, Ajzen, and Schmidt 2020).

In the context of this study, the attitude of information professionals toward ethical practices such as confidentiality, fairness, and intellectual honesty directly impacts their willingness to implement these principles during service delivery (Afolayan 2022). Subjective norms, including library management expectations and adherence to professional standards, also shape their ethical perceptions and guide their behavior. Furthermore, perceived behavioral control, referring to professionals' beliefs about their capacity to act ethically within their work environment, plays a crucial role. Roszkowska and Melé (2021) noted that factors such as the nature of services provided, access to

training, organizational support, and the clarity of ethical guidelines can either facilitate or hinder ethical behavior.

However, a notable weakness of the TPB is its focus on individual intentions, with limited attention to external factors such as organizational culture, leadership dynamics, and systemic constraints, which significantly influence ethical behavior in professional environments like academic libraries (Glusker et al. 2022). In this study, while addressing the limitations of the theoretical framework, the PAPA framework (Privacy, Accuracy, Property, and Accessibility) that emphasizes ethical practices that information professionals are expected to uphold, rather than relying solely on individual perception.

Conceptual framework

The study was guided by a conceptual framework on the information professionals' perception of ethical practices and use of ethical guidelines in academic library service delivery. The conceptual framework was informed by the Theory of Planned Action (TPA) from which two independent variables, perception and use behavior of information professionals, were obtained, while the dependent variable, effectiveness of ethical practices in service delivery was obtained from the literature. The assumption is that perception is shaping how information professionals view and interpret ethical practices, and ultimately how they apply them to enhance service delivery in academic library. It is further assumed that individual can have favorable or unfavorable perception toward ethical practices, and this may affect how one will eventually act upon them. Meaning, an individual's positive perception is likely to lead to actual use behavior of the ethical practices in service delivery, while negative perception is more likely lead to non- use behavior. Perception involves key indicators such as understanding of professional ethical principles such as privacy, accuracy, property, access (PAPA), trust in fairness of decisions, perceived transparency, integrity and honesty, accountability, and confidence in reporting unethical behavior. It is assumed that the use of existing ethical guidelines such as general library rules, INFLA, ALA can influence service delivery in academic library. Ethical guidelines include all relevant policies and code of conduct that are in place. It is further assumed that for the ethical guidelines to be effectively used they should be available, accessible, clear, and comprehensive. Also, information professional should be aware of the guidelines and this can be promoted through training and sensitization programs. Enforcement mechanisms are also important for ensuring the effective use of the ethical guidelines. It is further assumed that effective ethical practices in service delivery are dependent on information professionals' perception of ethical practices and their eventual use of the existing ethical guidelines. The key indicators of effective ethical practices in service delivery include consistency with ethical standards, fair treatment of clients, nondiscrimination, confidentiality, responsiveness to complaints, transparency in decisions and ultimately library user satisfaction. The conceptual framework is illustrated in Figure 1.

Methodology

The study adopted a cross-sectional mixed-methods design. The cross-sectional approach allowed for data collection at a single point in time, capturing the perceptions



Figure 1. The conceptual framework

and experiences of information professionals regarding ethical practices and service delivery within academic libraries (Oliveira 2023). The integration of both qualitative and quantitative methods enabled a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Maxwell 2022). The quantitative component involved the use of structured questionnaires to collect measurable data on service delivery and ethical adherence, while the qualitative component employed interviews and open-ended responses to gain deeper insights into contextual and experiential factors (Denzin and Lincoln 2018; Granikov et al., 2020). This mixed-methods approach ensured a balanced exploration of both statistical trends and underlying meanings. The study targeted a total population of 265 individuals. Using Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size calculation, a sample of 159 participants was determined, comprising information professionals providing various library services and four library directors responsible for ensuring adherence to ethical practices. Out of this sample, 136 respondents returned completed questionnaires, which were used in the analysis.The study was conducted across four academic libraries: the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Mzumbe University (MU), and the University of Dodoma (UDOM). These universities were purposefully selected because they are among the oldest and most reputable higher learning institutions in Tanzania, each hosting well-established academic libraries with a wide range of services and a professionally experienced workforce compared to many other institutions (Mubofu 2020). The selection focused on professionals actively engaged in service delivery to users to assess whether ethical practices are adhered to during service provision. Four directors, one from each selected academic library, were also included to provide institutional perspectives on ensuring compliance with ethical standards among library professionals. To ensure trustworthiness, credibility, and dependability of findings, the study employed a triangulation method involving multiple data collection techniques (Donkoh and Mensah 2023). These included a semi-structured questionnaire (combining both closed-ended and open-ended questions), unstructured interviews based on the natural flow of conversation, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). A total of seven focus groups were conducted, each containing a maximum of six respondents. Three groups at UDSM, two groups at UDOM, and one group each at SUA and Mzumbe University based on the number of information

professionals available in each institution. The instruments were pre-tested using 15 respondents drawn from Jordan University before the actual study to determine reliability. The Spearman-Brown split-half Cronbach's alpha of the instrument was found to be 0.79, which is considered reliable (Hair et al. 2010).

Data analysis plan and techniques

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyze the collected data. Quantitative analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22, while qualitative data from key informant interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) were analyzed through content analysis. Direct quotes from respondents were incorporated to enhance the authenticity and contextual richness of the findings.

For the quantitative strand, perceptions of ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries were measured using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree). Initially, descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and visual representations (e.g., bar charts) were applied to summarize responses across dimensions including service delivery, user access, communication, approachability, and satisfaction. This provided an overview of general trends and the distribution of positive, neutral, and negative perceptions.

To further assess the strength and direction of relationships, linear regression analysis was conducted with service delivery outcomes (reliability, accountability, and confidentiality) as dependent variables, and perceptions of ethical practices and demographic characteristics as predictors. Regression assumptions were tested to ensure model validity, and findings were interpreted in the context of both quantitative results and qualitative evidence from interviews and FGDs.

The effectiveness of ethical practices in influencing service delivery was also assessed using descriptive statistics. Respondents rated indicators such as organizing materials, updating collections, assisting users, removing outdated materials, providing reading references, resolving user queries, and participating in professional associations on a five-point Likert scale. These indicators helped measure how ethical practices shaped both core and sub-services in academic libraries.

In addressing the third objective, the study examined the use and influence of ethical guidelines and professional policies including general library rules, library service policies, ALA guidelines, IFLA guidelines, and collection development policies on service delivery. Findings indicated that while such frameworks exist, their application was often inconsistent, with most respondents reporting "Sometimes" in adherence.

Finally, Pearson's correlation analysis was used to explore interrelationships between variables. Results showed that services provided positively correlated with perceptions of ethical practices ($r = 0.260$, $p < 0.01$), extent of ethical guidelines correlated positively with services ($r = 0.210$, $p < 0.05$) but negatively with perceptions ($r = -0.194$, $p < 0.05$), while assurance of ethical practices positively correlated with both services ($r = 0.277$, $p < 0.01$) and perceptions ($r = 0.183$, $p < 0.05$). In addition, a multiple linear regression (MLR) model was applied to determine the predictive strength and direction of the

relationship between service delivery (dependent variable) and selected independent variables.

The following is the equation used to estimate the multiple linear regression model.

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7 + \beta_8 X_8 + \varepsilon_i$$

Whereby
Y_i stands for dependent variable (Service delivery)
X_1 = Sex of respondents
X_2 = Age of respondents
X_3 = Education level
X_4 = Working experience
X_5 – X_9 = Perception of information professionals on ethical practices
ε_i = Residual (Other factors remaining Constant)

For justification, the assumption underlying for model's goodness of fit was tested. Here forth, the normality test as the model requires that residuals should be identically and independently distributed with 0 mean and with constant variance (Homoscedastic). Multicollinearity was tested. The predictors in this are supposed to be independent in the sense of not being highly correlated with each other.

Results and discussion

The results were presented by first describing the data forms. This was followed by correlation analysis to assess the interrelationships among variables, and finally, regression analysis to determine the strength of the relationship between the response and predictor variables. Model assumptions were tested and incorporated into the discussion to support the validity of the results.

Perception of information professionals on ethical practices in service delivery

The perception of information professionals encompasses how library services are delivered, ethical aspects enhance information services, ethical issues ensure access to information, effectively communicate the availability of resources, approach users politely, and ensure user satisfaction with the library, as indicated in the study of Moruf (2020).

The findings in Figure 2 indicate a generally positive perception of ethical practices among librarians during service delivery in academic libraries. A large proportion of respondents selected "Strongly Agree" across several key areas, including ethical aspect, service delivery, user access, and satisfaction, each scoring above (60%). Positive perception was determined when the majority of respondents selected "Strongly Agree" or "Agree", showing favorable views of ethical practices in service delivery. Specifically, when responses in these categories exceeded 60% across dimensions such as ethical aspects, service delivery, user access, and satisfaction, the perception was interpreted as positive. This suggests that information professionals are perceived favorably in their adherence to ethical standards during daily operations. This aligns with prior research by Jan and Ahmad (2020) and Guo et al. (2022), which emphasizes that positive

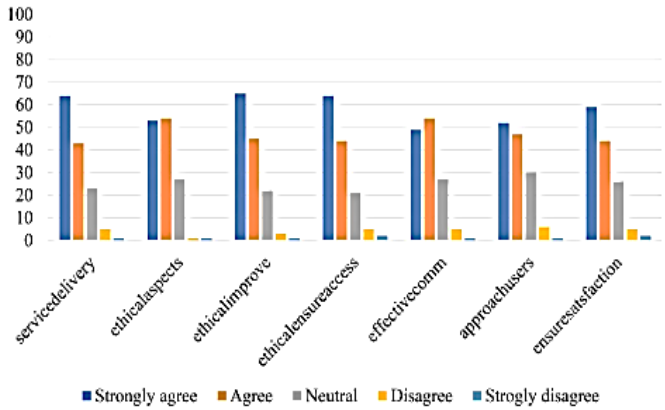


Figure 2. Perception of information professionals on ethical practices in service delivery. What are the perceptions of information professionals on the following aspects using the following Likert scale 1= Strong Agree 2= Agree 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree 4 = Disagree 5= Strong Disagree.

perception is often shaped by strong professional commitment and the implementation of ethical principles, leading to higher service quality.

In addition, "Agree" responses ranging from (35%–45%) further reinforce this perception, particularly in aspects like effective communication and approachability, which are vital for user engagement. These results reflect those ethical practices are not only acknowledged but are actively integrated into service delivery by a majority of professionals. This is observed during qualitative findings as follows:

> To a large extent, we have been ensuring equal access and accuracy of the information needed to our daily users because we believe it is part of our job. (Respondent, University 1)

This statement shows a strong commitment among information professionals to ethical practices, particularly in ensuring equity and accuracy in information provision. It highlights a professional perception that ethical practice is not just procedural but a core responsibility of their role. Thus, the findings suggest that a positive perception of ethical practice is deeply embedded in both attitudes and actions of professionals, reinforcing the overall integrity and quality of service delivery in academic libraries.

However, some professions show a "Neutral" response, especially in sub-services concerning ethical aspects, user interaction, and approachability, ranging from 25% to 30%. This suggests that professionals may experience uncertainty or lack sufficient confidence in consistently applying ethical practices. While the "Disagree" and "Strongly Disagree" responses were minimal at 10%, the neutral stance indicates a potential disconnect between knowledge of ethical practices and their practical application. This observation is also supported by the study by Yusniah and Yani (2023), which noted that insufficient orientation and reliance on informal practices may hinder ethical consistency in service provision. This point was emphasized during FGDs as follows:

> Sometimes we just do what feels right in the moment, especially when we're not sure what the ethical response should be. (Respondent, University 2).

The findings highlight that while most professionals show a positive and committed approach to ethical practices, the presence of such uncertainty indicates that not all

professionals feel adequately equipped or confident in consistently applying ethical standards. Therefore, the perception of ethical practice among information professionals is generally positive but somewhat mixed, revealing a need for stronger library enforcement, clearer ethical orientation, and practical training to ensure consistency and confidence in service delivery across all levels.

However, the previous studies, such as Adebayo and Mabawonku (2017) and Yueh, Huang, and Lin (2022), reported both highly positive and negative perceptions of ethical practices, and the current study reveals a clear positive shift. This highlights a commitment to ethical practices by professionals among library professionals. This is also shown through an interview with one director as follows:

> In the past, ethics used to be a checklist, but now staff are seeing it as part of their everyday responsibility. That's a big change. (Respondents, University 1)

This statement indicates that information professionals now view ethical practices not merely as external rules, but as personal values that direct how they deliver services each day. Nevertheless, the existence of neutral perceptions demands the need to involve ongoing professional development, inclusive policy communication, and regular ethical training to bridge the gap in perception of ethical practices during service delivery.

Regression model for perceptions of ethical practices and service delivery

The regression results in Table 1 provide insights into how demographic characteristics and perceptions of ethical practices influence information professionals' service delivery

Table 1. Regression model of information professionals' perceptions on ethical practices in academic libraries.

	Service Delivery by Information Professionals		
Variables	Reliability	Accountability	Confidentiality
Sex	0.174	−0.0564	−0.383**
	(0.134)	(0.191)	(0.183)
Education level	−0.155**	0.226**	0.135
	(0.0738)	(0.106)	(0.101)
Work experience	0.0283	0.0740	−0.0729
	(0.0547)	(0.0784)	(0.0750)
Training	0.183***	−0.110	−0.153**
	(0.0525)	(0.0751)	(0.0719)
Perception of Ethical Practices based on Service delivery	0.190	0.138	−0.0244
	(0.120)	(0.171)	(0.164)
Perception of Ethical Practices based on Using ethical guidelines	0.157	0.204	0.0871
	(0.165)	(0.237)	(0.226)
Perception of Ethical Practices based on Ensuring equal access	−0.101	−0.130	0.153
	(0.129)	(0.185)	(0.177)
Perception of Ethical Practices based on Effective communication	0.305**	−0.133	−0.0848
	(0.152)	(0.218)	(0.209)
Perception of Ethical Practices based on Approaching users politely	−0.00639	−0.385*	−0.413*
	(0.156)	(0.223)	(0.214)
Perception of Ethical Practices based on Ensuring user satisfaction	0.0457	0.0223	0.0648
	(0.131)	(0.188)	(0.180)
Constant	0.618	3.683***	4.877***
	(0.411)	(0.588)	(0.563)
Observations	136	136	136
R-squared	0.412	0.170	0.152

in academic libraries, specifically in terms of reliability, accountability, and confidentiality.

The findings for the reliability dimension, the model explains about 41.2% of the variance, which indicates a relatively strong explanatory power compared to the other dimensions. Education level was found to have a significant negative effect on reliability ($\beta = -0.155$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that higher levels of education may reduce consistency in service delivery. Training, on the other hand, had a strong positive influence ($\beta = 0.183$, $p < 0.01$), showing that professional training enhances reliability in delivering library services. Additionally, perceptions of ethical practices based on effective communication ($\beta = 0.305$, $p < 0.05$) were also positively related to reliability, highlighting the importance of clear, respectful, and transparent communication in ensuring dependable services. This is also noted in qualitative findings as follows;

> Honestly, having regular training helps us standardize how we serve users. Without training, everyone applies their own style, and the service becomes inconsistent (Respondent, University, 4).

This supports the quantitative evidence that training has a strong positive influence on reliability.

The model showed weaker explanatory power for accountability, explaining only 17% of the variance. However, education level was positively significant ($\beta = 0.226$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that professionals with higher education levels tend to be more accountable in their service delivery. This can be justified because higher education often equips professionals with deeper knowledge, critical thinking skills, and a stronger sense of responsibility essential for accountability. Educated professionals are more likely to understand why it is important to follow ethical rules, keep proper records, and take responsibility for their actions, which leads to greater accountability. Thorpe and Howlett (2020) note that higher education helps develop professional values and promotes continuous learning and evidence-based practices key factors that support accountability in library services. Without such education, professionals may lack the confidence, skills, or motivation to be fully accountable in their roles. This is also, emphasized in a study of Budur, Demir, and Ahmed (2024) noted that professionals with higher education improved service quality and accountability, as they are more likely to engage in professional practices. However, approaching users politely was negatively associated with accountability ($\beta = -0.385$, $p < 0.1$), which may reflect a paradox where excessive emphasis on politeness reduces directness in responsibility or decision-making. Other predictors, including training and communication, did not significantly affect accountability. This was noted during FGDs as follows

> In the context of our work, users often believe that we lack specialized knowledge and that our job is merely arranging books. Therefore, being excessively polite can cause ambiguity about who is responsible for decisions during service delivery. (Respondent, University, 2).

Thus, excessive politeness, may unintentionally obscure accountability and decision-making clarity during service delivery, potentially undermining professional responsibility and trust.

The model explains only about 15.2% of the variance in confidentiality, indicating a limited ability to predict it. The finding that sex was significantly negative ($\beta = -0.383$,

$p < 0.05$) suggests that female professionals may have less positive perceptions of confidentiality practices compared to their male counterparts. This could be due to differences in experiences, roles, or workplace dynamics that affect how confidentiality is understood or prioritized. For instance, female professionals might face unique challenges or have distinct perspectives that influence their views on confidentiality. Research shows that men and women often exhibit different workplace behaviors and perceptions due to socialized gender roles and organizational status differences. Women are generally more attuned to indirect forms of workplace behaviors and may be more critical or cautious about issues like confidentiality, possibly because of concerns about employment status and social dynamics in the workplace. These gender-based differences in perception and behavior could explain why female professionals perceive confidentiality practices less positively than males (McGill & Thompson, 2018; Alotaibi & Alshehri, 2020). On the other hand, training showed a significant negative effect ($\beta = -0.153$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that training received might not adequately address confidentiality issues or that gaps remain in how confidentiality is operationalized. Furthermore, approaching users politely was negatively significant ($\beta = -0.413$, $p < 0.1$), indicating a potential tradeoff between user-centered interpersonal conduct and strict confidentiality enforcement.

Therefore, the results show that professional training and higher education help improve ethical practices in library services. However, it's important to have clear communication, good training programs, and a balanced way of interacting with users to make sure reliability, accountability, and confidentiality are strong in academic library services.

Effectiveness of ethical practices on service delivered in academic libraries

The following are the results on the effectiveness of ethical practices in core library services and sub-service delivery.

Ethical practices in core library services

Results presented in Figure 3 show that the service provided by info professionals in academic libraries during service provision. The services provided by information professionals in academic libraries illustrate the level of agreement among respondents regarding the provision of various services, namely circulation services, information search services, reference services, research support, and library orientation.

The findings reveal that a significant majority of respondents (70%) strongly agreed that they consistently provide core library services such as circulation, reference, and orientation. This indicates that these services are not only fundamental to daily library operations but are also central to the professional identity of information professionals in academic libraries. The prioritization of these services reflects a shared ethical commitment to user engagement, equitable access, and accurate information provision in academic libraries. This alignment is further supported by VanScoy and Rafiq (2024), who observed that information professionals tend to emphasize services that directly address information needs, especially through orientation and reference interactions.

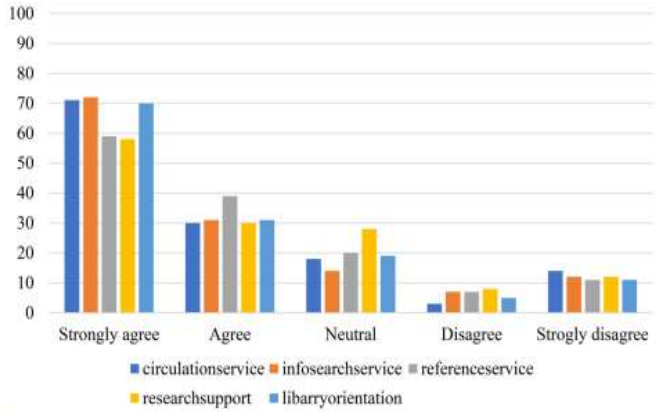


Figure 3. Ethical practices in core library services. What are the core services provided by information professionals in the Academic Library using the following aspects1= Strong Agree 2= Agree 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree 4 = Disagree 5= Strong Disagree.

Such services reflect ethical practices like accountability and accessibility, underscoring the moral responsibility of library staff to serve users fairly and effectively.

A participant from University 2 emphasized this ethical dimension during focus group discussions:

> Our daily activities during service delivery involve reference and circulation services. These are the entry points where we meet users, guide them, and set the tone for their overall library experience. (Respondents, University 2)

This perspective positions library staff not only as service providers but also as ethical stewards, ensuring that the services provided are guided by fairness, professionalism, and respect for users' rights to information.

However, the findings also reveal variability in the provision of more advanced services, such as research support. Moderate agreement levels (30%–40%) and a high neutral response rate (28%) regarding these services suggest gaps in confidence and preparedness among professionals. These inconsistencies are likely due to insufficient training, lack of resources, or limited institutional support. This is also noted by a respondent as follows:

> Most of the staff are fresh from school and need some skills in advanced research support. It's an area where we need more training and institutional support. (Respondents, University 1)

This quote underscores the ethical obligation of competency and continuous professional development. The inability to adequately support users, especially postgraduate students, raises concerns about the quality and fairness of service delivery in specialized areas. Upholding ethical standards requires that all professionals possess the necessary skills and support to offer consistent and high-quality services across all user needs.

Despite these challenges, the study reports minimal disagreement (5–8%) on core service delivery, suggesting a broad professional consensus and a positive ethical culture

within academic libraries. In contrast to prior research by Alabi, Omoike, and Ikegune (2023) and Kaishe-Mulungu and Lwehabura (2024), which focused on user satisfaction and service availability, this study explores how professionals perceive and enact ethical responsibilities in their daily roles.

As one respondent state as follows:

> We are not just offering services; we are representing the integrity of the library. Every interaction with a user is a reflection of our ethical practice. (Respondent, University 3)

The findings show that ethical practices are closely related to the services provided through professional reality, embedded in the attitudes and actions of library staff. It reinforces the importance of integrity, respect, and professional accountability in all aspects of service delivery.

However, the persistent neutral responses concerning research support and information searching reflect uncertainty and a lack of ethical practices in these advanced areas. A respondent from university 4 noted:

> Many of us are confident with circulation and reference tasks, but when it comes to guiding postgraduate students through complex research queries, we sometimes feel underprepared. (Respondent, University 4)

This comment highlights an ethical concern related to equity of service if some users receive more competent support than others, particularly in research, it may compromise the library's ethical obligation to provide fair and equal access to information.

Therefore, the findings affirm that ethical practices are deeply embedded in the delivery of core library services such as circulation, reference, and orientation. These services are delivered with a strong sense of professional integrity and commitment to user needs. However, the findings also point to areas, particularly research support, where ethical service delivery must be strengthened through targeted training and institutional support. Addressing these gaps will help academic libraries uphold their ethical mandate, ensuring that service delivery is not only efficient and consistent but also grounded in the highest professional and moral standards.

Ethical practices in sub-service delivery

Information professionals demonstrate ethical commitment in service delivery by effectively performing sub-services such as responsibly organizing and updating collections, providing impartial user assistance, transparently weeding out outdated materials, utilizing reference sources to stay informed, addressing user queries with respect, and engaging in continuous professional development as indicated in a study of Putra (2022).

The findings in Figure 4 indicate that information professionals mostly selected the 'Neutral' option when rating their performance in sub-activities related to service delivery, with responses ranging from (90%–98%). This implies that most professionals are involved in service activities, and their commitment or confidence in performing these tasks is moderate at best. Such neutrality suggests an absence of strong conviction or satisfaction in their roles, potentially indicating a lack of motivation or clarity about expectations. This perception is in contrast to findings by Vaidya, Malik, and Ali (2021), who assert that effective service delivery is closely tied to how professionals perceive their responsibilities and competencies in daily operations.

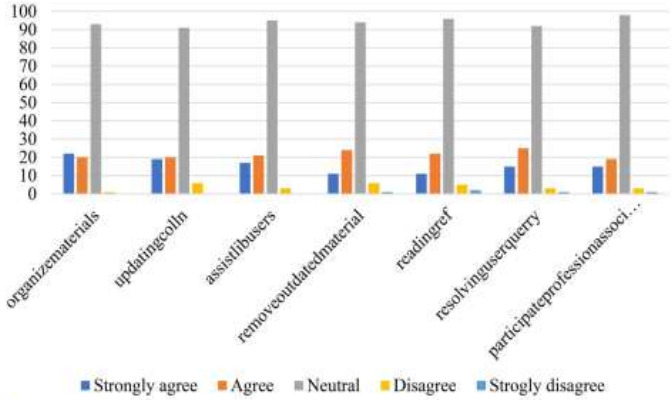


Figure 4. Ethical practices in sub-service delivery. What are the perceptions of information professionals on sub services during service delivery using the following Likert scale 1= Strong Agree 2= Agree 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree 4 = Disagree 5= Strong Disagree. Source: Field Data.

Although some respondents selected 'Agree' (20%–27%) and 'Strongly Agree' (1%–20%) regarding their engagement in service delivery, the low percentage of strong agreement reflects limited interest in their contributions. In addition, a small proportion of disagreement (2%–7%) further underlines inconsistencies in perception and possibly practice among information professionals. This is highlighted in qualitative findings during FGDs as follows:

> We have been providing these services in shifts as part of our responsibilities. However, the main challenge is the lack of regular training to reinforce our roles, which leads to lower service delivery influenced by our mood or prevailing circumstances, (Respondent, University 1).

This qualitative insight highlights that while duties are being fulfilled, fluctuating personal perception and institutional support play a major role in how these services are perceived and delivered.

Thus, the study emphasizes the importance of strengthening the perception of information professionals through continuous professional development. A lack of training, evolving expectations, and unclear role definitions may contribute to negative attitudes toward service delivery. Therefore, by developing a culture of ongoing learning, institutional recognition, and ethical accountability, academic libraries can help shift professionals from neutrality to confident and committed service providers.

Ethical guidelines/policy used in the provision of services

Figure 5 below indicates the extent of ethical guidelines in the provision of service delivery by information professionals in academic libraries. and professional guidelines among information professionals. Ethical guidelines in library studies encompass various frameworks, including general library, library service policy, American Library

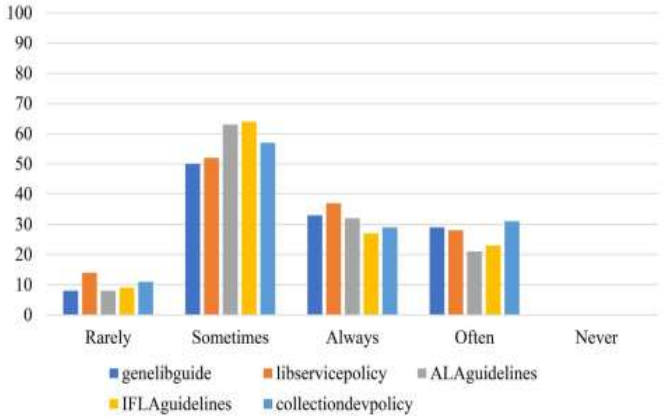


Figure 5. Ethical guidelines/policy used in the provision of services. To what extent do you consider with the following ethical guidelines/policy in the provision of service delivery using this aspects 1= Never, 2= Rarely 3= Sometimes, 4 = Always, 5 = Often.

Association (ALA), International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), and collection development policies as observed in a study of Muyao (2024).

The findings of the study reveal that the highest frequency of responses across all guideline types falls within the "Sometimes" category, particularly regarding the IFLA Guidelines, ALA Guidelines, and Collection Development Policies, each exceeding 60%. These guidelines indicate that, although ethical frameworks and professional standards exist to guide service delivery in academic libraries, information professionals often demonstrate inconsistency in adhering to them. Such inconsistencies may stem from limited awareness, inadequate enforcement mechanisms, or variations in institutional policies, which in turn affect the quality and uniformity of services provided. This aligns with previous studies by Young (2014) and Yakubu (2021), which found that library professionals were somewhat aware of ethical rules but did not always follow them completely or consistently. These findings show that professionals often have the perception of using ethical guidelines during their service delivery.

Further, the lower frequencies in the "Always" and "Often" categories, ranging between (25%–35%), highlight that while guidelines such as the Library Services Policy, ALA Guidelines, and General Library Rules are acknowledged, they are not regularly or systematically applied. These findings suggest that while these frameworks are acknowledged, they are not systematically integrated into daily service delivery. The limited application of guidelines may result in ethical vulnerabilities, inconsistent service quality, and reduced trust in library services. This inconsistency reflects a perception among information professionals that ethical guidelines, while important, are not always practical or enforceable in their institutional contexts. Institutional gaps such as inadequate staff training, weak enforcement mechanisms, and a lack of regular professional development may contribute to this trend.

> What I know is that we have general library rules, but I have only heard about them and have never actually seen them. I also heard that an ethical guideline is being developed,

> though it has not been officially implemented. As a result, I have been providing services based solely on the situation of that time (**Respondent, University 4**).

This statement is reflected in the study findings showing a disconnection between the availability of policies and their actual application among information professionals. This is emphasized in the study of Yusniah and Yani (2023) reveals that a lack of formal orientation on using ethical guidelines has led many professionals in academic libraries to rely on informal practices and personal judgment during service delivery. This gap underscores the need for structured policy implementation, awareness campaigns, and regular training to ensure that ethical guidelines are not only available but actively integrated into daily operations. Similarly, an interview with one of the directors stated that:

> As library management, we discovered that some staff members were drafting and preparing policies without involving service providers, who are the key stakeholders. Therefore, we have now started working together with the library staff to collect their opinions and also ensure they are informed of the guidelines (**Respondent, University,3**)

The findings highlight the need for policy formulation, ongoing staff training, and active dissemination of ethical guidelines to enhance professionalism and accountability in library services.

Interrelationships of service provision, ethical practices, and perceptions in services delivery

The results in Table 2 present Pearson correlation statistics, which show the degree of relationship between two variables, and Sig(2-tailed) is a p value. As observed correlation between services provided in academic libraries and the perception of info professionals on ethical issues is 0.260 and significant at (5%) level. Since Pearson correlation is positive and significant, this implies a positive relationship that as the services provided by info professionals in academic libraries are good, they tend to increase the perception of info professionals on ethical practices in service delivery.

The findings show that the interrelationship between variables reveals significant positive correlations between the services provided by information professionals in academic libraries and other ethical dimensions, including the extent of ethical guidelines or policies ($r = 0.210$, $p < .05$), assurance of ethical practices in service delivery ($r = 0.277$, $p < .01$), and professionals' perception of ethical practices ($r = 0.260$, $p < .01$). This suggests that improved ethical guidelines and positive perceptions are associated with enhanced service provision. Furthermore, there is a significant positive correlation between the assurance of ethical practices and professionals' perceptions ($r = 0.183$, $p < .05$), indicating that when ethical practices are actively ensured, professionals tend to view ethical conduct more favorably. These results align with those observed in the study by Azeroual and Schöpfel (2023), which noted a significant correlation value regarding professionals' adherence to ethical guidelines and assurance of ethical practices in service delivery. This means that when ethical practices are adhered to and followed by professionals, they are more likely to have a positive perception of ethical practices in service delivery. However, the finding is a weak but significant negative correlation between the extent of ethical guidelines and professionals' perceptions

Table 2. Interrelationship between variables.

		Services provided by info professionals in academic libraries	Extent of ethical guidelines/policy in the provision of services	Extent of assurance to ethical practices in service delivery	Perception of info professionals on ethical practices in service delivery
Services provided by info professionals in academic libraries	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	1	0.210* 0.014	0.277** 0.001	0.260** 0.002
Extent of ethical guidelines/policy in the provision of services	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	0.210* 0.014	1	0.137 0.112	−0.194* 0.024
Extent of insurance to ethical practices in service delivery	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.277** 0.001	0.137 0.112	1	0.183* 0.033
Perception of info professionals on ethical practices in service delivery	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.260** 0.002	−0.194* 0.024	0.183* 0.033	1

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

($r = -.194$, $p < .05$), which may imply that strict or poorly implemented policies could reduce morale or satisfaction among staff. Thus, these findings highlight the importance of not only having ethical policies in place but also ensuring they are practically applicable and positively perceived to enhance ethical service delivery in academic libraries.

Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusion

The study concludes that information professionals in academic libraries generally hold a positive perception of ethical practices in service delivery, strongly supporting values such as equity, access, user satisfaction, and accountability. However, while these practices are widely acknowledged, they are not always applied systematically or consistently due to limited training, weak enforcement of guidelines, and inconsistent use of professional frameworks. The findings highlight that when ethical guidelines are clearly communicated and effectively enforced, perceptions of professionalism improve and service delivery is strengthened. Therefore, sustaining positive perceptions of ethical practice requires stronger policy integration, continuous staff training, and consistent application of ethics, to ensure quality and equitable service delivery.

Recommendations

1. The study recommends the Universities/colleges through academic libraries should conduct regular training on adherence to ethical practice to improve the perceived quality of service delivery.

2. The findings recommend for academic libraries strengthening policy formulation, enforcement, and communication to ensure that ethical guidelines are practical, accessible, and fully integrated into daily library operations
3. The study suggests that academic libraries should develop a culture for information professionals to uphold ethical practices to ensure consistent and professional integrity within academic libraries.
4. The study highlights for academic libraries to develop a culture of continuous professional development to motivate and empower professionals toward confident ethical practice
5. The study suggests that academic libraries recognize and reward ethical behavior as part of performance evaluations to ensure a positive perception among information professionals
6. The study recommends that academic libraries regularly monitor and evaluate ethical practices to close gaps, strengthen ethics, and improve staff perceptions, thereby enhancing reliability, accountability, and confidentiality in service delivery

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributors

Beth Kachota is an assistant librarian in the Department of Library and Information Studies at Mzumbe University. She is currently a PhD candidate at the Department of Informatics and Information Technology, Sokoine University of Agriculture, in Tanzania researching ethical practices in service delivery by information professionals in the selected academic libraries in Tanzania. She holds a Bachelor of Law and a Master of Arts in Information Science, with a strong academic background in law, health information and ethics. Her research interests include information ethics, open educational resources and health information–seeking behaviour. Beth has authored several scholarly papers and chapters and holds an ORCID iD: 0000-0002-6442-2056.

Ronald Benard Tarimo is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Informatics and Information Technology at Sokoine University of Agriculture in Tanzania. His PhD focused on Leveraging ICT to improve information sharing among rural fish-farming communities in Tanzania. He actively engages in departmental activities and seminars, contributing to student mentorship and research excellence. He currently serves as the major PhD supervisor of Beth Kachota, whose study explores ethical practices in service delivery by information professionals in selected academic libraries in Tanzania. Dr Tarimo holds ORCID iD: 0000–0001–6398-7541 and has a strong academic background in aquaculture and information science.

Silver John Hokororo is a dedicated Lecturer in the Department of Business Management at Sokoine University of Agriculture in Tanzania. He holds a PhD in Business Administration with a specialization in Human Resource Management. His research interests focus on staff retention, job embeddedness, and organizational dynamics within Tanzanian universities. Dr Hokororo teaches and mentors both undergraduate and postgraduate students and currently serves as a PhD co-supervisor for a candidate whose study examines ethical service delivery by information professionals in academic libraries. He is registered with ORCID iD: 0009-0002-4358-1186.

ORCID

Beth Kachota http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6442-2056
Ronald Bernard http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6398-7541
Silver Hokororo http://orcid.org/0009-0002-4358-1186

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CHAPTER FOUR
PAPER III

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Ethical practices and professional responsibilities in upholding confidentiality in academic libraries in Tanzania

Beth Kachota[1], Bernard Ronald[1] and Silver Hokororo[2]

Abstract

This study examines ethical practices and professional responsibilities in maintaining confidentiality during service delivery in Tanzanian academic libraries. Guided by Professionalism Theory, it employs a cross-sectional mixed-methods design, collecting quantitative data from 136 information professionals across four universities University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Mzumbe University, and University of Dodoma and qualitative insights via interviews and focus groups. Findings indicate that while ethical practices, especially equal access to information and user privacy protection, are generally upheld, inconsistencies exist in service reliability and alignment with user needs. Confidentiality is rated positively overall, although concerns remain about data security and unclear policies on user list disclosure. The study concludes that despite strong ethical commitment, challenges such as policy gaps and uneven implementation hinder effective confidentiality maintenance. It recommends enhanced ethics training, clear institutional policies, and stronger accountability to build user trust, improve satisfaction, and ensure ethical and professional responsibilities in academic library in Tanzania

Keywords

Academic libraries, confidentiality, ethical practices, professional responsibilities, service delivery

Introduction and background of the study

Ethical practices and professional responsibilities play a crucial role in ensuring effective and efficient service delivery in academic libraries (Bagriy and Grechanyk, 2024). Ethical practices include promoting equal access to information, ensuring the accuracy of the information provided and protecting user privacy as well as intellectual property (Luo and Trott, 2016; Raudhoh and Agustin, 2024). Meanwhile, professional responsibilities refer to professionals' duties and accountability toward their institutions and users, emphasizing honesty, integrity, accountability and fairness (Emandei, 2023). These principles are essential for fostering trust and ensuring high-quality service delivery in academic libraries (Raudhoh and Agustin, 2024). Adhering to ethical practices not only safeguards the integrity of information resources but also reinforces librarians' professional responsibilities (Mokshagundam and Somashekar, 2023; Kaplan, 2023). Conversely, failing to uphold ethical practices can undermine the credibility of libraries and discourage users from utilizing their resources (Ankrah et al., 2023).

Over time, information professionals have been recognized as key service providers, which necessitates a heightened awareness of the increasing complexity of legal and ethical practices arising from their professional duties and their relationship with the communities they serve (Hoq, 2012; Tweve, 2023). Studies such as Rubin and Rubin (2020) and Mahadevagouda and Pavithrabai (2023) offer insightful analyses of guiding principles, including responsibility and individuality in the library field. These principles not only shape service delivery but also contribute to the evolution of ethical practices. Ethical practices and professional duties remain inseparable from the overarching mission of academic libraries to advance knowledge, support learning and nurture intellectual growth (War, 2019). By upholding ethical practices, embracing professional responsibilities and advocating for diversity and inclusion, information professionals can ensure that their services remain ethical, equitable and impactful in the digital age (Pérez-Pulido and Teruel, 2022).

In Africa, ethical practices and professional responsibilities are fundamental for quality service delivery in academic libraries (Mbofung and Popoola, 2014; Ejedafiru and Chukwuma, 2020). Studies by Ocholla (2009), Arko-Cobbah (2011) and Matyna and Sibiya (2024) highlight that ethical and responsible practices support education,

[1]Department of Informatics and Information Technology, Sokoine University of Agriculture, United Republic of Tanzania
[2]Department of Business Management, Sokoine University of Agriculture, United Republic of Tanzania

Corresponding author:
Beth Kachota, Department of Informatics and Information Technology, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, United Republic of Tanzania.
Email: b.kachota@gmail.com

research and innovation by ensuring equal access to information. To navigate these challenges, professionals must adhere to ethical practices while maintaining accountability and responsibility in their service provisions.

In Tanzania, academic libraries encounter several challenges related to ethical decision-making, professional responsibilities and service delivery. Issues such as copyright infringement, privacy concerns, bias in information provision and mismanagement of resources can undermine the quality and credibility of library services. Understanding the ethical challenges and professional responsibilities of librarians is essential for enhancing service delivery and ensuring that academic libraries fulfill their mandate effectively.

Statement of the problem

Ethical practices and professional responsibilities are crucial for delivering quality services in academic libraries, as they significantly impact the integrity, trust and efficiency of information services (Kadu and Ssekitto, 2023; Ghosar, 2024). Information professionals are expected to adhere to ethical practices to promote equitable access, ensure information accuracy and protect user privacy and intellectual property, while providing standardized services (Batechko and Mykhailichenko, 2020; Mitchell, 2022). However, there are increasing concerns about ethical challenges and shortcomings in professional responsibility among library staff, which negatively affect service quality (Mindel, 2022; Nambobi et al., 2023). As a result, information professionals worldwide face ethical dilemmas that significantly influence how they deliver services to information seekers (Yusuf, 2021). Despite the critical role of ethical practices in shaping service delivery, previous studies, including those by Phillips et al. (2018), have observed a lack of recognition and enforcement of ethical practices in many libraries, which negatively impacts the quality of services provided by information professionals (Mahadevagouda and Pavithrabai, 2023).

Furthermore, academic libraries across Africa face unique challenges, including ethical dilemmas that impact service delivery. Studies by Miller-Nesbitt (2023) and Yap et al. (2024) highlight that failure to maintain user privacy, unethical handling of digital resources and lack of accountability in library management can compromise service quality in academic libraries. These ethical shortcomings may result in decreased trust in library services, limited access to quality information and dissatisfaction among users (Emandei, 2023).

Despite the existence of professional associations which establish and oversee ethical guidelines for information professionals, challenges in service delivery persist. This underscores the need for further research to address these gaps. Therefore, this study aims to investigate ethical practices and professional responsibilities in upholding confidentiality in academic libraries in Tanzania.

General objective

The general objective of this study is to explore ethical practices and responsibilities of information professionals of upholding confidentiality while providing services in academic libraries.

Specific objectives

Specifically, the study aims to address the following objectives:

1. To assess the extent information professionals are responsible for ensuring ethical practices in service delivery in academic libraries; and
2. To examine the extent to which professionals uphold confidentiality to ensure ethical practices in service delivery in academic libraries.

Research questions

1. What are the ethical practices and responsibilities of information professionals of upholding confidentiality in providing services in academic libraries?
2. To what extent are information professionals responsible for ensuring ethical practices in service delivery in academic libraries?
3. How do information professionals uphold confidentiality to maintain ethical standards in service delivery in academic libraries?

Literature review

The literature review for this study aligns with its objectives, namely to assess how information professionals are responsible for ensuring ethical practices and the extent of upholding confidentiality to maintain ethical practices in service delivery in academic libraries.

Professional responsibilities in service delivery in academic libraries

Service delivery remains a core function in academic libraries, supporting learning, teaching and research (Oladokun and Mooko, 2023). Beyond resource availability, high-quality service delivery requires librarians to fulfill their professional responsibilities while meeting user needs (Oden and Owolabi, 2021). Professionals' responsibilities are integral to ensuring equitable access to information, respect for users and privacy protection (Ejedafiru and Chukwuma, 2020; Oltmann et al., 2023). However, while these studies provide conceptual insights into professional responsibilities, they lack a detailed analysis of how professionals practically implement these responsibilities during service delivery.

Ethical practices are fundamental for library service delivery as they uphold professional standards, protect user rights and foster trust in academic institutions (Nambobi, 2021; Badmus and Ogunkana, 2022). Studies by Tweve (2023) and Nambobi et al. (2023) found that ethical practices function as cultural norms shaping values in delivering library services, particularly about service providers' welfare, work attitudes and commitment to their roles. Additionally, Klugman (2022) and Matyna and Sibiya

(2024) highlight the significance of user expectations and organizational culture in shaping ethical practices and professional responsibilities. Despite the existing literature emphasizing the importance of ethical practices and professionals being responsible for service delivery, a research gap remains in differentiating ethical practices and professional responsibilities that need to be adhered to during service delivery. While previous studies (Twevе, 2023; Nambobi et al., 2023) focus on moral values and professional duties, they do not sufficiently link ethical practices and professional responsibility during service provision.

While studies by Adewojo et al. (2024) and Ghosh et al. (2024) emphasize the significance of ethical practices in maintaining the relevance of academic libraries and underscore librarians' responsibility for managing collections to ensure accuracy and accessibility, they do not sufficiently explore the practical challenges which professionals face in adhering to ethical practices and professional responsibility. Therefore, further investigation is necessary to uphold ethical practices and professional responsibility for effective service delivery.

Upholding confidentiality as ethical practice in service delivery

Confidentiality is essential for fulfilling professional responsibilities and maintaining ethical practices during service delivery in academic libraries (Yusuf, 2021; Thiruppathi, 2024). It protects users' privacy, builds trust and supports intellectual freedom, ensuring that professionals fulfill their duties. IFLA (2015) and ALA (2021) note that maintaining confidentiality ensures that users can freely seek information without fear of surveillance or judgment, thereby promoting intellectual freedom. However, despite the emphasis on confidentiality in academic libraries, there is a gap in understanding how information professionals practically implement and uphold confidentiality to ensure ethical practices in service delivery. While Fultz (2016) and Gunton (2022) emphasize that professionals have a responsibility to protect users' rights to personal space and equal access to information as ethical practices, the practical enforcement of these responsibilities remains unclear.

Furthermore, Oltmann (2016) and Ashikuzzaman (2025) highlight that ethical responsibilities extend beyond maintaining confidentiality to ensuring ethical standards in scholarly practice. Thus, the extent to which professionals actively integrate these ethical commitments into daily service delivery is not well documented. This gap raises concerns about whether ethical practices and professional responsibilities are effectively translated into practice during service delivery in academic libraries.

Theoretical framework

This study uses Professionalism Theory, which was developed in the twentieth century through the work of two sociologists, namely Eliot Freidson and Talcott Parsons. The theory defines values, standards and behaviors that characterize a professional. It emphasizes adherence to ethical practices, responsibility, and commitment to services. The theory is appropriate as it contains components relevant to this study, including ethics and integrity, which guide honest and principled conduct; responsibility and accountability, emphasizing ownership of professional actions; and confidentiality, which involves safeguarding sensitive information trusted by users. These elements provide a framework for assessing how information professionals uphold ethical practices and maintain confidentiality during service delivery, which directly aligns with the objectives of the study, namely, to evaluate ethical practices and protection of user privacy in academic libraries. However, the weakness of the Professionalism Theory is the challenge of ensuring accountability among information professionals, especially in the absence of specific and clear ethical standard. In addressing this weakness, it is essential to promote transparency and integrity by encouraging professionals to be honest and accurate in their work, avoid misleading claims, and consistently maintain confidentiality during service delivery Table 1.

Methodology

Research approach

This study utilized a mixed-methods research approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. It leveraged the strengths of numerical data analysis (quantitative) and in-depth contextual understanding (qualitative) to provide a comprehensive examination of the research problem by combining qualitative and quantitative research approaches (Creswell and Creswell, 2018). Qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously and then merged. In this case, quantitative informed qualitative if numerical trends guided qualitative exploration. Using both methods enables cross-validation of findings, increasing the accuracy, reliability and credibility of the results by confirming or explaining data from multiple perspectives (Cresswell and Plano Clark, 2011).

Research design

This study adopted a cross-sectional research design to collect data from a population at a single point in time, making it an efficient and cost-effective approach. This design is particularly beneficial for descriptive analysis, as it enables researchers to assess the prevalence of characteristics or outcomes and examine multiple variables simultaneously to identify relationships and correlations (Creswell, 2014; Qutoshi, 2018). Additionally, the design is suitable for studying ethical practices during service delivery in academic libraries (Creswell, 2014; Patton, 2015).

Area of study

The study was conducted in academic libraries at the University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Mzumbe University and the University of Dodoma. The universities selected have relatively well-developed library systems which support teaching, learning and research, thus having a reasonable number of

Table 1. Conceptual linkages to the study variables.

Study objectives	Aligned components of professionalism theory	Explanation
Assess the extent information professionals are responsible for ensuring ethical practice in service delivery	Ethics and integrity, responsibility, and accountability	These components emphasize the duty of professionals to act ethically, take responsibility for their actions, and follow established ethical standards in their service delivery
Examine the extent to which professionals uphold confidentiality to ensure ethical practice in service delivery	Confidentiality, ethics and integrity responsibility, and accountability	These elements highlight the importance of protecting sensitive information as a core ethical obligation and demonstrate the professional's commitment to user trust and privacy

Source: Field Data.

Table 2. Sampling frame of the study.

SN	University	Total population per university	Proportion	Sample size	Selected Sample (n) = (n*h)/N
1.	Mzumbe University	42	0.16	159	25
2.	SUA University	30	0.11	159	18
3.	University of Dar es Salaam	90	0.34	159	54
4.	University of Dodoma	103	0.39	159	62
5.	**Total**	**265**	1		**159**

professionals for conducting in-depth studies on ethical practices and professional responsibility during service delivery.

Study population

The total population was 265 respondents. The population comprised information professionals selected from academic libraries at the University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Mzumbe University and the University of Dodoma. The information professionals involved were the librarians who provided services in academic libraries.

Sample size and sampling techniques

Sample size. The sample size for this study comprises 159 who are part of the population of 265 respondents. This sample was determined using the proposed formula by Yamane (1967) as presented below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

where n = required sample size, N = population size and e = sampling error (5% = 0.05).

Then:

$$n = \frac{265}{1 + 265(0.05)^2} = 159$$

Sampling techniques. Stratified sampling techniques were employed to select 159 information professionals from four academic libraries, out of which 136 completed and returned the questionnaires. The population was first divided into strata based on their specific roles in service provision in the selected academic libraries. This stratification ensured that different categories of library staff were proportionally represented according to their functions. The criterion for forming these strata was the direct interaction of staff members with library users, as such interaction equips them with valuable insights into ethical practices and responsibilities in service delivery. By grouping participants according to their roles, the study captured diverse perspectives relevant to ethical practices in academic libraries.

In addition to stratified sampling, purposive sampling was used to select key informants, specifically, library directors. These individuals were selected owing to their managerial positions and their critical role in overseeing and ensuring adherence to ethical practices in academic libraries Table 2.

Data collection methods

Primary data. Primary data were collected using structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). The structured questionnaires, which contained closed-ended questions, were distributed in person to information professionals in the selected academic libraries in Tanzania. The distribution and collection of these questionnaires were carried out by trained research assistants who visited the respective libraries to ensure proper administration and to provide clarifications when needed. Out of the 159 questionnaires distributed, 136 were correctly filled, returned and used in the study, representing an acceptable response rate. These questionnaires aimed to gather insights into ethical practices and professional responsibilities in service delivery in academic libraries.

The study also conducted semi-structured interviews and FGDs at convenient times and locations agreed upon with the participants, ensuring a comfortable environment to facilitate open and honest discussions. In addition, seven FGDs were conducted, each consisting of six participants and lasting approximately for 30 min. Participants in the FGDs were

information professionals selected based on their active roles in delivery of library service. The FGDs were organized as follows: three groups at the University of Dodoma; two at the University of Dar es Salaam; and one group each at Sokoine University of Agriculture and Mzumbe University. These discussions provided a collaborative platform to explore shared experiences, challenges and strategies in upholding professional responsibilities in academic libraries

Secondary data. Secondary data was obtained through a review of relevant literature, including academic journals, books, institutional reports, and policy documents on ethical practices in academic libraries. These sources provided contextual background, theoretical foundations, and comparative insights to support the analysis of primary data (Welch et al., 2022).

Validity and reliability

The study ensured that the tools used for data collection were both valid and reliable. Validity checks confirmed that concepts like confidentiality, ethical practices (EP) and professional responsibilities (PR) were clearly distinct from one another and accurately measured what they were supposed to. This was shown by low HTMT ratios (below 0.85) and high average variance extracted scores (above 0.50). Reliability was also tested using a sample of 20 participants at Jordan University in Morogoro Region before the main study. The results showed strong internal consistency, with high Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability scores (all above 0.70), meaning that the questions used in the survey consistently measured the intended concepts. Overall, the research tools were both accurate and dependable.

Statistical data analysis

The collected quantitative data from closed-ended questionnaire responses were processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 22. The quantitative analysis allowed measurement of the extent to which information professionals are responsible for ensuring ethical practices in service delivery. Respondents were asked to indicate their rates using the following aspects of scales: 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = disagree and 5 = strongly disagree. The quantitative data on the extent to which infomation professionals are responsible for ensuring ethical practices in service delivery were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviations). In addition, a linear regression model helped to identify how specific variables (such as protecting intellectual property, assisting users or resolving queries) significantly contribute to or hinder service delivery outcomes.

Thus, by analyzing the coefficient values, significance levels (p-values) and standardized beta weights, the model reveals which factors have positive or negative effects, and how strong those effects are. Additionally, regression diagnostics (ANOVA, normality, heteroskedasticity and specification tests) were used to check the validity and reliability of the model.

To measure to what extent profesionals uphold confidentiality to ensure ethical practices in service delivery, respondents were asked to rate confidentiality in performing the ethical practices in service delivery using the following Likert scale: 1 = very poor, 2 = poor, 3 = good, 4 = very good, 5 = excellent. Confidentiality had several indicators, namely limiting access to records of users, disclosing the list of borrowing items for each library user, preventing unauthorized access to user accounts, ensuring regular monitoring and tracking user activities, data securing and the frequency of guidelines in the provision of library services.

The qualitative data obtained from open-ended questions were analyzed through content analysis, which involved systematically examining the responses to identify recurring themes, patterns and meaningful categories that reflected participants' perspectives. This approach enabled the researcher to interpret the underlying meanings within the textual data, allowing for a deeper understanding of the issues under investigation (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005; Salmona et al., 2024).

During data presentation, the qualitative findings were reported using the pseudonyms University 1, University 2, University 3, and University 4 to maintain confidentiality, in line with the nature of the study and as emphasized by Hwang and Kang. (2023)

Results and discussion

Table 3 presents descriptive statistics on the extent to which information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania are responsible in ensuring ethical practices and service delivery. The findings indicate that professional responsibilities are moderately practiced, with mean scores ranging between 2.54 and 2.74. The lowest mean was observed in organizing materials based on user needs (mean = 2.54, SD = 0.77), suggesting that some library professionals may not be consistently aligning resources with users' information requirements. Slightly higher mean scores were found in activities such as reading reference sources (mean = 2.74, SD = 0.72) and removing outdated materials (mean = 2.72, SD = 0.71). This reflects moderate engagement in collection maintenance and information validation. The findings imply that while library professionals are somewhat engaged in their duties, there is inconsistency in fully meeting user-centered service standards, particularly in organizing materials to align with users' specific information needs. These findings align with the study by Owolabi (2024), which found that the quality of library services is significantly improved when professionals maintain high standards of ethical practices and the ability to provide services. This is also observed in qualitative data collected through FGDs as one respondent was emphasizing as follows:

> I believe that ethical issues are critical and should not be ignored by professionals. Therefore, I think there is a need to establish ethical guidelines to help us manage and make appropriate decisions for better service delivery. (Respondent, University 3)

Therefore, the findings imply that ethical practices and professional responsibilities, particularly in upholding confidentiality during service delivery, are only moderately practiced and may lack consistency among library professionals. Thus, the study highlights the need for stronger adherence to ethical

Table 3. Descriptive statistics by professional responsibilities, ethical practices and service delivery.

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
Responsibilities					
Organizing materials for library users based on their needs	136	1.00	4.00	2.54	0.77
Updating collection to ensure the relevancy and currency of materials	136	1.00	4.00	2.62	0.78
Assisting library users in finding materials through databases	136	1.00	4.00	2.62	0.73
Removing outdated and damaged materials from the collection	136	1.00	5.00	2.72	0.71
Read reference sources of information sources	136	1.00	5.00	2.74	0.72
Resolving user queries in providing service	136	1.00	5.00	2.63	0.74
Participating in professional associations and conferences to network and share knowledge	136	1.00	5.00	2.68	0.73
Ethical practices					
Maintaining the accuracy of provided information	136	1.00	5.00	3.60	0.98
Protection of intellectual property	136	1.00	5.00	3.54	1.00
Ensuring equal access to information	136	1.00	5.00	3.81	0.98
Protection of privacy issues	136	1.00	5.00	3.73	1.12
Service delivery					
Confidentiality	136	1.00	5.00	3.69	1.04
Reliability	136	1.00	5.00	1.98	0.91
Accessibility	136	1.00	5.00	3.48	1.19
Timing	136	1.00	5.00	3.74	1.10

practices among information professionals during service delivery.

On the other hand, the level of ethical practices reported by the respondents was relatively high, with mean scores ranging from 3.54 to 3.81. The highest rating was given to ensuring equal access to information (mean = 3.81, SD = 0.98), followed by protection of privacy issues (mean = 3.73, SD = 1.12), which demonstrates that academic librarians place strong emphasis on equity and confidentiality as core values in ethical librarianship. Maintaining the accuracy of information (mean = 3.60, SD = 0.98) and protecting intellectual property (mean = 3.54, SD = 1.00) were also rated highly, though the latter appears to be slightly less emphasized. The findings imply that academic libraries have a strong commitment to ethical practices, particularly in upholding core values such as ensuring equal access to information and protecting user privacy. High mean scores in these areas indicate that equity and confidentiality are prioritized in their professional conduct. This aligns with the study by Gyau et al. (2021), which highlighted that user satisfaction is a significant determinant of confidentiality in service provision. This was also observed during FGDs by one professional and interview of one director:

> We do not just provide access; we verify sources to ensure that users receive credible and up-to-date information during service provision. (Respondent, University 4)

One library director added as follows:

> Truly, students must feel safe when seeking information. If they cannot trust us to protect their search history or borrowing records, we fail in our ethical responsibility. (Respondent, University 3).

Therefore, the findings reveal that academic libraries ensure ethical practices and professional responsibility in service delivery, particularly by prioritizing equal access to information and safeguarding user privacy. The high ratings in these areas indicate professionals' commitment to equity and confidentiality as core values of ethical librarianship.

Meanwhile, the findings on service delivery show mixed results, with a notable disparity in performance. Aspects such as timing (mean = 3.74, SD = 1.10), confidentiality (mean = 3.69, SD = 1.04) and accessibility (mean = 3.48, SD = 1.19) scored relatively high. This is indicating that services are timely, confidential and accessible; reliability was significantly low (mean = 1.98, SD = 0.91). The findings imply a partial fulfillment of ethical practices and professional responsibilities in academic libraries. Aspects of timing (mean = 3.74), confidentiality (mean = 3.69) and accessibility (mean = 3.48) scored relatively high, indicating a commendable commitment to core ethical practices such as respecting user privacy, ensuring access and delivering timely services. The significantly low score in reliability (mean = 1.98) raises serious ethical concerns. This is also emphasized in a study of Yaya and Adeeko (2024) that noted that enhancing reliability could lead to improved user satisfaction and trust. The findings reveal that while professionals in academic libraries demonstrate a commendable commitment to ethical practices, there is inconsistency in fulfilling their professional responsibilities in reliability which undermines the service delivery. Thus, the results highlight the need for professionals to strongly adhere to ethical practices and responsibilities to achieve consistently high quality of service in academic libraries Table 4.

Among the demographic variables examined, none showed a statistically significant effect on service delivery at the 5% significance level; however, age group ($p = 0.057$) and education level ($p = 0.072$) approached marginal significance, suggesting that older and more highly educated professionals might slightly influence service quality, although not conclusively. Although work experience exhibited a negative coefficient ($B = -0.093$, $p = 0.096$), indicating a possible, though statistically insignificant, link between increased years of experience and a slight decline in perceived service delivery,

Table 4. Influence of ethical practices and professional responsibilities in service delivery.

Parameters	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients			Collinearity statistics
	B	Standard error	β	t	Significance	VIF
(Constant)	0.864	0.405		2.134	0.035	
Sex of respondent	0.063	0.103	0.044	0.607	0.545	1.17
Age group	0.105	0.055	0.192	1.919	0.057	2.253
Education level	0.104	0.057	0.135	1.814	0.072	1.242
Work experience in the library	−0.093	0.056	−0.165	−1.675	0.096	2.173
Organizing material for library user based on their needs	0.159	0.115	0.174	1.38	0.17	1.578
Updating the collection to ensure the relevancy and currency of materials	0.073	0.145	0.081	0.505	0.614	1.781
Assisting library users in finding materials through databases	−0.403	0.162	−0.419	−2.486	0.014	1.376
Resolving user queries in providing the service	0.258	0.099	0.271	2.601	0.01	2.438
Maintain the accuracy of the provided information	−0.102	0.075	−0.143	−1.362	0.176	2.492
Protection of intellectual property	0.284	0.083	0.402	3.43	0.001	1.091
Ensuring equal access to information	0.23	0.069	0.32	3.311	0.001	2.096
Protection of privacy issues	0.086	0.055	0.136	1.568	0.12	1.699

1. ANOVA: F (7, 128) = 13.28, Prob > F = 0.0000.
2. Normality test: Shapiro–Wilk test (Z) = 4.660, Prob > Z = 0.0000.
3. Breusch–Pagan/Cook–Weisberg test for heteroskedasticity: $\chi^2(1) = 1.43$, Prob > $\chi^2 = 0.2365$.
4. Ramsey RESET test for omitted variables: F (3, 125) = 6.69, Prob > F = 0.0097.

VIF: Variance inflation factor.

an outcome potentially reflecting factors such as resistance to change, job tiredness or shifting roles among long-serving professionals (Kimathi and Serem, 2023). This was also stated by one professional as follows:

> It is obvious that older professionals and those with higher education are perceived as having deeper institutional knowledge and confidence in service delivery, while those with more work experience sometimes face challenges of adapting to new technologies or organizational changes. (Respontent, University 2)

This implies that while demographic factors such as age, education level, and work experience do not have a statistically confirmed impact on service delivery, there are emerging patterns suggesting their potential influence. Therefore, these findings highlight the importance of providing continuous support, training and professional development to staff across all demographics to ensure quality of service provided in academic libraries.

Regarding professional responsibilities, two variables significantly influenced service delivery. Assisting library users in locating materials through databases had a statistically significant negative effect ($B = -0.403$, $p = 0.014$), which appears counterintuitive. This may reflect underlying challenges such as limited database access, lack of technical support, or inadequate digital literacy training (Willis and O'Reilly, 2020). In contrast, resolving user queries had a positive and statistically significant impact ($B = 0.258$, $p = 0.010$), emphasizing the importance of direct user support in enhancing service delivery outcomes. Omollo (2024) noted that user-centered services and responsiveness to information needs are increasingly recognized as core competencies in academic libraries. This is also emphasized by one director as follows:

> When we address user concerns effectively, it clearly boosts professional experience and enhances our library's reputation. That's why investing in professional ethics training is just as important as improving digital infrastructure. (Respondents, University 1)

Therefore, the findings imply that not all professional responsibilities contribute equally to enhancing library service delivery. Although assisting users with database searches had a negative impact, this may be due to structural or technological barriers such as limited access to updated databases, insufficient training, and inadequate technical infrastructure.

Ethical practices show as strong predictors of service delivery. Specifically, the protection of intellectual property ($B = 0.284$, $p = 0.001$) and the assurance of equal access to information ($B = 0.230$, $p = 0.001$) are both positive and statistically significant effects. This implies that ethical practices play a crucial role in enhancing the quality-of-service delivery in academic libraries. Specifically, when information professionals consider protecting intellectual property and ensuring equal access to information, the effectiveness and fairness of their service improve significantly. Hence, professional responsibilities and ethical practices have a much stronger impact and appear important for effective service delivery.

To examine extent to which professionals uphold confidentiality to ensure ethical practice in service delivery

The findings in Table 5 show that most information professionals in academic libraries demonstrate a generally positive commitment to uphold confidentiality as an aspect of ethical service delivery, with the majority of responses across all six measures limiting access, disclosing user lists, preventing unauthorized access, regular monitoring, data security, and provision of guidelines falling under the "good", "very

Table 5. Descriptive statistics by extent professionals uphold confidentiality to ensure ethical practice in service delivery.

Confidentiality	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good	Excellent
Limiting access	8	8	48	34	38
Disclose list	3	20	44	35	34
Prevent unauthorized access	8	9	40	43	36
Regular monitoring	7	12	38	39	40
Data security	14	11	39	32	40
Guideline provision	8	16	36	33	43

Table 6. Relationships between confidentiality, ethical practices, and professional responsibilities.

	Confidentiality	EP	PR	Average variance extracted
Confidentiality	–	–	–	0.820
Ethical practices	0.409	–	–	0.896
Professional responsibilities	0.268	0.271	–	0.776

good" and "excellent" categories. Likewise, high ratings in areas such as limiting access, regular monitoring, and guideline provision suggest that professionals are aware of and actively implement confidentiality standards. However, a relatively higher number of respondents rated "poor" and "very poor" in disclosing user lists and data security, highlighting areas of concern where breaches or ethical gaps may occur. This is also observed during focus group discussion as follows:

> I have over twenty years of experience now. Confidentiality is something I take seriously every day. I always make sure that user records are only accessible to authorized staff. We have been trained in this, and I follow the procedures. But when it comes to disclosing user lists, sometimes the policies are not clear. (Respondents, University 2)

These results imply that while confidentiality is well observed, there is a need for enhanced training, clearer institutional policies, and continuous monitoring to ensure consistency and address weaknesses, particularly in handling user information and securing sensitive information.

Levels to which professionals uphold confidentiality to ensure ethical practice in service delivery. Figure 1 shows that confidentiality in performing ethical practices shows that the majority of respondents perceive their adherence to confidentiality standards as strong, with most ratings falling under good, very good, and excellent. This suggests that a significant portion of information professionals are committed to maintaining confidentiality in their daily service delivery, reflecting a positive ethical practice within their institutions. This in line with a study of Emandei (2023) that indicates that most professionals demonstrate a strong commitment to confidentiality and ethical conduct in their service delivery, reinforcing trust and institutional integrity. However, the presence of some poor and very poor ratings indicates that a minority still face challenges, potentially owing to unclear guidelines and inadequate training. Therefore, these findings highlight the need for policy clarification, regular ethical training and workshops to ensure consistent and reliable confidentiality practices across all service in academic libraries (Table 6).

The findings show a notable connection among confidentiality, EP and PR. Each factor shows high average variance extracted values: 0.820 for confidentiality, 0.896 for EP and 0.776 for PR, indicating strong convergent validity. Moderate positive correlations are present between confidentiality and EP (0.409) and between confidentiality and PR (0.268). This suggests that strong confidentiality practices are associated with better ethical practices and professional responsibilities. This outcome aligns with moral standards that emphasize the importance of confidentiality in fostering trust and integrity in professional roles, particularly in academic libraries. Additionally, the strong average variance extracted values indicate that the constructs are well defined and measured accurately, further strengthening the validity of the study's results. These insights highlight that

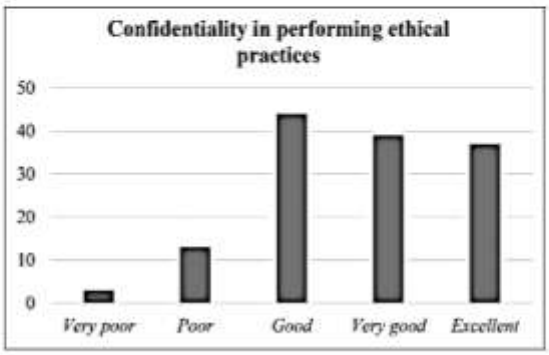


Figure 1. The extent to which professionals uphold confidentiality to ensure ethical practice in service delivery.

confidentiality is crucial in promoting ethical practices and professional responsibilities among information professionals in academic libraries.

Conclusion

This study concludes that ethical practices and professional responsibilities are essential components of effective service delivery in academic libraries in Tanzania. Information professionals demonstrate a commendable commitment to upholding confidentiality and ensuring equitable access to information, which are critical for maintaining institutional trust and integrity. However, findings also reveal a disparity in the consistent application of professional responsibilities, particularly in areas related to service reliability, digital resource handling and alignment with user needs. While confidentiality is generally well practiced, policy ambiguity and gaps in training still pose significant challenges. Moreover, ethical practices such as safeguarding intellectual property and ensuring equal access are strong predictors of quality service delivery, underscoring their importance in academic librarianship. Therefore, for academic libraries to fully realize their roles in supporting research, learning and teaching, stronger adherence to ethical practices, clearer institutional guidelines and continuous professional development are required. These efforts will enhance consistency, accountability and quality of library services in Tanzania.

Limitations of the study

This study provides meaningful insights into ethical practices and professional responsibilities in upholding confidentiality in academic libraries in Tanzania. However, it has some limitations which cannot be ignored. First, its cross-sectional design captures data at a single point in time, limiting the ability to observe changes or trends in ethical practices over time. Second, the study focuses on information professionals involving librarians only and left others such as record managers, archivists and information scientists for others to conduct further research. Third, the study focused on four large, well-established academic libraries, which may not reflect the experiences of smaller or under-resourced institutions, thus limiting the generalizability of its findings. Lastly, while this study focuses only on ensuring equal access to information, maintaining information accuracy, protecting user privacy and safeguarding intellectual property, further research may explore additional dimensions of ethical practices that were not covered in this study. Addressing these limitations will help build a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of ethical and professional responsibilities during service delivery in academic libraries in Tanzania.

ORCID iDs

Beth Kachota https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6910-6901
Bernard Ronald https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6398-7541

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Author biographies

Beth Kachota is an assistant librarian in the Department of Library and Information Studies at Mzumbe University. She is currently a PhD candidate at the Department of Informatics and Information Technology, Sokoine University of Agriculture, in Tanzania researching ethical practices in service delivery by information professionals in the selected academic libraries in Tanzania. She holds a Bachelor of Law and a Master of Arts in Information Science, with a strong academic background in law, health information and ethics. Her research interests include information ethics, open educational resources and health information-seeking behaviour. Beth has authored several scholarly papers and chapters and holds an ORCID iD: 0000-0002-6442-2056.

Ronald Benard Tarimo is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Informatics and Information Technology at Sokoine University of Agriculture in Tanzania. His PhD focused on Leveraging ICT to improve information sharing among rural fish-farming communities in Tanzania. He actively engages in departmental activities and seminars, contributing to student mentorship and research excellence. He currently serves as the major PhD supervisor of Beth Kachota, whose study explores ethical practices in service delivery by information professionals in selected academic libraries in Tanzania. Dr Tarimo holds ORCID iD 0000-0001-6398-7541 and has a strong academic background in aquaculture and information science.

Silver John Hokororo is a dedicated Lecturer in the Department of Business Management at Sokoine University of Agriculture in Tanzania. He holds a PhD in Business Administration with a specialization in Human Resource Management. His research interests focus on staff retention, job embeddedness, and organizational dynamics within Tanzanian universities. Dr Hokororo teaches and mentors both undergraduate and postgraduate students and currently serves as a PhD co-supervisor for a candidate whose study examines ethical service delivery by information professionals in academic libraries. He is registered with ORCID iD: 0009-0002-4358-1186.

CHAPTER FIVE

PAPER IV



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Factors Influencing Ethical Practices in Service Delivery Among Information Professionals in Tanzanian Academic Libraries

Beth Kachota[a], Ronald Bernard[a], and Silver Hokororo[b]

[a]Department of Informatics and Information Technology, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania; [b]Department of Business Management, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania

ABSTRACTS

This study examined the factors influencing ethical practices among information professionals during service delivery in academic libraries in Tanzania. However, challenges such as low morale, inadequate training, and lack of clear ethical guidelines, can negatively affect the adherence of ethical practices during service delivery The study was guided by Duty-Based Theory, which highlights moral obligations such as fairness, accountability, and respect for intellectual property, while recognizing the theory's limitations in addressing dynamic institutional and personal factors. A cross-sectional mixed-methods design was employed, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data from 159 respondents and key informants across four major academic libraries. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, and ordinal logistic regression. The findings reveal that ethical practices are shaped, by management enforcement, ethical training, clear guidelines, and positive staff morale than demographic characteristics such as age, gender, or work experience. The study concludes that strengthening institutional support through continuous training, the establishment of codes of ethics, policy development, clear guidelines, and ethics committees is essential for promoting consistent and accountable ethical practices. It recommends that national bodies such as the Tanzania Library Services Board and Tanzania Library Association spearhead the development of a formal code of ethics suited to the Tanzanian context, while academic libraries should enhance ethical standards through regular training, staff involvement in policy formulation, and the practical application of ethical principles in service delivery.

KEYWORDS

Influencing factors; ethical practices; services delivery; information professionals; Tanzania academic libraries

1. Introduction and background of the study

In academic libraries ethical practices involve a balancing of professional standards on ensuring equal access and maintaining accuracy of information provided, addressing privacy issues and safeguarding intellectual property (Ankrah et al., 2023; Agarwal et al., 2025). These practices associated with the professional standards such as being honesty, integrity, confidentiality, fairness, and respect for intellectual property among information professionals (Afolayan, 2022; Shachaf, 2005). Globally, ethical practices for

CONTACT Beth Kachota b.kachota@gmail.com, bkachota@mzumbe.ac.tz Department of Informatics and Information Technology, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Morogoro, Tanzania

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information professionals began to take shape in the early 20th century, particularly with the rise of formalized library science education and the development of professional associations such as the American Library Association (Matingwina, 2015; Ailakhu & Kingsley, 2022). These organizations established codes of ethics to guide information professionals conduct during service delivery.

Studies such as Ocholla and Bothma (2007), Ndumbaro and Mutula (2020), and Malanga et al. (2024) noted that in Africa, the evolution of ethical practices in academic libraries has been closely tied to broader developments in higher education, information policy, and professional training. In this context, academic libraries in Tanzania have played a crucial role in supporting teaching, learning, and research since the establishment of the country's first universities in the 1960s (Mubofu, 2022; Mushi et al., 2023). As these institutions have grown, there has been a corresponding increase in the number of trained professionals, many of whom are guided by professional ethics taught during their education and embedded in institutional policies (Grigoropoulos, 2019; Riabova et al., 2021). Despite these developments, challenges to ethical practice exist as indicated in studies such as favoritism, lack of confidentiality, poor service delivery, misuse of information resources, and limited awareness of professional codes of ethics (Ashiq et al, 2021; Ondieki, 2023; Owusu-Ansah & Dadzie, 2024). These challenges are often influenced by various factors, including the socio-demographic characteristics of library staff, institutional culture, professional training, and leadership commitment to ethical standards (Albee et al., 2019; Phillips & Oyewole, 2024). Hence, understanding the factors that influence ethical practices among information professionals is, therefore, essential for enhancing the quality-of-service delivery in academic libraries.

In Tanzania context, academic libraries serve as center for knowledge dissemination, supporting higher education institutions in achieving their educational and research objectives (Mosha & Ngulube, 2024). However, most of academic libraries have been faced with several factors during service delivery despite with the existence of ethical guidelines. Tweve (2023) and Mwilongo et al. (2024) noted that individual factor such as persons values and beliefs and professional competence may shape behaviors during service provisions while organizational factor such as enforcement of ethical guidelines and ethical training play a role in promoting or hindering ethical practice. On the other hand, Ackim et al. (2024) and Kuhumba et al. (2025) noted that low staff morale, insufficient training, and unclear ethical guidelines may undermine professional integrity, while strong management and supportive organizational culture support ethical practice.

Thus, understanding these factors influence ethical practices for improving service delivery but also aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG4) on (quality education) by ensuring equitable access to information, and SDG 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions) by promoting transparency, accountability, and respect for rules and regulations within academic institutions. Therefore, the study seeks to explore factors influencing ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries.

1.1. Statement of the problem

Ethical practices are crucial for the effective and trustworthy of service delivery by information professionals in academic libraries (Owushi & Anyalebechi, 2024). In academic libraries, information professionals are expected to uphold values such as integrity,

confidentiality, fairness, and accountability in providing services to users (Dixit et al., 2024). However, challenges such as low morale, inadequate training, and lack of clear ethical guidelines, can negatively affect the adherence of ethical practices during service delivery (Nambobi et al., 2023; Wabomba et al., 2025; Nzimakwe & Utete 2025). Such challenges lead to unethical practices among information professionals which lower the quality of services in academic libraries (Ankrah et al., 2023).

Studies such as Mseti et al. (2023), Ackim et al. (2024) and Masaya (2024) have examined professional ethics in the public service sector, there is limited empirical research focusing specifically on academic library environments in Tanzania. This gap makes it difficult to understand how factors such as personal values, organizational culture, management style, and professional competence shape ethical conduct among information professionals. Therefore, in addressing this gap, the present study aims to investigate the factors that influence ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in Tanzanian academic libraries.

1.2. General objectives

The general objective is to examine the factors influencing ethical practices among information professionals during service delivery in academic libraries in Tanzania.

1.2.1. Specific objectives

The study specifically aims to

1. Determine the influence of socio-demographic factors on ethical practices during service delivery in academic libraries in Tanzania.
2. Examine the factors influencing ethical practices among information professionals during service delivery in academic libraries in Tanzania.
3. Assess the strategies used to strengthen ethical practices among information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania

1.2.2. Research questions

What are the factors influencing ethical practices among information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania? Specifically, to;

1. How do socio-demographic factors influence ethical practices in academic libraries in Tanzania?
2. What are the factors that influence ethical practices among information professionals during service delivery in academic libraries in Tanzania?
3. What strategies are used to strengthen ethical practices among information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania

2. Literature review

This section presents a literature review and theoretical framework for the study. The literature review aligns with the research objectives, which are to determine the

influence of socio-demographic factors influencing ethical practices and strategies employed to promote ethical practices among information professionals during service delivery in academic libraries in Tanzania.

2.1. Influence of socio-demographic factors on ethical practices during service delivery in academic libraries

Socio-demographic factors significantly influence the ethical practices of information professionals in academic libraries, shaping their values, attitudes, and responses during service delivery (Lizazi-Mbanga & Mapulanga, 2021; Phillips & Oyewole, 2024). Factors such as age, marital status, religion, and years of experience have been shown to correlate with differing perceptions of ethical issues in library settings. Understanding these influences is essential for designing effective training and workshops that promote ethical awareness and informed decision-making among library personnel (Moonasar, 2024). Variables including age, gender, education level, professional training, and work experience all play a role in ethical decision-making. Research by Komba and Mwakabenga (2019) and Singh (2024) indicates that older or more experienced professionals tend to exhibit stronger ethical awareness, likely due to their extended exposure to workplace practices and professional norms. Although gender remains a discussed issue, some studies suggest that female professionals may demonstrate heightened sensitivity to ethical issues such as confidentiality and fairness (Musa & Omwoyo, 2017; Bishu et al., 2021). Furthermore, Prasanth and Vasudevan (2019) and Salaman et al. (2023) noted that education and training in Library and Information Science (LIS), particularly programs that incorporate professional ethics based on international guidelines such as those from IFLA, have been shown to enhance ethical competencies. Therefore, the implementation and integration of such ethics education remain inconsistent across Tanzanian academic institutions (Chisita & Chiparausha, 2020; Mseti et al., 2023).

In addition to individual characteristics, organizational factors such as institutional support, leadership quality, and mentoring opportunities play a critical role in promoting ethical practices, particularly among younger or less experienced professionals (Busch et al., 2024; Shrivastava, 2023). Ethical practice in academic libraries is shaped by a complex interplay of personal values, professional standards, institutional governance, and the pressures of a rapidly evolving technological landscape (Oyedokun, 2025). As noted by Ocholla and Bothma (2007), Ngulube and Mhlongo (2018), and Glusker et al. (2022), while professional integrity remains a foundational element, sustainable ethical practices are strengthened through robust institutional policies, a supportive ethical culture, and ongoing professional development initiatives. Despite recognition of these factors, there remains a significant gap in empirical studies that specifically examine how socio-demographic characteristics intersect with institutional dynamics to influence ethical behavior among information professionals in Tanzanian academic libraries.

2.2. Factors that influence ethical practices in academic libraries

Ndumbaro (2018) and Yusuf (2021) demonstrate that multiple factors, including institutional structures, individual attributes, technological developments, and broader societal

norms, influence ethical practices among information professionals in academic libraries. Scholars such as Ocholla (2009), Emandei (2023a, 2023b), and Kumala et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of institutional frameworks, particularly codes of ethics and professional guidelines, in shaping ethical behavior. These frameworks are essential for establishing standards of professional conduct, guiding librarians through ethical dilemmas, and improving service quality and integrity. In addition, Arciniega et al. (2019) and Prendiville and Kinsella (2022) identify personal values, professional education, and work experience as critical determinants of ethical decision-making in library settings.

Despite growing awareness of ethical standards, studies by Rubin and Rubin (2020), Nambobi (2021), and Kaddu and Ssekitto (2023) reveal continuous challenges that hinder ethical practices in academic libraries. These challenges include a lack of awareness and interest in ethical codes, the absence of locally developed codes of ethics, difficulties in implementing international standards, limited enforcement by library management, and the complexity or low visibility of existing ethical frameworks. Thus, the reviewed literature noted that the challenges affect ethical practices in the field, particularly with socio-demographic factors, institutional policies, and the practical impact of ethics training.

Perhaps, technological advancements have been identified as both opportunities and challenges to ethical practice. As noted by Ndumbaro and Mutula (2020) and Mwambuli (2023), the rapid integration of digital technologies in library services can enhance access and efficiency but also introduces ethical dilemmas related to data privacy, intellectual property, and digital inclusion.

Thus, the literature shows that ethical practice in academic libraries is not just an individual responsibility. It is also strongly shaped by institutional culture, societal norms, and the technological environment. While many studies have focused on the factors that encourage ethical behavior, there is still a clear gap in research on the real-life and local challenges that make it hard to adopt and apply ethical standards, especially in African academic libraries.

2.3. Strategies used to strengthen ethical practices in academic libraries

Ethical practices among information professionals are essential for ensuring quality service delivery, building user trust, and upholding the integrity of academic libraries (Adaeze, 2024; Shiferaw, 2018). In academic libraries, various strategies have been employed globally, including the adoption of ethical frameworks and the provision of professional training (Owushi & Anyalebechi, 2024; Singh, 2024). Additionally, ongoing professional development initiatives, such as workshops and training sessions, equip professionals with the necessary skills to navigate ethical dilemmas effectively (Moonasar, 2024; Rehman et al., 2024). In many countries, the development and enforcement of professional codes of ethics provide clear guidelines on confidentiality, neutrality, fairness, and respect for intellectual property (Badmus & Ogunlana, 2022; Jain & Shonhe, 2021). The reviewed literature shows there are no specific strategies employed within Tanzanian academic libraries to promote ethical practices.

Furthermore, the establishment of institutional policies and accountability mechanisms such as ethics committees, reporting procedures, and performance evaluations is

critical for maintaining ethical standards (Ackim et al., 2024). These frameworks not only offer guidance but also help promote a culture of accountability among professionals, ensuring adherence to ethical norms where they are applied (Tweve, 2023). Shneiderman (2020) noted that monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, including user feedback systems and regular follow-up, are crucial in identifying ethical gaps and reinforcing ethical practices in academic libraries. Therefore, in addressing ethical challenges, the need for clear ethical frameworks, ongoing education, and fostering transparent relationships with the library association is needed for effective service delivery.

2.4. Theoretical framework

The study used the Duty-Based Theory introduced by Immanuel Kant to provides a strong foundation for understanding the moral obligations of information professionals in fulfilling their roles. The theory emphasizes that ethical practices in libraries, such as providing equal access to information, protecting users' privacy and intellectual property, ensuring accuracy in information services, should be considered regardless of external pressures or outcomes (Udayakumar & Sunder Singh Babu, 2022; Okpo, 2023).

The duty-based theory has its four components which are moral duty, moral intention, moral rules and moral reasoning which both of the element is applicable in this study (Ellis, 2020). Moral duty will involve indicators of adequate enforcement by library management and competency, moral intention includes indicators of low morale and individual values/beliefs, moral rules involve indicator of ethical guidelines and moral reasoning includes awareness of ethical issues and fair treatment of users. These elements are directly aligned with the core responsibilities of information professionals during service delivery. However, the theory's application has weakness in this study's context, as it tends to assume uniform adherence to these duties without fully accounting for the complex and dynamic factors such as age, education level, work experience and institutional culture, that influence ethical behavior in practice. In addressing the weakness of the theory, the study will use a Masons PAPA Model which help to integrate independent variable of factors influencing adding with control variable which age, education level, work experience and the dependent variable of ethical practices in service delivery. This combined approach ensures that the study can adequately address both the principles of duty and the practical realities that shape ethical practices in academic library service delivery.

2.5. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework shows the relationship between factors influencing ethical practices (independent variables), ethical practices in service delivery (dependent variables), and demographic characteristics as control variables among information professionals in academic libraries. When professionals experience low morale, their motivation to act ethically may be weaken, while effective enforcement by library management supports their sense of duty to follow ethical standards. Adequate ethical training supports moral reasoning and promotes consistent application of ethical practices, supported by

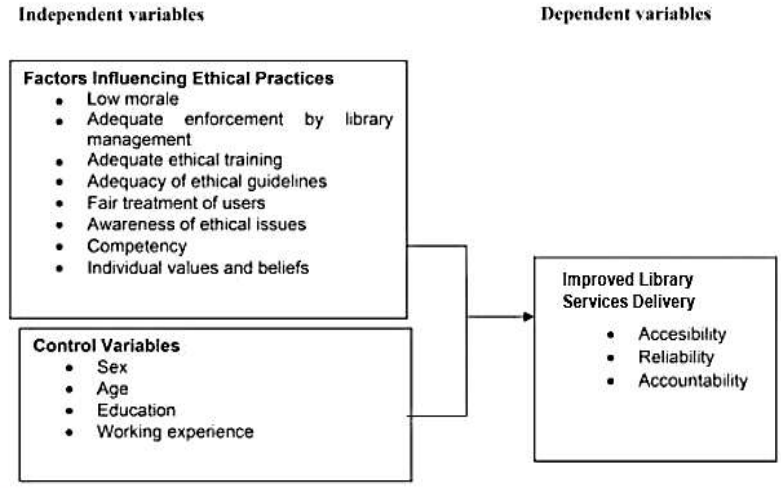


Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

clear and comprehensive ethical guidelines that help professional on decision making. Fair treatment of users proves respect for human dignity and equality, while awareness of ethical issues enhances the ability to make duty-based decisions rather than those driven by personal gain. Competence reflects a professional's responsibility to serve users with integrity and reliability, and individual values and beliefs further influence one's commitment to act morally and fulfill professional duties sincerely (Figure 1).

On the other hand, control variables including age, sex, education level and work experience can moderate the extent to which these influencing factors impact ethical practices. Meanwhile, the interaction between these influencing factors and control variables determines the ethical practices in service delivery in terms of accessibility, reliability and accountability.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

This study adopted a cross-sectional research design to collect data from a population at a single point in time, making it an efficient and cost-effective approach (Wang & Cheng, 2020). Cross-sectional designs are typically inexpensive, relatively quick to implement, and easy to manage (Creswell, 2014; Qutoshi, 2018). This approach is particularly suitable for studying ethical practices among information professionals during service delivery in academic libraries, as it allows researchers to capture a broad snapshot of current behaviors, perceptions, and challenges across diverse demographic groups within a defined timeframe (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Hence, understanding ethical practices at a specific point in time is crucial for identifying existing gaps, areas of concern within the academic libraries.

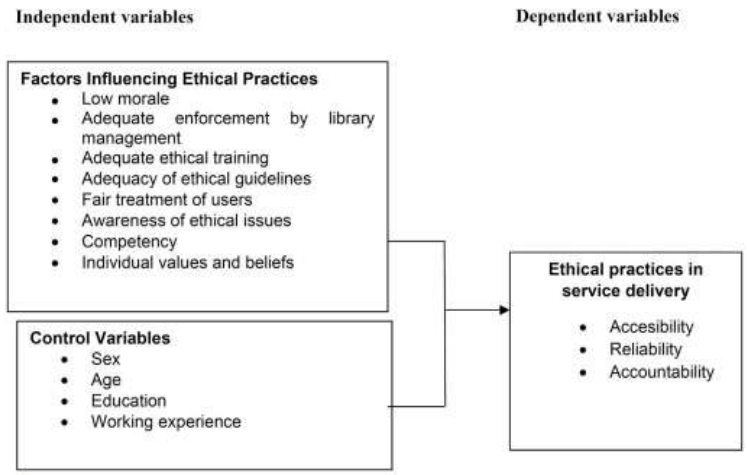


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3.2. Research approach

This study used a mixed-methods research approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to investigate the factors influencing ethical practices in academic libraries (Hayman & Smith, 2020). A mixed methods approach is important as it allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem by combining the depth and contextual insights provided by qualitative data with the measurable trends derived from quantitative data (Yim et al, 2020).

3.3. Study area

The study involved four academic libraries at the University of Dar es Salaam (UD), Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Mzumbe (MU), and the University of Dodoma (UDOM). These universities were selected due to their various institutional profiles and geographical representation. These universities were purposefully selected because they host some of the largest and most well-established academic libraries in the country, with a broad range of information services and information professionals for providing services (Wema, 2024).

3.4. Study population

The study population comprised information professionals from academic libraries at the University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Mzumbe University, and the University of Dodoma. A stratified sampling method was employed to ensure proportional representation of information professionals from each university library. From the total population of 265 information professionals, a sample size of 159 was determined using Yamane's formula.

The sample size was determined using the proposed formula by Yamane (1967) as presented below.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

where: n is the required sample size; N is the population size; and e is the sampling error (5% = 0.05).

Then:

$$n = \frac{265}{1 + 265(0.05)^2} = 159$$

Out of 159 respondents given questionnaire, 136 respondents returned the questionnaires for the study. Additionally, purposive sampling was used to select the four directors of the academic libraries because they have the specific knowledge, experience, and responsibility needed for the study.

3.5. Data collection

Firstly, the study employed a questionnaire administered to information professionals in the selected academic libraries. This was followed by seven Focus Group Discussions (FDGs), with six participants drawn as follows: three groups from the University of Dodoma (UDOM), two from the University of Dar es Salaam (UD), and one each from Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) and Mzumbe University. Each Focus Group consisted of six participants to ensure a diversity of views regarding the factors influencing ethical practices. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with key informants, including the four directors of the selected academic libraries.

3.6. Data analysis

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches to ensure a comprehensive understanding of factors influencing ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries.

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 22, while qualitative data from key informant interviews and focus group discussions were examined through content analysis to enhance the credibility and authenticity of the findings.

Descriptive statistics were first used to summarize respondents' socio-demographic characteristics and their perceptions of ethical practices, providing an overview of response patterns.

The Chi-square test of association was used because most of the study variables such as demographic characteristics, ethical factors, and levels of ethical practice are categorical in nature. Chi-square is appropriate for determining whether there is a significant relationship between these categorical variables. On the other hand, it helps to show whether factors like age, education, or awareness of ethical issues are statistically linked to ethical practices in service delivery.

The Ordinal Logistic Regression model was used because the dependent variable (ethical practices in services delivery such as accessibility, reliability, and accountability) is measured in ordered categories, such as low, moderate, or high. Thus, makes the Ordinal Logistic Regression is the suitable method for analyzing ordered outcomes while estimating the strength and direction of the relationship between independent and dependent variable of ethical practice after controlling for demographic characteristics.

The following is the equation used to estimate the multiple linear regression model.

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7 + \beta_8 X_8 + +\beta_9 X_9 + \beta_{10} X_{10} + \beta_{11} X_{11} + \beta_{12} X_{12} + \varepsilon_i$$

$$logit(\pi) = \frac{p}{1-p} = \frac{e^{Y_i}}{1+e^{Y_i}}$$

whereby, Y_i stands for dependent variable (Ethical practices in service delivery), X_1 is the Sex of respondents, X_2 is the Age of respondents, X_3 is the Education level, X_4 is the Working experience, X_5 is the Low Morale, X_6 is the Adequate enforcement by the library management, X_7 is the Adequate ethical training, X_8 is the Adequate ethical guidelines, X_9 is the Unfair treatment of users, X_{10} is the Lack of awareness of ethical

issues, X_{11} is the Lack of competency, X_{12} is the Individual values and beliefs, ε_i = Residual (Other factors remaining Constant).

For justification, the assumption underlying for model's goodness of fit and Parallelism was tested.

3.7. Ethical consideration

The research adhered to all ethical procedures, including obtaining relevant permits, securing informed consent, informing respondents of the research objectives, and maintaining confidentiality throughout the research and thereafter (Creswell, 2012). Additionally, the researchers strictly followed all guidelines regarding data integrity, refraining from any form of data forgery and ensuring confidentiality at every stage of the study. In presenting the qualitative findings, the universities involved will be referred to as university 1, university 2, university 3, and university 4 instead of mentioning their actual names to protect the identity of the institutions and ensure anonymity, thereby upholding ethical standards in reporting the findings (Khoa et al, 2023).

3.8. Validity and reliability

The study ensured the validity and reliability of the findings through several measures employed across the quantitative and qualitative method. For the quantitative data, the questionnaire was developed based on existing literature, and similar studies conducted in academic libraries. Then the developed instrument was reviewed by experts in Library and Information Science to ensure completeness, clarity, and relevance to the research objectives. Additionally, a pilot test was conducted for 15 respondents at Jordan University before full data collection to determine reliability and refine ambiguous items. The credibility was strengthened through triangulation by using three methods of data collection including questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions. Dependability was ensured by maintaining detailed documentation of data collection and analysis procedures. Confirmability was achieved by presenting respondents' views accurately without researcher bias and without changing any information.

3.9. Measurement of construct

In testing factors influencing ethical practices such as gender, age, education, and work experience on factors influencing ethical practices but were not significant predictors, as shown by chi-square and regression results. For instance, gender (χ^2=1.644, p = 0.439) and education (χ^2=3.079, p = 0.799) had no significant association with ethical practices, suggesting that personal characteristics alone do not determine ethical behavior. Instead, institutional and organizational constructs played a stronger role. Adequate enforcement by management (χ^2=127.600, p = 0.000; Estimate = 0.719, p = 0.012), ethical training (χ^2=123.977, p = 0.000; Estimate = 0.660, p = 0.021), and ethical guidelines (χ^2=134.091, p = 0.000) were significantly associated with higher ethical practices, confirming that supportive structures shape professional conduct. Psychological factors such as morale (where 69.1% reported high morale) and fairness (χ^2=126.275,

$p = 0.000$) also influenced ethical practices, with low morale (Estimate= −10.14, $p = 0.012$) having a strong negative effect on behavior. Similarly, individual competency (χ^2=121.768, $p = 0.000$) and alignment of personal values with professional ethics (χ^2=121.836, $p = 0.000$) reinforced ethical practice but required institutional mediation.

Regression results further confirmed that years of schooling (Estimate = 2.217, $p = 0.007$) was a strong predictor, emphasizing the role of education and continuous professional development. Strategies proposed by respondents, such as regular training (85%), establishment of codes of ethics (80%), and presence of ethical guidelines (77%), underscored the importance of systemic support in sustaining ethical service delivery. Thus, while demographic factors provide context, institutional enforcement, training, morale, and competency emerged as the most influential constructs, showing that ethical practices in academic libraries are driven more by organizational support and professional development than by personal characteristics.

4. Results and discussion

The demographic details in Table 1 indicate significant factors that impact ethical practices in library services. The findings reveal that a majority of respondents identified as female (59%), with age distributions of the following: 31–34 years (33%) and under 30 years (24.3%). This suggests that a relatively young and gender workforce shapes ethical practices in service delivery, influencing attitudes toward compliance with ethical standards, willingness to engage in training, and acceptance of guidelines (Lasthuizen & Badar, 2023; Kuhumba, Molewijk, et al., 2025). Regarding education, a large proportion of respondents held a first degree (39.0%) and a diploma (39.0%), while fewer possessed a master's degree (14.7%) or a PhD (7.4%). This suggests that although higher education generally correlates with a better understanding of professional ethics, the significant number of first-degree and diploma holders highlights the need for continuous ethical training to enhance moral reasoning and ethical conduct in academic libraries. This is emphasized during FGDs as follows:

> To a large extent, our institution has been supporting our education, but we still need more continuous training and regular workshops, which would help us align with our daily practices and manage ethical issues more effectively. (Respondents, University 3)

Therefore, academic libraries need to prioritize ongoing professional training and workshops to ensure that professionals at all educational levels are well equipped to uphold ethical standards in service delivery.

The findings on professional experience among respondents indicate that a significant proportion hold between 6 and 10 years (24.3%), 11–15 years (33.1%), and over 15 years (15.4%) of service. This suggests that many information professionals possess considerable exposure to library operations, policies, and ethical dilemmas. This level of experience is likely to enhance their competence in addressing ethical issues, as professionals are generally better equipped to apply ethical principles and adhere to professional standards in service delivery. The findings imply that work experience, particularly with longer years of service, often leads to encountering various ethical challenges, dilemmas, and user needs, thereby deepening their understanding of appropriate ethical conduct Therefore, library management should focus on ensuring continuous training for the

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of studied variables.

Variables	Categories	*n*	%
Gender	Male	55	40.4
	Female	81	59.6
Age group	Less than 30 years	33	24.3
	31–34 years	45	33.1
	35–39 years	24	17.6
	40–44 years	20	14.7
	Above 45 years	14	10.3
Education level	PhD	10	7.4
	Masters	20	14.7
	First degree	53	39.0
	Diploma	53	39.0
	Other level	0	0.0
Work experience in the library	Less than 2 years	17	12.5
	2–5 years	20	14.7
	6–10 years	33	24.3
	11–15 years	45	33.1
	Above 15 years	21	15.4
Low morale	Low	31	22.8
	Moderate	11	8.1
	High	94	69.1
Adequate enforcement by the library management	Low	30	22.1
	Moderate	12	8.8
	High	94	69.1
Adequate ethical training	Low	29	21.3
	Moderate	12	8.8
	High	95	69.9
Adequate ethical guidelines	Low	29	21.3
	Moderate	13	9.6
	High	94	69.1
fair treatment of users	Low	26	19.1
	Moderate	17	12.5
	High	93	68.4
Lack of awareness of ethical issues	Low	28	20.6
	Moderate	13	9.6
	High	95	69.9
Lack of competency	Low	27	19.9
	Moderate	12	8.8
	High	97	71.3
Individual values and beliefs	Low	31	22.8
	Moderate	9	6.6
	High	96	70.6

professionals on ethical issues, and empowering them for decision making when faced with ethical challenge during service delivery. This is also discussed by one senior professional as follows;

> Work experience helps us navigate daily ethical challenges, but regular ethical training remains essential for improving our decisions and service quality. (Respondent University 1)

Thus, academic libraries should not only recognize the value of professional experience but also prioritize continuous ethical training and empower professionals to make informed decisions when faced with ethical challenges, thereby strengthening ethical practices in service delivery.

The findings regarding low morale as a factor affecting ethical practices reveal that 69% of respondents reported having high morale, while 22% indicated experiencing low morale, which may hinder ethical behavior. This suggests that low morale among

information professionals can contribute to unethical practices, increased stress, and reduced commitment to ethical standards, ultimately compromising the quality of library services. As indicated in a study by Kendrick (2021), low morale among public service professionals significantly affects ethical practices by shaping organizational culture, weakening leadership effectiveness, and diminishing the perceived value of the profession.

These demographic factors interact with reported levels of morale, management enforcement, training, guidelines, and personal values. For instance, despite a workforce dominated by experienced professionals, (22.8%) still reported low morale, and (22.1%) indicated inadequate enforcement by management, both of which can compromise ethical behavior. Similarly, while around (70%) reported adequate ethical training, guidelines, and competency, about (20%) still perceived deficiencies in these areas, showing that experience and qualification alone do not guarantee ethical service delivery without continuous institutional support.

Moreover, individual values and beliefs aligned well with ethical standards for (70.6%) of respondents, yet (22.8%) reported low alignment, hinting at personal factors that might conflict with professional ethics, regardless of age or experience. Hence, such misalignment could affect their ability to consistently apply ethical principles in service delivery. As a result, there is a need to address institutional policies that help professionals reflect on and harmonize their values with the expectations of the profession. This is noted by one director as follows;

> As library managers, we are responsible for developing a culture of continuous ethical reflection and discussion. We are committed to strengthening policies, offering regular ethics training, and supporting staff in aligning personal values and professional standards. (Respondents, University 4)

Thus, these findings suggest that while demographic factors such as age, gender, education, and work experience provide a foundation for ethical practices, they are not sufficient on their own. The study suggests that continuous ethical training, strong management enforcement, and efforts to sustain high morale are critical in shaping ethical practices in service delivery (Table 2).

4.1. Demographic and organizational factors influencing ethical practices in library service delivery

The analysis examined various demographic and organizational factors influencing ethical practices in library service delivery.

4.1.1. Gender

The findings indicate that both male and female respondents show a high level of ethical practice, with no significant association between gender and ethical practices as evidenced by the Chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 1.644$, $p = 0.439$). The findings align with a study of Maholani (2020) and Ali et al. (2024), which shows that shows no significant association between gender and ethical practices. This suggests that gender does not play a critical role in determining ethical behavior among the respondents. In this

Table 2. Association between socio-demographic characteristics and ethical practices.

		Low		Moderate		High			
Variables	Categories	n	%	n	%	n	%	$\chi^2(4)$	P-value
Gender	Male	14	25.5	8	14.5	33	40.4	1.644	0.439
	Female	19	23.5	19	23.5	43	59.6		
Age group	Less than 30 years	8	24.2	5	15.2	20	24.3	13.443	.097
	30-34 years	12	26.7	13	28.9	20	33.1		
	35-39 years	3	12.5	5	20.8	16	17.6		
	40-44years	3	15.0	2	10.0	15	14.7		
	Above 45 years	7	50.0	2	14.3	5	10.3		
Education level	PhD	2	20.0	1	10.0	7	7.4	3.079	.799
	Masters	7	35.0	4	20.0	9	14.7		
	First degree	13	24.5	12	22.6	28	39.0		
	Diploma	11	20.8	10	18.9	32	39.0		
	Other level	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0		
Work experience in the library	Less than 2 years	2	11.8	5	29.4	10	12.5	9.015	.341
	2-5 years	8	40.0	1	5.0	11	14.7		
	6-10 years	6	18.2	6	18.2	21	24.3		
	11-15 years	11	24.4	12	26.7	22	33.1		
	Above 15 years	6	28.6	3	14.3	12	15.4		
Morale	Low	15	16	0	15	16	0	123.468	.297
	Moderate	7	3	1	7	3	1		
	High	0	3	91	0	3	91		
Adequate enforcement by the library management	Low	16	14	0	16	14	0	127.600	.000
	Moderate	6	6	0	6	6	0		
	High	0	2	92	0	2	92		
Adequate ethical training	Low	16	13	0	16	13	0	123.977	.000
	Moderate	6	6	0	6	6	0		
	High	0	3	92	0	3	92		
Adequate ethical guidelines	Low	13	16	0	13	16	0	134.091	.000
	Moderate	9	4	0	9	4	0		
	High	0	2	92	0	2	92		
Fair treatment of users	Low	12	14	0	12	14	0	126.275	.000
	Moderate	10	6	1	10	6	1		
	High	0	2	91	0	2	91		
Awareness of ethical issues	Low	16	12	0	16	12	0	125.022	.000
	Moderate	6	7	0	6	7	0		
	High	0	3	92	0	3	92		
Competency	Low	17	10	0	17	10	0	121.768	.000
	Moderate	5	7	0	5	7	0		
	High	0	5	92	0	5	92		
Individual values and beliefs	Low	18	13	0	18	13	0	121.836	0
	Moderate	4	5	0	4	5	0		
	High	0	4	92	0	4	92		

context, the findings suggest that gender differences do not strongly influence ethical practices.

4.1.2. Age group

The findings on age aspects show that higher ethical practices were reported among older respondents, aged 40–45 years (75.0%), and those aged 35–40 years (66.7%) also reported high ethical practices. In contrast, above 45 years (35.7%) of those reported the same. The Chi-square result ($\chi^2 = 13.443$, $p = 0.097$) suggests a marginal, but not statistically significant, relationship between age and ethical practice. This may imply that experience contributes to ethical practice, but age alone is not a determining factor. This is observed during FGDs as follows;

> In my experience, it's not age alone, but the experience, guidance, and training gained over time that strengthen our ethical judgment and commitment to ethical service (Respondent, University 1)

4.1.3. Education level

The findings on aspects of education reveal that respondents with first degrees (39.0%) and diplomas (39.0%) reported the highest levels of ethical practice, while those with master's degrees (14.7%) and PhDs (7.4%) reported the lowest. The findings indicate that respondents with diploma and degree have highest ethical practices because this group are among of the service providers in academic libraries compared with respondents of higher level of education like Masters and PhDs. This is contrary to a study by Mushi et al. (2023) who noted that higher level of education might leads to competency in providing service delivery. Thus, the findings implies that respondents with Master's and PhDs qualifications might hold leadership positions or focus more on teaching and administrative duties, limiting their direct involvement in service delivery. The Chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 3.079$, $p = 0.799$) indicates no significant association between educational level and ethical practice. This aligns with findings by Mwilongo et al. (2024) and Kuhumba, Molewijk, et al. (2025), who noted that higher academic qualifications do not necessarily correlate with ethical practice. These findings indicate that ethical practices in academic libraries is influenced by factors beyond formal education, such as institutional culture, personal values, ongoing ethics training, and practical experience. Therefore, results highlight the need to promote ethical practices across all educational levels, including among those with advanced degrees.

4.1.4. Work experience

The findings on work experience show that those with 11 to 15 years are more experienced (33.1%) compared to those with less than 5 years (14.7%) and those with more than 15 years (15.4%). This implies that the mid-level experience group is likely to be actively involved in daily library operations and service delivery, which may enhance their ability to apply ethical practices effectively. Those with longer experience may contribute to improved moral reasoning, allowing for better decision-making in complex situations. Thus, the association between work experience and ethical practice was not statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 9.015$, $p = 0.341$); however, mid-level experience likely contributes to moral reasoning and decision-making in daily tasks. This is also observed in a study by Mwilongo et al. (2020), which reveals that mid-level experience may enhance moral reasoning and decision-making in library services, potentially improving the application of ethical practices.

4.1.5. Low morale

The findings show that respondents with high morale overwhelmingly reported high ethical practice (91%). The Chi-square result ($\chi^2 = 123.468$, $p = 0.297$) suggests no significant association, yet the trend highlights that morale is an important factor in promoting ethical behavior. This implies that while the statistical test did not find a significant association between morale and ethical practice, the descriptive trend is still meaningful. The high percentage (91%) of respondents with high morale reporting strong ethical practices

suggests morale plays a crucial role in encouraging ethical practice. Hence, the high morale among library professionals could be a factor in enhancing ethical practices and improving the quality of library service delivery. This is noted in FGDs.

> When we feel motivated and valued in our work, it becomes easier to adhere to ethical standards because we take pride in the service we provide. (Respondent University 2)

Therefore, the findings highlight the need for academic libraries to create supportive, motivating work environments that can enhance professionals' morale, thereby ensuring stronger adherence to ethical practices and improving the overall quality of library service delivery.

4.1.6. Adequate enforcement by management

The findings show that high ethical practice (92%) was reported where respondents perceived adequate enforcement of ethical standards by management. A strong, significant association was found ($\chi^2 = 127.600$, $p = 0.000$), underscoring the vital role of institutional enforcement in shaping ethical practices during service delivery. This highlights that ethical practices in library services are not driven by individual values alone, but are strongly influenced by the leadership's commitment to ethical practices adhered to by professionals during service delivery. During FGDs and interviews was noted that;

> We expect management not only to enforce ethical standards, but also to actively support continuous training and workshops to help strengthen our understanding of ethical practice during service delivery. (Respondents, University 2)

While the response of one director shows that;

> Without strong enforcement, ethical guidelines are just words on paper. It is our duty as leaders to ensure these standards are followed so that users can trust our services. (Respondent, University 4)

4.1.7. Adequate ethical training and guidelines

The findings show that adequate ethical training is strongly linked to high ethical practices. There was a significant association ($\chi^2 = 123.977$, $p = 0.000$), with 92% of respondents who received adequate training reporting high ethical practice. The findings align with a study of Muneja et al. (2024), which emphasizes that professionals require various training types, including ethical training, to enhance their competencies. Therefore, while the findings highlight regular and effective training to boost ethical compliance, it is essential to consider that not all professionals may have equal access to such training opportunities, potentially leading to disparities in ethical practices. Additionally, the study found that adequate ethical guidelines play a crucial role in shaping ethical behavior. A significant association was observed ($\chi^2 = 134.091$, $p = 0.000$), with 92% of those who reported having adequate guidelines indicating high ethical practice. This reflects the importance of clear, accessible, and well-communicated ethical standards in guiding staff behavior and decision-making during service delivery. This is also supported by one director as follows:

> You know, we have had various guidelines, but we do not have ethical guidelines. Therefore, there is a team preparing them, and I think this will help in decision-making during service delivery. (Respondent, University 1)

Therefore, the study highlights the need for academic libraries to ensure regular review of ethical standards to guide professionals during service delivery.

4.1.8. Fairness and awareness as of ethical practice

The findings highlight that fairness in service delivery and awareness of ethical issues are central to promoting high ethical standards among information professionals. A significant relationship was observed between fairness and ethical practice ($\chi^2 = 126.275$, $p = 0.000$), where 91% of respondents reported high ethical practice in contexts with low levels of unfair treatment of users. This underscores the importance of equitable and respectful service delivery in upholding ethical standards. This is also noted by Kumbo et al. (2024) noted that fairness is the foundation of ethical practice, particularly during service delivery. Perhaps a lack of awareness of ethical issues was significantly associated with lower ethical practice. The analysis ($\chi^2 = 125.022$, $p = 0.000$) revealed that respondents with greater awareness of ethical matters reported higher ethical practices. This demonstrates the critical role of ethical awareness initiatives in fostering integrity and professionalism in library service delivery. On the other hand, the qualitative findings show that during FGDs;

> I believe that if we are allowed to attend workshops and training on awareness programs, it will help to address ethical issues, which are essential in providing services to our users. (Respondent, University 2)

4.1.9. Competency and personal values of ethical practice

The findings indicate that both professionals' competency and alignment of individual values with professional ethics play a crucial role in fostering ethical practices in service delivery. There was a strong, significant association between perceived competency and ethical practice ($\chi^2 = 121.768$, $p = 0.000$), where high ethical practice was reported in contexts where competency was regarded as high. This suggests that building and sustaining staff competencies directly enhances ethical service delivery.

In addition, individual values and beliefs were significantly associated with ethical practice ($\chi^2 = 121.836$, $p = 0.000$). The data showed that where personal values aligned well with professional ethics, 92% of respondents reported high ethical practice. This highlights the importance of promoting ethical culture and ensuring that individual values resonate with institutional ethical standards (Table 3).

4.2. Factors influencing ethical practices among information professionals

4.2.1. Model confirmation of ethical practice levels

The ordinal logistic regression model confirms that there are significant differences between low, moderate, and high levels of ethical practices, as shown by the highly significant thresholds ($p = 0.000$). This indicates that the levels of ethical practices among information professionals are well defined and that the model variables help to explain these variations. The significance of the thresholds suggests that ethical practices can be meaningfully categorized and that certain factors contribute to a shift from lower to higher levels of ethical conduct in service delivery.

Table 3. Ordinal logistic regression model to examine factors influencing ethical practices among information professionals.

							95% Confidence Interval	
	Factors	Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Threshold	Ethical practices = Low vs High	5.060	0.893	32.135	1	0.000	3.311	6.810
	Ethical practices = Moderate vs High	6.129	0.918	44.607	1	0.000	4.330	7.927
Location	Work experience	0.504	0.857	0.347	1	0.556	−1.174	2.183
	Gender (Male vs Female)	−0.703	0.627	1.256	1	0.262	−1.931	0.526
	Age	0.504	0.857	0.347	1	0.556	−1.174	2.183
	Morale	−10.14	1.292	61.673	1	0.012	−0.812	0.333
	Adequate enforcement	0.719	0.287	6.276	1	0.012	0.156	1.281
	Adequate ethical training	0.660	0.285	5.364	1	0.021	0.101	1.219
	Adequate ethical guidelines	0.476	0.282	2.857	1	0.091	−0.076	1.028
	Fair treatment	0.131	0.297	0.196	1	0.658	−0.450	0.713
	Awareness of ethical practices	0.498	0.270	3.417	1	0.065	−0.030	1.027
	Competency	0.394	0.253	2.414	1	0.120	−0.103	0.890
	Individual values	0.308	0.277	1.238	1	0.266	−0.234	0.850

Link function: Logit.
Model Fitting Information (-2Log Likelihood = 220.580, X2 = 153.522, df = 8, P-value = 0.000).
Goodness of fit (χ^2=347.547, df = 456, P-value = 1.000).
Pseudo R-Square (Cox&Snell = 67.7%, Negelkerke = 71.8%, Mcfaden =0.39.6%).
Parallelism ((-2Log Likelihood = 204.390, χ^2=16.190, df = 24, P-value = 0.881).

4.2.2. Institutional factors shaping ethical practice

Institutional factors played a critical role in predicting ethical practices. Adequate enforcement by management (Estimate = 0.719, $p = 0.012$) and sufficient ethical training (Estimate = 0.660, $p = 0.021$) were both significant positive contributors. This indicates that ethical practices are more likely when library management actively enforces rules and when professionals receive appropriate ethical training. These findings highlight that, beyond individual attributes, the organizational culture and leadership commitment to ethics are essential for ensuring ethical service delivery. These findings align with a study by Ackim et al. (2024), which reveals that institutional preparedness and educational support were identified as more critical factors affecting integrity and ethical practices. The findings support the need to strengthen institutional support for adherence to rules, and training may lead to better ethical behavior among information professionals.

4.2.3. Low morale on ethical practices

In contrast, low morale had a significant negative association with ethical practices (Estimate = −10.14, $p = 0.012$). This result indicates that when library staff experience low morale, their capacity or willingness to engage in ethical practices is greatly diminished. Low morale may stem from dissatisfaction with work conditions, poor leadership, or lack of recognition, which in turn can decrease motivation to adhere to ethical standards. This underscores the necessity for library management to invest in staff well-being, recognition programs, and positive work environments to foster both morale and ethical behavior.

4.2.4. Demographic and individual factors

The findings indicate that variables such as gender ($p = 0.262$), work experience ($p = 0.556$), and age ($p = 0.556$) did not show significant effects on ethical practices. The

Table 4. Descriptive statistics on strategies to ensure ethical practice in providing services.

Strategies	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Training for staff	107	19	6	1	3
Establishment of a code of ethics in the library profession	96	27	9	3	1
Presence of clear ethical guidelines	37	12	1	5	81
Promote a culture of honesty and ethical behavior.	41	9	2	3	81
Regular supervision within the library	37	12	1	3	83
Establishment of the ethics committee within a library	34	11	2	3	86
Integrating ethics education into the library curriculum	27	11	2	5	91

findings imply that the p-values for these variables are greater than the common significance level (typically 0.05), suggesting that any observed differences or relationships for these variables with ethical practices could likely have occurred by chance. Similarly, while factors like adequate ethical guidelines ($p = 0.091$) and awareness of ethical issues ($p = 0.065$) approached significance, their influence may depend on how they interact with training and enforcement structures. The non-significance of unfair treatment of users ($p = 0.658$) and individual values and beliefs ($p = 0.266$) suggests that personal attitudes or isolated behaviors may have less predictive power compared to systemic and organizational factors.

Therefore, the factors influencing ethical practices can be categorized into low, moderate, and high levels, and some of the factors help explain these differences. The results showed that people with more years of education are more likely to practice ethics well, as education exposes them to important knowledge about ethics. Likewise, support from the institution, especially good management enforcement of rules and providing ethical training, strongly encourages ethical practices in academic libraries. On the other hand, low morale among staff reduces ethical practices, showing that professional well-being needs to be considered. Meanwhile, personal characteristics like age, gender, and work experience did not have a strong effect on ethical behavior on their own; instead, institutional and educational support played a bigger role. This is also supported in a study by Santalla-Banderali and Malavé (2022) noted that personal characteristics alone do not strongly dictate ethical behavior compared to other factors. Thus, these findings highlight the importance of promoting staff well-being and creating supportive institutional environments through training, management enforcement, and positive work conditions rather than relying on personal characteristics like age, gender, or work experience to ensure ethical behavior (Table 4).

4.3. Strategies for promoting ethical practices among information professionals

4.3.1. Training for staff

The findings highlight that staff training was strongly agreed upon as a strategy for promoting ethical practices, with 107 respondents strongly agreeing and 19 agreeing. This suggests that information professionals recognize the importance of continuous capacity building in upholding ethical standards, refining moral reasoning, and equipping staff to address ethical dilemmas effectively. These findings align with a study by Muneja et al. (2024) that emphasizes the need for training for effective service delivery. The minimal disagreement (only 4 respondents) highlights of continuous training and

workshops for professionals on understanding ethical practices. This was emphasized during FGDs and one director's views;

> I have learned about ethical issues through reading on various online platforms as well as through experience. Therefore, we see the need to have in-house training so that we can share experiences (Repondents, University 3).
>
> We have started the practice of in-house training on some issues like referencing, plagiarism, and information searching. In the same way, we will ensure that we also remind each other about these ethical issues (Repondents, University 1)

4.3.2. Establishment of a code of ethics in the library profession

There was a similarly strong endorsement for the establishment of a code of ethics in the library profession, with 96 respondents strongly agreeing and 27 agreeing. This indicates that a formal code is considered essential in guiding professional conduct and ensuring consistent, accountable practices. However, the few respondents of the 04 respondents recorded as "strongly disagree" suggest they might understand the meaning of the code of ethics. This is discussed during an interview with one director as follows:

> I think there is a need for the Tanzania Library Board and the Tanzania Library Association to consider how we, too, can have a code of ethics, just as other countries have done (Respondent, University 3).

Therefore, the study suggests the need for a code of ethics for library professionals while continuing to provide education for the professionals with a low understanding.

4.3.3. Presence of clear ethical guidelines

On the other hand, strategies like the presence of clear ethical guidelines and promoting a culture of honesty and ethical behavior received mixed responses. For clear ethical guidelines, 37 respondents strongly agreed and 12 agreed, while a large number (81) strongly disagreed, which signals that many may feel existing guidelines are either unclear, insufficient, or poorly communicated. Similarly, promoting honesty and ethical behavior attracted 41 strongly agreeing and 9 agreeing responses, but again, 83 strongly disagreed. This could indicate doubt about whether simply encouraging values, without structural reinforcement, is enough to influence behavior meaningfully. While in FGDs, respondents show that;

> We kindly request to be involved in the development of these policies because we are the actual service providers. This will greatly help to ensure that the policy is practical and applicable. (Respondents, University 2)

Hence, the findings highlight those ethical guidelines are of significant importance in guiding professionals during service delivery despite their low involvement in preparing those guidelines.

4.3.4. Other strategies

Other structural strategies, such as regular supervision, establishment of an ethics committee, and integrating ethics education into the library curriculum, were moderately supported. Regular supervision had (37 strongly agreeing and 12 agreeing), while (86 strongly disagreed), again revealing possible dissatisfaction with current supervisory practices or

doubt about their effectiveness in fostering ethics. The establishment of ethics committees (34 strongly agree, 11 agree) and ethics education in curricula (27 strongly agree, 11 agree) were seen as positive, though not as strongly as training or codes of ethics. The strong disagreement for these strategies suggests that respondents may feel these measures, while important, need to be backed by real authority, resources, or cultural change to be effective.

4.4. Study limitation

Despite the study achieved its objectives, some of the limitations should be acknowledged. First, the research adopted a cross-sectional design which limited the ability to capture changes in ethical practices over time while a longitudinal study could provide deeper insight into how practices evolve. Second, the study focused on four public universities only, which, although large and representative, may not fully reflect the situation in private universities and all of academic libraries in Tanzania. Perhaps, the study focused on information professionals who are the service provider and left to include users of academic libraries, whose experiences could have provided complementary perspectives on the ethical practices of information professionals.

4.5. Future research

Future research should consider adopting longitudinal approaches to examine changes in ethical practices over time. Researchers should focus on including private universities and for public libraries should include other regions in the country could provide more generalizable insights. Moreover, including library users as respondents would offer a more comprehensive understanding of ethical practices in service.

5. Conclusion and recommendation

The study examined the factors influencing ethical practices among information professionals in academic libraries during service delivery. It is noted that demographic factor such as age, gender, and work experience do not significantly predict ethical practice. Instead, ethical training, staff morale, and strong institutional support seem as crucial for application of ethical practice. Hence, suggesting effective enforcement of clear ethical policies, presence of accessible ethical guidelines, a positive organizational culture, and ongoing professional development of information professionals needed to ensure ethical practices in academic libraries. Likewise, the institutional and individual factors, highlight the importance of promoting ethical training, supportive leadership, and participatory policymaking to ensure application of ethical practice for effective service delivery in academic libraries.

6. Recommendation

I. The study recommends continuous training on academic libraries for professionals regardless of demographic characteristics like age, gender, and work experience to ensure application of ethical practices for effective service delivery.

II. The study recommends that the Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB) and the Tanzania Library Association (TLA) should take the lead in formulating a formal code of ethics aligned to the Tanzanian context, learning from international best practices.
III. The study highlights that library management should consider forming ethics committees that can guide professionals to oversee ethical compliance and provide advice on complex ethical issues arising during service delivery
IV. The study recommends that academic libraries involve Information professionals, especially service providers, during the development and review of ethical policies and guidelines to ensure their relevance and applicability.
V. The study highlights the need for academic libraries to review existing ethical guidelines, refine, and communicate them effectively to ensure they are clear, comprehensive, and actionable in daily service delivery.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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CHAPTER SIX

PAPER V

Role of Ethical Practices in Enhancing Library Service Delivery among Information Professionals in Academic Libraries, Tanzania

[1]Beth Kachota
Department of Informatics and Information Technology, Sokoine University of Agriculture
[2]Dr. Ronald Bernard
Department of Informatics and Information Technology, Sokoine University of Agriculture
[3]Dr. Silver Hokororo
Department of Business Management, Sokoine University Agriculture

Abstract
This study examined the role of ethical practices in enhancing service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania. It focused on confidentiality, personal privacy protection, equal access to information, accuracy in information provision, and intellectual property compliance, and their influence on library service quality. Academic libraries continue to face challenges such as inconsistent service quality, limited reliability, and inadequate infrastructure, which affect effective service delivery. The study adopted a cross-sectional mixed-methods research design involving 159 information professionals from four academic libraries. A total of 136 valid questionnaires were returned, giving an 85.5% response rate. Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions. Reliability testing yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.79, indicating acceptable internal consistency, while construct validity was confirmed through Exploratory Factor Analysis. Findings revealed that ethical practices significantly improve service delivery in academic libraries. Equal access to information and intellectual property compliance enhanced accessibility and fairness in service

provision. However, accuracy of information showed a weaker direct effect on perceived service quality. The study further found that ethical knowledge is acquired through training workshops, formal education, peer mentorship, institutional policies, and self-learning. The study concludes that ethical practices are essential for improving academic library service delivery by strengthening reliability, accessibility, and user trust. It recommends continuous professional development, improved ICT infrastructure, strengthened ethical guidelines, and increased institutional support for ethical capacity building among information professionals to enhance service quality in academic libraries in Tanzania.

Keywords: Ethical Practices, Information Professionals, Service Delivery, Academic Libraries Tanzania.

1. Introduction

Professional ethical conduct among information professionals (IPs), particularly in academic libraries, forms the foundation for effective and high-quality service delivery (Maryna, 2025). Academic libraries support teaching, learning, and research activities, and the achievement of these goals largely depends on how ethically library personnel perform their responsibilities. Scholars such as Hranchak (2022) and Suman and Peelwan (2024) emphasize that ethical standards including equitable access to information, information accuracy, user privacy protection, and respect for intellectual property are essential for improving library service quality. These ethical responsibilities are closely linked to the broader mission of advancing knowledge and intellectual development within academic institutions (War, 2019). Consequently, adherence to professional ethics strengthens the ability of library personnel to provide reliable, fair, and user-centered services in the digital environment (Awuo et al., 2024). Academic libraries therefore achieve their service goals when service provision aligns with user needs and professional ethical standards.

The importance of ethics in librarianship can be traced to the social responsibility debates of the 1960s, which emphasized the need for

libraries to respond fairly and effectively to users' information needs (DuMont, 1991; Eid & Hussin, 2023). During this period, ethical principles were recognized as important mechanisms for preventing bias, censorship, plagiarism, and discrimination in information services. In the contemporary information environment, professional ethics remain essential for ensuring quality and user-oriented service delivery (Singh, 2024). Information professionals are now required to operate within increasingly complex technological, legal, and professional environments that demand accountability, flexibility, and adherence to ethical standards (Albee, Campbell, & Martincick, 2019; Omigie, 2020).

Despite the growing recognition of professional ethics, several studies indicate that ethical compliance in library service delivery remains inadequate. Empirical studies by Tsompanakis (2014) and Mfaume and Bilinga (2024) demonstrate that insufficient emphasis on professional ethics negatively affects library service quality. Similarly, Igun (2013) and Phillips, Oyewole and Akinbo (2018) report that weak ethical orientation contributes to challenges such as unequal access to information, compromised confidentiality, and poor service attitudes. Although academic libraries employ qualified professionals, inconsistencies in the application of ethical standards continue to weaken service effectiveness. McMenemy, Poulter, and Burton (2014), Samek (2017) and Mahadevagouda and MS (2023) further argue that many challenges affecting library service quality are associated with limited commitment to professional ethical principles.

Professional associations in Library and Information Science (LIS) continue to emphasize the importance of ethics in improving library services. This commitment is reflected in professional codes of conduct, ethics committees, and the integration of ethics into LIS curricula worldwide (Luo, 2016; Pérez Pulido & Teruel, 2022). Nevertheless, studies specifically examining how professional ethics influence library service delivery remain limited. Young (2020) and Malanga et al. (2024) argue that further research is needed to explore shared ethical values among information professionals and their influence on service outcomes. Persistent

conflicts concerning access to information, confidentiality, and fairness in service provision further demonstrate the need to strengthen ethical practices within academic libraries.

In the African context, ethical conduct is widely recognized as essential for professional integrity and quality service delivery in libraries and related information institutions (Atanda, Owolabi, & Ugbala, 2021; Yusuf, 2021; Mamokhere, Musitha, & Netshidzivhani, 2022). International organizations such as the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions advocate ethical service provision and emphasize the responsibility of information professionals to uphold professional standards in facilitating access to information (Ndumbaro, 2018; Raju, Chu, & Cunningham, 2023). Ejedafiru and Chukwuma (2020) further affirm that professional ethics strengthen the effectiveness and credibility of library services.

In the Tanzanian context, academic libraries continue to experience challenges related to ethical compliance, including inconsistent service quality, inadequate ethical training, limited awareness of professional ethics, compromised confidentiality, and unequal access to information resources (Ndumbaro, 2018; Kipasika, 2023; Kahumba, 2024). These challenges affect the effectiveness of library services in supporting teaching, learning, and research activities within higher learning institutions. Although professional ethics are increasingly recognized within librarianship**,** limited empirical studies in Tanzania have specifically examined how ethical practices influence service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries (Malanga et al., 2024; Mfaume & Bilinga, 2024). This demonstrates the existence of a contextual and empirical research gap that requires further investigation.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Professional ethics are essential for effective library service delivery because they guide information professionals in ensuring equitable access to information, confidentiality, accuracy, intellectual property protection, and fairness in user services (Nambobi et al., 2023; Nabossa et al., 2025). Despite the existence

of institutional guidelines and professional training in Library and Information Science, academic libraries continue to experience challenges related to unequal access to information resources, compromised user privacy, inconsistent service quality, and user dissatisfaction (Abubakar, 2021; Rehman et al., 2025). These challenges reduce the ability of academic libraries to effectively support teaching, learning, and research activities.

In Tanzania, academic libraries are expected to uphold ethical values such as accountability, integrity, transparency, and fairness in service provision (Ankrah, 2023). However, studies by Ndumbaro (2018), Tweve (2023), and Kaddu and Sekkito (2023) indicate that the contribution of professional ethics to library service delivery has not been adequately emphasized. Consequently, information professionals continue to face challenges associated with inadequate ethical training and limited ethical awareness, which negatively affect the quality, consistency, and fairness of library services (Kachota et al., 2025).

Although previous studies have identified ethical challenges within libraries, most have concentrated on describing ethical issues rather than examining how professional ethics can improve service delivery (Mwilongo, 2024; Singh, 2024). As a result, limited empirical evidence exists regarding the role of ethical practices in strengthening service quality within Tanzanian academic libraries. Therefore, this study examines how ethical practices contribute to enhancing service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries.

1.2 Specific Objectives

The study aimed to:

i. Assess the role of ethical practices performed by information professionals in enhancing service delivery in academic libraries.
ii. Identify the sources through which information professionals acquire knowledge of ethical practices in academic libraries.
iii. Examine challenges affecting the application of ethical practices in academic libraries.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Ethical Practices and Library Service Delivery

Professional ethics are widely recognized as fundamental to effective library service delivery because they guide information professionals in maintaining fairness, accountability, confidentiality, and equitable access to information**.** Studies by Owushi and Anyalebechi (2024) and Mahadevagouda and MS (2023) indicate that adherence to ethical standards such as intellectual freedom, honesty, impartiality, and respect for user privacy strengthens trust between library personnel and users, thereby improving the reliability and quality of services offered. These studies further demonstrate that ethical compliance supports institutional credibility and promotes user confidence in academic libraries.

Globally, academic libraries have increasingly integrated ethical standards into daily operations through professional codes of conduct, institutional policies, digital information management guidelines, and user privacy regulations. Libraries in developed and developing countries have adopted ethical practices aimed at ensuring equitable information access, protecting intellectual property rights, safeguarding confidentiality, and promoting academic integrity (IFLA, 2023; Pérez Pulido & Teruel, 2022). The implementation of these practices has contributed to improved user satisfaction, transparency in information services, and effective management of digital resources.

With the rapid growth of electronic information systems, ethical concerns associated with copyright compliance, plagiarism, data privacy, and digital resource licensing have become increasingly important within academic libraries (Prashar et al., 2024). Consequently, information professionals are expected to apply ethical principles consistently while managing both print and electronic information resources. Effective ethical practice therefore requires not only awareness of professional values but also the practical ability to apply those principles during service delivery.

Although previous studies have shown that professional ethics positively influence user satisfaction and institutional integrity (Akter

& Barua, 2025; Kachota et al., 2025), limited empirical attention has been given to how ethical standards are implemented in everyday library operations, particularly within Tanzanian academic libraries. Furthermore, many existing studies focus mainly on conceptual discussions of ethics without adequately examining users' perceptions of ethical service delivery. This demonstrates the need for context-specific research examining how ethical practices contribute to service quality, reliability, confidentiality, and accessibility in academic libraries in Tanzania.

2.2 Sources of Ethical Knowledge among Information Professionals

Ethical knowledge refers to the understanding and awareness of professional values, ethical principles, and acceptable conduct within librarianship, while ethical practices involve the actual application of those principles during professional service delivery**.** Ethical knowledge therefore forms the basis upon which information professionals develop ethical behavior in their daily work activities.

Existing literature indicates that information professionals acquire ethical knowledge from both formal and informal sources (Yap et al., 2025). Formal education through Library and Information Science (LIS) programmes is widely recognized as a primary source of ethical awareness because it introduces concepts such as confidentiality, intellectual freedom, equity of access, accountability, and professional responsibility through academic coursework and training (Nonthacumjane, 2021; Singh, 2024). Professional organizations also strengthen ethical awareness through codes of ethics, professional guidelines, and standards that guide professional conduct within academic libraries (IFLA, 2023; Pérez Pulido & Teruel, 2022).

In addition, continuing professional development activities including workshops, seminars, conferences, and in-service training contribute significantly to enhancing ethical competence among information professionals, particularly in addressing emerging issues related to digital resources, academic integrity, artificial

intelligence, and data privacy (Hranchak, 2022; Suman & Peelwan, 2024). Institutional documents such as staff manuals, university regulations, and library policies further assist in translating general ethical principles into practical workplace responsibilities (Afolayan, 2022).

Informal learning mechanisms including peer interaction, mentorship, observation, and professional experience also play an important role in shaping ethical understanding, especially in institutions with limited formal training opportunities (War, 2019; Nambobi et al., 2023). These mechanisms enable information professionals to develop practical approaches for addressing ethical challenges encountered during service provision.

Despite the existing literature, most studies have concentrated on identifying sources of ethical knowledge without critically examining how these sources influence ethical behavior and service delivery outcomes in practice (Tkachenko & Hedayati, 2022; Roy et al., 2024). In the Tanzanian context, limited studies have explored the relationship between ethical knowledge acquisition and the actual application of ethical principles during library service delivery. This gap highlights the need for further research examining how different sources of ethical knowledge contribute to professional conduct and effective service delivery in academic libraries.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by Duty-Based Theory developed by Immanuel Kant, which emphasizes that individuals are morally obligated to act according to ethical principles and professional responsibilities regardless of the consequences (Adu & Mensah, 2023). The theory is relevant to this study because it explains how ethical obligations influence professional conduct and decision-making among information professionals in academic libraries.

Duty-Based Theory emphasizes principles such as honesty, fairness, accountability, respect for rights, and adherence to professional rules. In librarianship, these principles are reflected through responsibilities such as ensuring equitable access to

information, protecting user privacy, maintaining information accuracy, and respecting intellectual property rights (Balasaheb & Kulkarani, 2025). The theory therefore provides a useful foundation for understanding how ethical obligations contribute to effective library service delivery.

The theory further assumes that ethical behavior depends on individuals understanding their moral duties and consistently applying them in professional practice. In the context of this study, information professionals are expected to acquire ethical knowledge through sources such as training programmes, workshops, institutional policies, staff manuals, professional experience, and peer learning (Muneja et al., 2024). These sources strengthen ethical awareness and enhance the ability of professionals to apply ethical principles appropriately during service delivery.

Although Duty-Based Theory provides a strong moral foundation, critics argue that it lacks flexibility because strict adherence to rules may sometimes produce negative outcomes in complex situations. To address this limitation, the study incorporates Manson's conceptual framework, which emphasizes the practical application of ethical knowledge within real service environments. The framework integrates ethical knowledge acquisition mechanisms such as training, workshops, institutional policies, peer learning, and professional experience as factors influencing ethical conduct among information professionals.

The framework further illustrates the relationship between ethical practices including accurate information provision, equitable access to information, privacy protection, and respect for intellectual property rights and service delivery outcomes such as reliability, confidentiality, and accessibility. This integration strengthens the theoretical foundation of the study by linking ethical knowledge, ethical practices, and effective library service delivery within academic libraries as shown below;

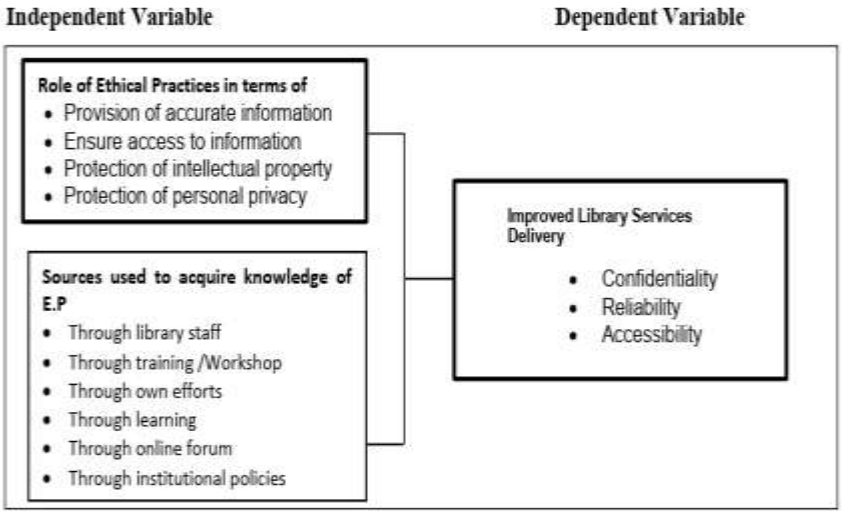


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework on Ethical Practices for Enhancing Library Service Delivery
Source: Researchers Constructs (2024)

Figure 1 above shows that ethical practices performed by information professionals play a fundamental role in ensuring quality service delivery in academic libraries. These practices involve ensuring the role of accurate information, provision of equal access to information, protection of intellectual property and protection of personal privacy are effective implemented in academic libraries. While this is the case, ethical practices are shaped and strengthened by various sources through which information professionals acquire ethical knowledge, including library staff interactions, training and workshops, self-directed learning, and staff manuals and institutional policies (Dube *et al.,* 2024). For instance, knowledge acquired through library staff promotes shared professional values and peer accountability, enabling information professionals to consistently provide accurate and reliable information services. Training programs and workshops enhance awareness of professional codes of ethics and emerging ethical challenges, thereby strengthening professionals' capacity to protect user confidentiality and respect intellectual property rights (Tsankova, 2025). Similarly, self-learning initiatives

such as reading professional guidelines and engaging with scholarly literature empower information professionals to make informed and ethical decisions, particularly in complex service situations. Furthermore, online forums increase knowledge of ethical issues, and sharing of best practices, thereby enhancing ethical practices while institutional policies provide formal guidance that standardizes ethical practices, ensuring that services are delivered in a reliable, confidential, and transparent manner across academic instutions (Ali *et al.,*2025).

Perhaps, when ethical practices are effectively learned and applied, they directly contribute to quality service delivery outcomes. The provision of accurate information enhances service reliability; protection of personal privacy and intellectual property ensures confidentiality and trust; and equitable access to information supports effective decision making by users. Thus, the interaction between ethical practices and sources of ethical knowledge creates a strong ethical practices foundation that enables information professionals to deliver services that are reliable, confidential, and supportive of informed decision making.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a mixed-methods cross-sectional research design to collect data from a population at a single point in time, making it an efficient and cost-effective method for examining relationships among variables (Mehta & Naveed, 2025). This design enabled the integration of quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the influence of ethical practices on library service delivery. The study involved academic libraries from University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Mzumbe University, and University of Dodoma. These universities were purposively selected to reflect differences in institutional maturity, structural complexity, research intensity and strategic positioning within Tanzania's higher education system**.** Institutional maturity was assessed based on the number of years the universities had operated, while structural complexity was determined by

institutional size, administrative structure, and diversity of academic programmes.

The target population comprised information professionals working in the selected academic libraries. A stratified sampling technique was employed to categorize respondents according to their institutions and job roles before administering questionnaires. In addition, purposive sampling was used to select participants for interviews and focus group discussions because of their experience and knowledge relevant to the study objectives. The study involved seven focus group discussions, each consisting of six participants**,** drawn from the selected universities. Key informant interviews involved four library directors, one from each university**,** because of their managerial responsibilities in ensuring ethical standards and service quality within academic libraries.

The total population for the study was 265 respondents. The sample size of 159 respondents was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size determination, and proportional allocation was used to distribute respondents across the participating universities. Quantitative data were collected using questionnaires, while qualitative data were obtained through interviews and focus group discussions. The research instruments were pre-tested using 15 respondents from Jordan University College to determine reliability and improve clarity before the actual data collection. The reliability test using the Spearman-Brown split-half Cronbach's Alpha coefficient yielded a value of 0.79, indicating acceptable internal consistency of the research instrument (Hair *et al.,* 2010).

A questionnaire containing both open-ended and closed-ended questions was distributed to 159 information professionals from UDSM, SUA, MU, and UDOM. A total of 136 questionnaires were correctly completed and returned, resulting in a response rate of 85.5%, which was considered adequate for statistical analysis. Qualitative data were collected through interviews with four key informants and seven focus group discussions involving 42 participants. During the discussions, respondents were given

freedom to express their views openly while the researcher recorded and organized the emerging responses for analysis.

3.1 Statistical Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the assistance of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were computed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree. Inferential statistics, particularly correlation analysis at $p < 0.05$**,** were used to examine relationships between ethical practices and library service delivery.

To establish construct validity, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Component Analysis with varimax rotation was conducted. Items with factor loadings below 0.50 were excluded. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity confirmed the adequacy and suitability of the data for factor analysis. Qualitative data obtained from interviews and focus group discussions were analyzed thematically to complement and triangulate the quantitative findings

3.2 Measurement of Constructs

The study measured key constructs using structured questionnaire items developed in line with the study objectives and variables under investigation. The constructs focused on the role of ethical practices and sources of ethical knowledge among information professionals. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree, where higher mean scores indicated stronger agreement with the statements.

To ensure validity and reliability, Exploratory Factor Analysis and Cronbach's Alpha reliability testing were conducted. A Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.70 and above was considered acceptable**,** indicating adequate internal consistency among the measurement items. Only constructs that met both validity and reliability requirements were retained for further statistical analysis.

4. Findings and Discussion

This study employed a mixed-methods approach involving both quantitative and qualitative data to examine the influence of ethical practices among information professionals on library service delivery in academic libraries. To enhance clarity and transparency, the findings are presented according to the data source. The quantitative findings were derived from questionnaires distributed to 159 information professionals from University of Dar es Salaam, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Mzumbe University, and University of Dodoma. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 136 were correctly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 85.5%**,** which was considered adequate for statistical analysis. Qualitative findings were obtained through interviews and focus group discussions to provide deeper insights and support the quantitative results.

4.1 Role of Ethical Practices Performed by Information Professionals in Service Delivery

This section presents and discusses findings on the role of ethical practices performed by information professionals in service delivery. Ethical practices were examined across four key dimensions: Role of Accurate Information (RAI), Role of Equal Access to Information (REAI), Role of Personal Privacy (RPP), and Role of Intellectual Property (RIP). Respondents rated how frequently these practices were performed using a five-point scale ranging from Never too often.

Table 1: Role of Ethical Practices Performed by Information Professionals in Service Delivery

Ethical Practice Dimension	Item Description	Frequencies				
		Never	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Always**	**Often**
Provision of Accurate Information (RAI)	Verification of information accuracy using valid sources	9	15	42	41	29
	Guiding users in utilizing relevant databases	8	12	34	39	43
	Providing current lists of library resources	7	13	39	41	36
	Removing inaccurate and outdated materials	11	13	49	33	30
	Reading and consulting reference sources	7	6	50	42	31
	Assessing vulnerability of information sources before use	7	9	45	46	29
	Reviewing “About Us” sections to understand information sources	11	7	47	34	37
Ensure Equal Access to Information (REAI)	Guiding users in finding relevant resources	4	10	43	36	43
	Providing information searching skills	4	8	35	43	46
	Ensuring availability of computers and internet access	4	5	43	41	43
	Provision of a list of current materials s to information	6	6	43	38	43
	Providing reference services	5	10	39	39	43
	Marketing library	5	11	42	34	44

	resources					
	Assisting users to locate information resources	5	10	30	44	47
Role of Personal Privacy (RPP)	Restricting sharing of users' search inquiries	15	10	49	27	35
	Restricting Online services	9	11	37	37	42
	Restricting access to user name lists	16	16	22	40	42
	Restricting sharing of borrowing records	14	9	31	40	42
	Restricting sharing of circulation records	12	6	34	39	45
	Restricting disclosure of personal IDs without consent	13	6	25	47	45
Role of Intellectual Property (RIP)	Limiting photocopying per book	23	7	39	30	37
	Providing guidelines on use of library materials	12	9	35	46	34
	Explaining fair use of materials	9	8	40	39	40
	Conducting workshops on proper citation	12	10	42	32	40
	Explaining library policies on use of materials	11	18	35	33	39
	Displaying copyright warnings	20	17	41	30	28
	Assisting users with proper citation	8	7	34	37	50

4.1.1 Role of Accurate Information (RAI)

Findings under the role of accurate Information indicate that information professionals largely adhere to ethical standards that promote accuracy, reliability, and credibility of information services.

A substantial proportion of respondents reported often or always verifying information accuracy using valid sources (41 and 29 respectively), guiding users in utilizing relevant databases (39 always and 43 often), and providing current lists of library resources (41 always and 36 often).

Similarly, practices such as reading and consulting reference sources, assessing the vulnerability of information sources before use, and reviewing “About Us” sections to understand information providers were mostly performed sometimes too often, with relatively low frequencies recorded under never and rarely. However, some practices such as removing inaccurate and outdated materials recorded higher frequencies under sometimes (49), suggesting that while the practice exists, it may not be consistently institutionalized. Thus, the results demonstrate that ethical commitment to information accuracy plays a significant role in enhancing service delivery by ensuring users receive credible and up to date information. These findings align with a study of Sargiotis (2024) which emphasize the commitment to data quality, including the importance of accurate of information. Therefore, the findings recommend for continuous monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure consistent ethical practices during services delivery.

4.1.2 Role of Equal Access to Information (REAI)

Results for the role of equal access to Information reveal strong ethical engagement by information professionals in promoting inclusivity and equity in service delivery. Most respondents indicated that they often or always guide users in finding relevant resources, provide information searching skills, ensure availability of computers and internet access, and assist users in locating information resources. For instance, assisting users to locate information resources recorded the highest often response (47), while providing information searching skills recorded high always (43) and often (46) responses. Marketing library resources and providing reference services also showed strong ethical practice, with minimal responses under never and rarely. These findings imply that information professionals actively support equitable

access to information, thereby reducing information barriers and enhancing effective utilization of library services. This is also noted during qualitative findings as follows;

> *"Some users are not aware of the resources available to them, so we actively promote our databases and reference services to ensure no group is left behind." [Respondents, University1]*

Hence, the findings indicated the role of equal access during service delivery which highlight for the library management to enforce and ensure equal access to information are adhered regardless of the age, background or sex.

4.1.3 Role of Personal Privacy (RPP)

In regard to the role of Personal Privacy, the findings indicate moderate to strong adherence to ethical practices related to confidentiality and user data protection. Practices such as restricting sharing of borrowing records, circulation records, usernames, and disclosure of personal identification without consent were largely performed always or often. For instance, restricting disclosure of personal IDs without consent recorded 47 responses under always and 45 under often.

Nonetheless, relatively higher frequencies under sometimes were observed for restricting sharing of users' search inquiries (49) and restricting online services (37), suggesting inconsistencies in fully enforcing privacy related practices. The presence of notable never and rarely responses in some items signals potential ethical risks related to privacy management, which may undermine user trust if not adequately addressed. This is also emphasized by library director as follows;

> *"Only authorized staff can access user records, and we emphasize confidentiality during staff meetings and training sessions. While much emphasize on whatsup groups to ensure that privacy is highly practiced" [Respondent, university 3]*
>
> This finding highlights the presence of structural measures supporting ethical practices on role of privacy issue during service delivery.

4.1.4 Role of Intellectual Property (RIP)

Findings on the role of intellectual property show mixed levels of ethical practice in protecting intellectual rights. Assisting users with proper citation emerged as a strongly practiced activity, with 50 respondents indicating often and 37 indicating always. Explaining fair use of materials and providing guidelines on the use of library materials also recorded high frequencies under always and often. On the other hand, practices such as limiting photocopying per book and displaying copyright warnings recorded relatively higher frequencies under never, rarely, and sometimes. For example, limiting photocopying per book recorded 23 responses under never, while displaying copyright warnings recorded 20 under never and 17 under rarely. These roles reflect the ethical responsibility of information professionals to balance access to information with respect for legal and moral rights of creators. Gupta & Gupta (2024) noted that libraries' role in navigating intellectual property rights direct aligns with ethical practices in limiting photocopying and displaying copyright notices. These results align with the discussion in qualitative findings as follows.

> *"In our library we allow photocopying only within acceptable limits. This has been very serious issues in our checkpoint, and ensuring that users make photocopying within our library and in some cases, we escort users to make photocopy if our machine is faulty. (Respondent, University 2).*

Hence, the findings suggest that while libraries demonstrate commitment to intellectual property education, the enforcement and visibility of copyright protection measures remain relatively weak, potentially creating gaps between awareness and actual compliance.

4.2 Identifying the Sources Used by Information Professionals to acquire knowledge of Ethical Practices in Academic Libraries

This section presents findings on the sources through which information professionals acquire knowledge of ethical practices in academic libraries. The responses were measured using a five-

point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. The results are summarized below.

Table 2: Sources used by information professionals to acquire knowledge of ethical practices in academic libraries

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Library staff source	52	44	25	10	5
Training/ workshop	72	26	21	6	11
Own efforts	53	39	35	5	4
Others source	44	46	34	7	5
Learning source	66	37	18	8	7
Online forum	50	30	39	8	9

4.2.1 Sources of Knowledge on Ethical Practices

The findings indicate that information professionals rely on multiple and complementary sources to acquire knowledge of ethical practices, with a general tendency toward agreement across most sources. Training workshops emerged as the most influential source of ethical knowledge. A large proportion of respondents strongly agreed (72) or agreed (26) that training workshops contribute significantly to their understanding of ethical practices. This result aligns with Hranchak (2022) and Suman and Peelwan (2024), who argue that continuing professional development is essential for updating ethical implementation, particularly in response to emerging challenges related to digital information use, data privacy, and academic integrity This suggests that formal and structured learning opportunities play a critical role in strengthening ethical practices and professional competence within academic libraries.

Similarly, learning sources (such as formal education, professional courses, or institutional learning programs) recorded high levels of agreement, with 66 respondents strongly agreeing and 37 agreeing. This finding highlights the importance of continuous professional learning in shaping ethical conduct among information professionals. The result is consistent with studies by Nonthacumjane (2021) and Singh (2024), which emphasize that Library and Information Science (LIS) education provides

foundational ethical principles such as confidentiality, equity of access, and professional responsibility. In line with Yap et al. (2025), the findings further demonstrate that ethical knowledge is developed through cumulative learning experiences rather than isolated interventions, underscoring the importance of continuous learning in sustaining ethical standards within the Tanzanian academic library context. This is also noted during FGDs sessions as follows

> *"For me I e learned ethical practices issues through attending professional training such as Tanzania Library association (TLA) and continuous refresher courses, especially on issues of confidentiality and fair treatment of users." (Respondents, University 4).*

This being the case the study, highlighting the need for ongoing professional development programs to reinforce ethical standards in Tanzanian academic libraries.

Additionally, the role of library staff as a source of ethical knowledge was also prominent. A considerable number of respondents either strongly agreed (52) or agreed (44) that colleagues and fellow staff members are key sources of ethical guidance. This implies that peer interaction, mentorship, and shared professional experiences contribute significantly to the internalization of ethical practices. This result is consistent with the findings of War (2019) and Nambobi and Nabossa (2023), who emphasize the influence of informal learning, mentorship, and workplace socialization in strengthening ethical awareness and practice. These findings, indicate the need of peer interaction on gaining knowledge of issues related to library service including ethical issues rather than relying depending on formal training or individual effort.

Furthermore, individual initiatives (own efforts) were identified as an important source, with 53 respondents strongly agreeing and 39 agreeing. This indicates that self-directed learning such as reading professional guidelines, policies, and ethical codes plays a substantial role in enhancing ethical knowledge. This finding

supports the argument by Yap et al. (2025) that ethical competence is not shaped exclusively by formal structures but also by personal responsibility and intrinsic professional motivation. This is emphasized during FDS as follows

> *"While workshops and training are helpful, most of my understanding of ethical practices comes from reading professional materials on my own and reflecting on how to apply them in my daily work." (Respondents, University 2).*

Thus, the findings emphasize that information professionals in Tanzanian academic libraries demonstrate intrinsic motivation and professional responsibility, taking ownership of the ethical practices' knowledge development beyond formal institutional mechanisms.

The category labeled other sources also recorded notable agreement (44 strongly agree and 46 agree), suggesting that information professionals draw ethical knowledge from diverse channels beyond the commonly recognized ones, possibly including professional associations, institutional policies, or external experts. In contrast, online forums showed comparatively mixed responses. While a reasonable number of respondents strongly agreed (50) and agreed (30), a relatively high number remained neutral (39). This suggests that although online platforms contribute to ethical knowledge acquisition, their credibility, relevance, or consistency may not be uniformly trusted or utilized by all professionals.

Therefore, the findings show that ethical knowledge among information professionals in Tanzanian academic libraries comes from multiple sources. Training and structured learning are the most influential, supported by peer mentorship and self-directed learning. While online forums contribute, their impact is less consistent. These findings highlight for continuous professional development and individual commitment are essential for maintaining ethical practices during service delivery.

4.3 Quality of Library Service Delivery

This section presents findings on the quality of library service as provided by information professionals. Service quality was assessed using three key dimensions: confidentiality, reliability, and accessibility. Respondents rated each item using ordered response scales reflecting the perceived level of service performance. The results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Quality of Library Service Delivery

Confidentiality					
Item	**Very Poor**	**Poor**	**Good**	**Very Good**	**Excellent**
Limiting access to user records	8	8	48	34	38
Disclosure of borrowing lists	3	20	44	35	34
Preventing unauthorized account access	8	9	40	43	36
Monitoring user activities	7	12	38	39	40
Data security	14	11	39	32	40
Service guidelines provision	8	16	36	33	43
Ethical practice (Index 8)	3	13	44	39	37
Reliability					
Item	**Not Reliable**	**Slightly Reliable**	**Moderately Reliable**	**Reliable**	**Highly Reliable**
Online services	64	47	19	6	0
Print services	53	44	20	10	9
Photocopy services	42	34	35	12	13
Circulation services	76	35	17	7	1
Reference services	71	30	24	8	3
Average reliability (Index 9	50	46	34	5	1

Accessibility	Not Accessible	Slightly Accessible	Moderately Accessible	Accessible	Highly Accessible
Online services	17	15	32	31	41
Print services	22	11	36	25	42
Photocopy services	26	12	38	28	32
Circulation services	16	12	28	32	48
Reference services	18	10	30	34	44
Average accessibility (Index 10)	10	16	42	35	33

4.3.1 Confidentiality of Library Services

Findings on confidentiality indicate that library service delivery performs relatively well in safeguarding users' information and records. Most respondents rated confidentiality related practices as good, very good, or excellent. For instance, limiting access to users' records recorded 48 responses under good, (34) under very good and (38) under excellent, suggesting strong adherence to ethical standards concerning user privacy. Similarly, preventing unauthorized access to user accounts and ensuring regular monitoring and tracking of users' activities were largely rated positively, with a high number of responses falling under very good and excellent. Data security also received favorable ratings, although a noticeable number of respondents rated it as very poor (14) and poor (11), indicating existing concerns regarding the robustness of data protection mechanisms. This is also, noted during FGDs as follows;

> *"Although we try our best to secure user accounts, sometimes system limitations and outdated software make it challenging to guarantee full protection" (Respondent, University 1)*

While the provision of frequent guidelines in library services was also positively rated, with (43) respondents rating it as excellent. The composite measure (Index 8) further confirms these findings, as the majority of respondents rated confidentiality in performing ethical practices as good (44), very good (39), or excellent (37). This is also noted by one library director as follows;

> *"Confidentiality is a core professional value in our library. We continuously remind professionals about privacy obligations and have policies in place to guide ethical conduct, but we acknowledge the need to strengthen our ICT infrastructure to improve data security further." (Respondent, University 2)*

Therefore, these results suggest that confidentiality is a relatively strong aspect of library service quality, though targeted improvements in data security could enhance user trust further.

4.3.2 Reliability of Library Services

In contrast, findings on reliability reveal comparatively weaker performance across most service categories. Online services, print services, circulation services, and reference services were predominantly rated as not reliable or slightly reliable. For instance, online services recorded (64) responses under not reliable and (47) under slightly reliable, with no respondents rating them as highly reliable. A similar pattern was observed for circulation services, where (76) respondents rated them as not reliable. Although photocopy services showed slightly better distribution, the majority of responses still clustered around not reliable, slightly reliable, and moderately reliable. The overall reliability index (Index 9) reinforces this pattern, with 50 respondents rating services as not reliable and 46 as slightly reliable, while very few rated them as reliable or highly reliable. These findings imply that despite the efforts of ethical by information professionals, operational and infrastructural challenges may be undermining the consistency and dependability of library services.

4.3.3 Accessibility of Library Services

Results on accessibility present a more balanced picture. Most services were rated between moderately accessible and highly accessible. Circulation services and reference services performed particularly well, with 48 and 44 respondents respectively rating them as highly accessible. Online and print services also recorded favorable ratings, although some respondents still perceived them as not accessible or slightly accessible. Photocopy services showed moderate accessibility, with most responses falling under

moderately accessible (38) and accessible (28). The composite accessibility index (Index 10) confirms that overall service accessibility is perceived positively, as most respondents rated services as moderately accessible (42), accessible (35), or highly accessible (33).

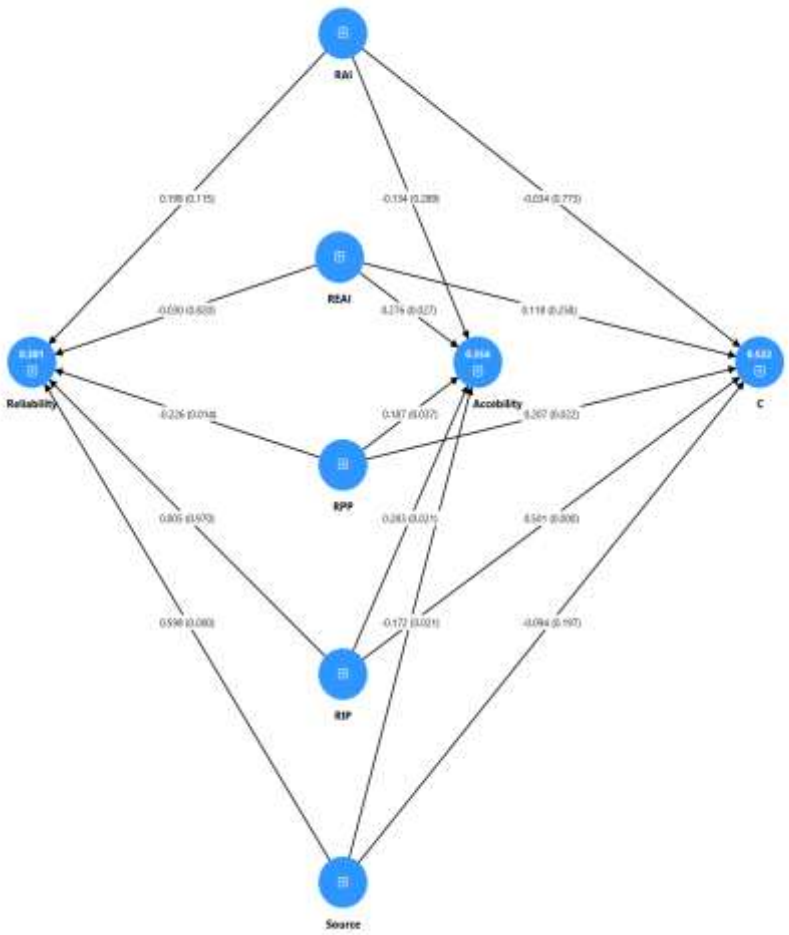
4.4 Measurement Model

Figure 1 presents the measurement model used to assess the relationships between latent constructs and their observed indicators in the study. The model specifies how the constructs related to ethical practices of information professionals and quality of library service delivery are operationalized and measured. The latent constructs include Role of Accurate Information (RAI), Role of Equal Access to Information (REAI), Role of Intellectual Property (RIP), Role of Personal Privacy (RPP), Sources of Ethical Knowledge (Source) and the service quality dimensions in Accessibility, Confidentiality, and Reliability. Each construct is measured by multiple indicators, reflecting different aspects of the underlying concept.

The standardized factor loadings shown in the model indicate that most indicators load strongly on their respective constructs, demonstrating that the observed variables are appropriate measures of the latent constructs. This is further supported by high values of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, which confirm internal consistency, as well as Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceeding the recommended threshold, indicating adequate convergent validity.

In addition, the measurement model satisfies discriminant validity, as the constructs are empirically distinct from one another, confirming that each construct captures a unique dimension of ethical practices or service quality. The absence of problematic cross-loadings and acceptable multicollinearity levels further support the robustness of the measurement model. Figure 1 confirms that the measurement model is reliable, valid, and suitable for structural model analysis, providing a sound basis for examining

the effects of ethical practices on the quality of library service delivery.



Note:
Role of Accurate Information= *(RAI), Role of Equal Access to Information=(REAI), Role of Personal Privacy (RPP), Role of Intellectual Property=(RIP), Confidentiality=C*

Figure 2: Measurement Model

4.5 Robustness check

This section presents robustness checks conducted to assess the explanatory power, reliability, validity, discriminant validity, multicollinearity and overall model fit of the study. These tests ensure that the results obtained from the structural model are statistically sound and credible.

4.5.1 Explanatory Power of the Model (R square and Adjusted R square)

Table 4 presents the R square and adjusted R square values for the endogenous constructs: accessibility, confidentiality, and reliability.

Table 4: R Square and adjusted R Square

	R square	R square adjusted
Accessibility	0.354	0.329
Confidentiality	0.522	0.504
Reliability	0.381	0.357

The results show that the model explains 35.4% of the variance in accessibility, 52.2% of the variance in confidentiality, and 38.1% of the variance in reliability. After adjusting for the number of predictors, the adjusted R square values remain relatively close to the original R square values (0.329, 0.504, and 0.357 respectively), indicating that the model is not overfitted. The relatively high explanatory power for confidentiality suggests that ethical practices and knowledge sources strongly influence how confidentiality is maintained in library service delivery. Thus, the R square values indicate moderate to substantial explanatory power, which is acceptable for social science research.

4.5.2 Reliability and Convergent Validity

Table 5 presents the internal consistency reliability and convergent validity results using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (rho_a and rho_c), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE).

Table 5: Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Accessibility	0.897	0.901	0.924	0.710
C	0.941	0.943	0.953	0.772
RAI	0.926	0.935	0.941	0.694
REAI	0.949	0.951	0.958	0.767
RIP	0.903	0.908	0.924	0.635
RPP	0.937	0.940	0.951	0.762
Reliability	0.852	0.885	0.893	0.629
Source	0.865	0.869	0.899	0.598

All constructs recorded Cronbach's alpha values above 0.85, exceeding the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70. Similarly, composite reliability values (rho_a and rho_c) for all constructs were above 0.89, confirming strong internal consistency among measurement items. Convergent validity was also established, as all AVE values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.50, ranging from 0.598 (Source) to 0.772 (Confidentiality). This indicates that the constructs explain a substantial proportion of variance in their respective indicators. Thus, these results confirm that the measurement model demonstrates strong reliability and satisfactory convergent validity.

4.5.3 Discriminant Validity (HTMT Criterion)

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), as shown in below.

Table 6: Discriminant analysis based on Heterotrait Monotrait Ratios (HTMT)

	Accebility	C	RAI	REAI	RIP	RPP	Reliability	Source
Accebility								
C	0.718							
RAI	0.413	0.585						
REAI	0.554	0.599	0.654					
RIP	0.553	0.739	0.802	0.763				
RPP	0.453	0.569	0.654	0.540	0.619			
Reliability	0.344	0.283	0.107	0.150	0.141	0.192		
Source	0.270	0.221	0.208	0.176	0.179	0.115	0.661	

All HTMT values are below the conservative threshold of 0.85, indicating that each construct is empirically distinct from the others.

Even the highest observed HTMT values such as between RIP and RAI (0.802) and between RIP and REAI (0.763) remain within acceptable limits. These findings confirm that the constructs used in the study measure conceptually different aspects of ethical practices, service quality, and knowledge sources, thereby establishing discriminant validity.

4.5.4 Multicollinearity Test (Variance Inflation Factor)

Table 7 below presents the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for all indicators.

Table 7: Multicollinearity Test Based on Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Variable	VIF	Variable	VIF	Variable	VIF	Variable	VIF
A1	3.492	C4	3.476	RAI4	2.101	RIP4	3.236
A2	2.954	C5	4.981	RAI5	4.181	RIP5	2.896
A3	2.206	C6	4.168	RAI6	3.592	RIP6	1.664
A4	3.630	R1	2.550	RAI7	2.236	RIP7	2.198
A5	3.199	R2	2.248	REAI1	4.904	RPP1	2.334
C1	3.715	R3	2.366	REAI2	5.512	RPP2	3.741
C2	3.019	R4	4.349	REAI3	4.367	RPP3	4.457
C3	4.251	R5	3.598	REAI4	3.053	RPP4	5.270
RAI1	3.326	S1	1.893	REAI5	4.012	RPP5	6.234
RAI2	3.418	S2	1.976	REAI6	3.508	RPP6	2.835
RAI3	2.972	S3	1.831	REAI7	3.870	S4	1.807
RIP1	1.744	S5	2.496	RIP2	2.893	S6	

Most indicators recorded VIF values below 5, which is generally considered acceptable. A few items (e.g., REAI2 = 5.512, RPP4 = 5.270, RPP5 = 6.234) slightly exceed the conservative threshold of 5. However, none approach the critical threshold of 10, indicating that multicollinearity is not severe. Therefore, the results suggest that predictor variables are sufficiently independent and that multicollinearity does not pose a serious threat to the stability or interpretation of the model estimates.

4.5.5 Model Fit Assessment

Table 8 presents the model fit indices for both the saturated and estimated models s indicated below.

Table 8: Model fit

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.071	0.078
d_ULS	6.157	7.490
d_G	4.808	4.879
Chi square	2835.449	2868.575
NFI	0.630	0.626

The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) values for both the saturated (0.071) and estimated (0.078) models are below the recommended cutoff of 0.08, indicating an acceptable model fit. The Normed Fit Index (NFI) values, although moderate (0.630 and 0.626), are considered acceptable given the complexity of the model and the exploratory nature of social science research. While the chi square values are relatively high a common occurrence in large and complex models they are interpreted cautiously and do not, on their own, invalidate the model. Thus, the model fit statistics indicate that the proposed model demonstrates adequate global fit and is suitable for hypothesis testing.

4.5.6 Robustness Assessment

Taken together, the robustness checks confirm that the study model is statistically reliable, valid, and stable. The constructs exhibit strong internal consistency, satisfactory convergent and discriminant validity, acceptable levels of multicollinearity, moderate to strong explanatory power, and adequate model fit. These findings provide confidence that subsequent structural model results and hypothesis testing are based on a sound and robust analytical framework.

4.6 To determine Effect/influence of independent on dependent variable

This section examines the effect and influence of the independent variables Role of Accurate Information (RAI), Role of Equal Access to Information (REAI), Role of Intellectual Property (RIP), Role of Personal Privacy (RPP), and Sources of Ethical Knowledge (Source) on the dependent variables representing quality of library service delivery, namely accessibility, confidentiality (C), and reliability. The analysis is based on bootstrapping results from the

SEM model, with significance determined using t-statistics ≥ 1.96 and p-values ≤ 0.05.

Table 9: Bootstrapping coefficients (SEM MODEL) to determine Effect/influence of independent on dependent variable

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
RAI > Accebility	0.134	0.130	0.127	1.060	0.289
RAI > C	0.034	0.026	0.119	0.288	0.773
RAI > Reliability	0.198	0.191	0.126	1.577	0.115
REAI > Accebility	0.276	0.289	0.125	2.209	0.027
REAI > C	0.118	0.120	0.104	1.132	0.258
REAI > Reliability	0.030	0.046	0.131	0.227	0.820
RIP > Accebility	0.283	0.270	0.123	2.306	0.021
RIP > C	0.501	0.493	0.126	3.969	0.000
RIP > Reliability	0.005	0.026	0.126	0.038	0.970
RPP > Accebility	0.187	0.183	0.090	2.087	0.037
RPP > C	0.207	0.207	0.090	2.291	0.022
RPP > Reliability	0.226	0.230	0.092	2.457	0.014
Source > Accebility	0.172	0.179	0.074	2.310	0.021
Source > C	0.094	0.095	0.073	1.289	0.197
Source > Reliability	0.598	0.605	0.076	7.910	0.000

4.6.1 Effect of Role of Accurate Information (RAI)

The results show that RAI has no statistically significant effect on any of the service quality dimensions. Specifically, the effect of RAI on accessibility (β = 0.134, p = 0.289), confidentiality (β = 0.034, p = 0.773), and reliability (β = 0.198, p = 0.115) is positive but not significant. These findings imply that although accurate information practices are ethically important, they do not independently translate into measurable improvements in accessibility, confidentiality, or reliability of library services. This may suggest that accuracy-related practices are already embedded as routine professional norms, reducing their observable marginal impact on service quality outcomes.

4.6.2 Effect of Role of Equal Access to Information (REAI)

REAI demonstrates a significant positive effect on accessibility (β = 0.276, t = 2.209, p = 0.027), indicating that ethical practices promoting equal access such as guiding users and ensuring availability of resources enhance the accessibility of library services. However, the effect of REAI on confidentiality (β = 0.118,

p = 0.258) and reliability (β = 0.030, p = 0.820) is not statistically significant. This suggests that while equal access practices improve users' ability to reach and use services, they do not directly influence confidentiality safeguards or service consistency.

4.6.3 Effect of Role of Intellectual Property (RIP)

The Role of Intellectual Property shows mixed but important effects. RIP has a significant positive influence on accessibility (β = 0.283, p = 0.021) and a strong and highly significant effect on confidentiality (β = 0.501, t = 3.969, p < 0.001). These results suggest that ethical enforcement of intellectual property such as proper citation, copyright guidance, and controlled use of materials not only enhances access to legitimate resources but also strengthens confidentiality through structured and regulated information use. However, RIP does not significantly affect reliability (β = 0.005, p = 0.970), indicating that intellectual property practices do not influence service consistency or dependability.

4.6.4 Effect of Role of Personal Privacy (RPP)

RPP emerges as one of the most influential ethical dimensions in the model. The findings show that RPP has a significant positive effect on all three service quality dimensions: accessibility (β = 0.187, p = 0.037), confidentiality (β = 0.207, p = 0.022), and reliability (β = 0.226, p = 0.014). These results imply that strong privacy protection practices such as restricting access to user data and preventing unauthorized disclosures enhance user trust, which in turn improves service accessibility, strengthens confidentiality, and promotes reliable service delivery. This highlights personal privacy as a central ethical driver of service quality in academic libraries.

4.6.5 Effect of Sources of Ethical Knowledge (Source)

The Source of ethical knowledge demonstrates a significant positive influence on accessibility (β = 0.172, p = 0.021) and an exceptionally strong effect on reliability (β = 0.598, t = 7.910, p < 0.001). However, its effect on confidentiality is not statistically significant (β = 0.094, p = 0.197).The strong effect on reliability suggests that training workshops, learning programs, peer

interactions, and self-directed learning significantly improve the consistency and dependability of library services. This indicates that well-informed information professionals are better equipped to deliver stable and reliable services, even if confidentiality is more strongly driven by formal policies and institutional controls.

4.6.6 Discussion of Structural Relationships

The SEM results reveal that not all ethical practices equally influence service quality dimensions. Personal privacy (RPP) and sources of ethical knowledge (Source) emerge as the most critical predictors of service delivery quality. Equal access (REAI) and intellectual property (RIP) primarily enhance accessibility, while accurate information (RAI) shows no significant direct effects. These findings suggest that ethical practices related to privacy protection and continuous ethical learning are more impactful in shaping users' perceptions of library service quality than accuracy-related practices alone. Thus, policy emphasis and capacity-building initiatives should prioritize privacy safeguards and structured ethical training to improve overall service delivery.

4.7 Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The findings from both quantitative and qualitative data complement each other in demonstrating that ethical practices are essential for improving library service delivery in academic libraries. The quantitative findings established the statistical relationship between ethical practices and service delivery, while the qualitative findings provided explanatory insights and practical experiences from respondents**.** The integration of findings therefore strengthened the overall interpretation of the study results and enhanced understanding of the role of ethics in academic library environments.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study assessed the role of ethical practices performed by information professionals in enhancing service delivery in academic libraries, identified the sources through which information professionals acquire knowledge of ethical practices, and examined challenges affecting the application of ethical practices in

academic libraries. The findings from both quantitative and qualitative data revealed that ethical practices such as confidentiality, professionalism, accountability, integrity, and fairness play a significant role in improving the reliability, accessibility, and effectiveness of library services. Most of the respondents indicated that adherence to ethical practices strengthens user trust, improves communication between library staff and users, and promotes equitable access to information resources. Further, the study established that information professionals acquire knowledge of ethical practices through professional training, institutional policies and guidelines, academic education, workshops and seminars, professional experience, and interactions with colleagues and professional associations. These sources were found to contribute significantly to ethical awareness and professional conduct among information professionals in academic libraries.

In addition, the findings revealed several challenges affecting the effective application of ethical practices in academic libraries. These challenges included limited opportunities for ethics training, inadequate institutional ethical guidelines, insufficient managerial support, technological changes, and inconsistent enforcement of professional standards. The study found that such challenges may negatively affect the quality and consistency of library service delivery if not properly addressed. Based on the findings, the study concludes that ethical practices are essential for improving service delivery in academic libraries and that strengthening ethical awareness among information professionals is necessary for ensuring reliable and accessible library services.

Therefore, the study recommends that university management and academic libraries should strengthen continuous professional ethics training through workshops, seminars, and capacity building programmes. Institutions should also establish and regularly update clear ethical guidelines and policies to support professional conduct and accountability among information professionals. Furthermore, academic libraries should improve managerial and institutional support systems to facilitate the effective

implementation of ethical practices in library operations and service delivery.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

7.0 INTEGRATED DISCUSSION

7.1 Overview

This chapter shows the integrated discussion from the study's key findings from four specific research objectives detailed in the manuscripts presented in chapters' two to five. The study broadly examined ethical practices in service delivery by information professionals in selected academic libraries in Tanzania. Specifically, the study addresses four research questions related ethical practices performed by information professionals, perception of information professionals on ethical practices, ethical practices and professional responsibilities in upholding confidentiality, and factors influencing ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in selected academic libraries in Tanzania.

Overall, the finding reveal that the study concludes that although ethical practices are widely acknowledged, their application is not always systematic or consistent, largely due to limited training. Despite, a significant positive relationship between ethical practice and perceptions of information professionals during service delivery. Meanwhile, over 60% of respondents affirmed that ethical principles guide their daily service delivery. On the other hand, ethical practices were highly recognized in ensuring equal access to information and protecting user privacy are generally well-practiced, inconsistencies are observed in fulfilling professional responsibilities, particularly in terms of reliability of service and alignment of resources with user needs. Thus, the study indicates that strengthening institutional support through continuous training, the establishment of codes of ethics, policy development, clear guidelines, and ethics committees is essential for promoting consistent and accountable ethical practices.

7.2 Summary of the Articles /Papers

This thesis is arranged based on four interrelated papers. The first paper assessed on ethical practices in library service delivery among Information professionals' insights from academic libraries, in Tanzania. The findings of this study present a different

perspective compared to previous studies such as Ndumbaro and Mutula (2020), Teke (2021), Hakbilen and Ozgonul (2023) and Rahman (2023), which observed that ethical practices is not widely recognized for effectively addressing users' needs in service delivery. In contrast, the present study highlights a high level of awareness of ethical practices in service provision, despite the variations of ethical implementation among professionals, and emphasizes the need for professional training to increase awareness among information professionals. On the other hand, previous studies on ethical practices in libraries, such as those by Nambobi (2021), Yusuf (2021), Band and Butler (2023) and Mtasigaza (2024), identified a gap in understanding how information professionals practically implement ethical practices during service delivery. However, the findings of this study indicate that information professionals do adhere to ethical practices in service delivery, despite variations in specific practices.

The second paper examine the perceptions of information professionals on ethical practices during service delivery in academic libraries. The findings indicate a positive perception of ethical practices among professionals during service delivery in academic libraries. This suggests that information professionals are perceived favourably in their adherence to ethical standards during daily operations. This aligns with previous research by Jan and Ahmad (2020) and Nze *et al.* (2024), which emphasizes that positive perception is often shaped by strong professional commitment and the implementation of ethical principles, leading to higher service quality.

The third paper is to explore ethical practices and professionals' responsibilities in upholding confidentiality in academic libraries. Findings indicate that most information professionals demonstrate a strong commitment in upholding confidentiality in service delivery, with the majority of responses across all six measures limiting access, disclosing user lists, preventing unauthorized access, regular monitoring, data security, and provision of guidelines falling under the 'Good', 'Very Good' and 'Excellent' categories. This in line with a study of Emandei (2023) indicate that most of

professionals demonstrate a strong commitment to Confidentiality and ethical conduct in their service delivery, reinforcing trust and institutional integrity.

Fourth paper is to examine the factors influencing ethical practices among information professionals during service delivery in academic libraries. The findings highlight that institutional factor such as strong management enforcement and adequate ethical training significantly improve ethical practices among information professionals. Likewise, low staff morale reduces ethical practices, indicating the need for better working conditions and motivation. Personal characteristics such as age, gender, and work experience have no significant influence. This is indicated in a study by Santalla-Banderali (2022) noted that personal characteristics alone do not strongly dictate ethical practice compared to other factors.

Both of the papers above provide a general overview of ethical practices performed by information professionals on ensuring equal access of information, accuracy of information provided, protection of privacy and intellectual property on proving services in academic libraries Tanzania.

7.3 Major points of the integrated Discussion

7.3.1 Ethical practices in library services

Based on the four aspects of ethical practices practiced by information professionals during service delivery. The findings indicate that equal access and privacy issues are significantly practiced by information professionals in service delivery compared to other ethical aspects, like moderate practice in the accuracy of the information and lower practice on the protection of intellectual property. The findings align with studies by Barfi *et al*.(2023) and Maesaroh *et al*. (2024), which emphasize the importance of professionals to assess the quality, accuracy and sources of information to effectively meet users' needs and uphold professional responsibility. Thus, the findings suggest that while the implementation of equal access and privacy protection is well-practiced and understood, other areas, particularly intellectual property and providing accuracy information, require more

awareness and consistent application to enhance ethical practices in service delivery.

7.3.2 Perception of ethical practices among professionals

The findings show positive perception of ethical practices among professionals during service delivery in academic libraries. A large proportion of respondents selected “Strongly Agree” across several key areas, including ethical aspect, service delivery, user access, and satisfaction, each scoring above (60%). Positive perception was determined when the majority of respondents selected “Strongly Agree” or “Agree”, showing favourable views of ethical practices in service delivery. Specifically, when responses in these categories exceeded 60% across dimensions such as ethical aspects, service delivery, user access, and satisfaction, the perception was interpreted as positive. This suggests that information professionals are perceived positively in their adherence to ethical standards during daily operations. This aligns with prior research by Jan and Ahmad (2020) and Nze *et al.* (2024), which emphasizes that positive perception is often shaped by strong professional commitment and the implementation of ethical principles, leading to higher service quality. Hence, while most professionals show a positive and committed approach to ethical practices, the presence of such uncertainty indicates that not all professionals feel adequately equipped or confident in consistently applying ethical standards. Therefore, the perception of ethical practice among information professionals though is positive but somewhat mixed, revealing a need for stronger library enforcement, clearer ethical orientation, and practical training to ensure consistency and confidence in service delivery across all levels.

7.3.3 Ethical practices and professional responsibilities

The findings indicate that professional responsibilities are moderately practiced, with mean scores ranging between 2.54 and 2.74. The lowest mean was observed in organizing materials based on user needs (Mean = 2.54, SD = 0.77), suggesting that some library professionals may not be consistently aligning resources with users' information requirements. Slightly higher mean scores

were found in activities such as reading reference sources (Mean = 2.74, SD = 0.72) and removing outdated materials (Mean = 2.72, SD = 0.71). This reflects moderate engagement in collection maintenance and information validation. The findings imply that while library professionals are somewhat engaged in their duties, there is inconsistency in fully meeting user-cantered service standards, particularly in organizing materials to align with users' specific information needs. These findings align with the study by Owolabi *et al*. (2024), which found that the quality of library services is significantly improved when professionals maintain high standards of ethical practices and the ability to provide services.

On the other hand, the findings imply that academic libraries have a strong commitment to ethical practices, particularly in upholding core values such as ensuring equal access to information and protecting user privacy. High mean scores in these areas indicate that ethical practices and being responsible are prioritized during service delivery. Therefore, the findings reveal that academic libraries ensure ethical practices and professional responsibility in service delivery, particularly by prioritizing equal access to information and safeguarding user privacy. The high ratings in these areas indicate professionals' commitment to ethical practices in academic libraries.

7.3.4 Factors influencing ethical practices

Findings on the factors influencing ethical practices can be categorized into low, moderate, and high levels and some of the factors help explain these differences. The results showed that people with more years of education are more likely to practice ethics well, as education exposes them to important knowledge about ethics. Likewise, support from the institution, especially good management enforcement of rules and providing ethical training, strongly encourages ethical practices in academic libraries. On the other hand, low morale among staff reduces ethical practices, showing that professional well-being needs to be considered. Meanwhile, personal characteristics like age, gender and work experience did not have a strong effect on ethical practices on their own; instead, institutional and educational support played a bigger

role. This is also supported in a study by Santalla-Banderali (2022) noted that personal characteristics alone do not strongly dictate ethical practices compared to other factors. Thus, these findings highlight the importance of promoting staff well-being and creating supportive institutional environments through training, management enforcement, and positive work conditions rather than relying on personal characteristics like age, gender, or work experience to ensure ethical practices.

7.3.5 Integration of theoretical Frameworks

The integration of three theories guided the study and provide a detailed explanation of the observed relationship. The theory of Planned Behavioural (TPB) offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how information professionals perceive and act upon ethical practices in academic library service delivery (Ahmed *et al.,* 2024). The theory emphasizes that an individual's behavior is influenced by three key components: attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. While, the Professionalism theory defines values, standards and behaviours that characterize a professional. It emphasizes adherence to ethical practices, being responsible and commitment during service delivery. Perhaps, the Duty Based Theory provides a strong foundation for understanding the moral obligations of information professionals in fulfilling their roles. The theory emphasizes that ethical practices in libraries, such as providing equal access to information, protecting users' privacy and intellectual property, ensuring accuracy in information services, should be considered regardless of external pressures or outcomes.

Therefore, integration of both theories strengthens ethical practices in academic library service delivery by emphasizing implementation of ethical practice, establishing the professional standards expected of information professionals, and helping professionals in decision making. Additionally, the theories provide a comprehensive understanding of why information professionals act ethically, guide them in maintaining integrity, accuracy, confidentiality, and fairness, and finally improve the quality,

consistency, and accountability of services delivered in academic libraries.

7.4 Theoretical reflection and Interpretive Integration

The integrated discussions confirm the utility of combining the theory of Planned behavior, Professionalism theory and Duty based theory to explain ethical practices, perception of information professionals, professional responsibilities and factors influencing ethical practices in academic libraries during service delivery. Based on the integration of theories it helps to identify variables related to equal access to information, accuracy of information provided, protection of privacy and intellectual property which are among the core ethical practices discussed in this study. These variables in multi theoretical it helps to define the scope of the study and ensure the analysis is based on the established theory rather than assumption.

CHAPTER EIGHT

8.0 GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provide the general conclusion and recommendations derived from integrated findings of this study of ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania. Both conclusion and recommendation drawn from four empirical papers and the integrated discussions, indicating how ethical practices, perception, professional responsibility and factors influencing ethical practices may lead to effective services delivery.

8.1 Conclusions

In conclusion, the study establishes that ethical practices are central to enhancing the quality, and effectiveness of service delivery in academic libraries in Tanzania. Information professionals demonstrate moderate to high awareness of ethical practices such as fairness, privacy, confidentiality, data protection, and equitable access, and they generally hold positive perceptions of their importance in library service delivery. These practices contribute significantly to user trust, institutional accountability and the effectiveness of services delivered in academic libraries.

However, despite this awareness, the study highlights a notable gap in the consistent and systematic application of ethical practices. Areas such as ensuring accuracy of information, protecting intellectual property, and managing digital resources require stronger attention. The inconsistent application of these practices is largely associated with limited ethics training, weak enforcement of institutional guidelines, unclear professional responsibilities, and insufficient policy integration. The study further noted that demographic factors such as age, gender and work experience do not significantly influence ethical practices; instead, institutional support, ethical training, staff morale, and organizational culture play a crucial role in shaping ethical practice.

Thus, strengthening ethical practices requires a multifaceted approach. Academic libraries need to develop and enforce relevant

ethical guidelines, establish clear policies, and encourage in continuous professional development to enhance competence for emerging ethical issues arises during service delivery. Professional bodies such as the Tanzania Library Association (TLA) should take a proactive role in standardizing ethics training, certifying ethical conduct and supporting capacity-building initiatives. Institutional management must also foster an organizational culture that promotes accountability, staff participation in policy development and adherence to professional standards. Therefore, improving ethical practices among information professionals is crucial for achieving consistent, equitable and high-quality library services in Tanzania.

8.2 Recommendations

i. The study recommends that the TLA and similar bodies provide ethical practices training in certification processes. The collaborations between academic libraries and associations can ensure the establishment of the national framework for ethical practices and accountability in the profession.

ii. The study recommends that library management in academic libraries should establish a library ethics committee for the regular assessment of professionals' awareness of ethical practices in library services. Such committees will serve as internal policy enforcement bodies and facilitate targeted interventions where gaps are identified.

iii. The study recommends a need for academic libraries to expand ethical awareness programs through existing communication tools, such as staff email accounts, social media platforms and WhatsApp groups, to share updates, reminders and guidelines on ethical practices. This will lead to consistent ethical practices among information professionals in service delivery.

iv. The study recommends that library management in academic libraries should develop clear and comprehensive guidelines to support adherence to ethical practices, particularly in

distinguishing between restricted and unrestricted materials. These guidelines will help to reduce confusion and promote responsible access and use of information resources.

v. The study recommends future research across public, private and other academic libraries to assess ethical practices and inform broader national strategies for ethical practices implementation during service delivery.

vi. The study recommends that academic libraries regularly monitor and evaluate ethical practices to close gaps, strengthen ethics, and improve staff perceptions, thereby enhancing reliability, accountability and confidentiality in service delivery.

vii. The study recommends that the Tanzania Library Services Board (TLSB) and the Tanzania Library Association (TLA) should take the lead in formulating a formal code of ethics aligned to the Tanzanian context, learning from international best practices.

8.3 Contribution of the Study to the Body of Knowledge

Contributions of the Study

1. Knowledge Contribution

- Provides empirical evidence on ethical practices among information professionals in Tanzanian academic libraries.
- Expands knowledge on the implementation of confidentiality, equitable access, information accuracy, privacy, and intellectual property.
- Identifies key factors influencing ethical practices, including management enforcement, ethical training, clear guidelines, staff morale, and organisational culture.
- Provides a baseline for future studies on ethical practices in Tanzania and other developing contexts.

2. Practical Contribution

- Provides academic libraries with evidence to improve the implementation and monitoring of ethical practices.

- Highlights the need for continuous ethical training, clear guidelines, management support, and staff awareness.
- Supports libraries in strengthening practices related to confidentiality, privacy, intellectual property, information accuracy, and equitable access.
- Provides a basis for establishing mechanisms such as library ethics committees and regular ethical awareness programmes.

3. Policy Contribution

- Identifies gaps in the availability, application, and enforcement of ethical guidelines in academic libraries.
- Provides evidence that can inform TLA, TLSB, and other relevant bodies in developing or refining a context-specific Tanzania Code of Ethics for Library Professionals (TCEL).
- Supports the development of policies and guidelines for ethical service delivery, privacy, confidentiality, intellectual property, and equitable access.

4. Theoretical Contribution

- Extends existing theoretical understanding by demonstrating that ethical practices are influenced not only by individual factors but also by organisational and environmental factors.
- Strengthens the application of Theory of Planned Behaviour, Professionalism Theory, Duty-Based Ethics, and the PAPA model in explaining ethical practices among information professionals.
- Demonstrates the value of integrating individual, professional, ethical, and organisational perspectives when studying ethical practices in academic libraries.

8.4 Areas for Further Research

Although this study has contributed to the body of knowledge, theoretical, practical, and policy implications, it had some limitations that open several avenues for future research. One of the limitations of this study was its research design.

The study adopted a cross-sectional research design that provided a snapshot of the current state in awareness, perceptions, and application of ethical guidelines over time. Although the design is worthy and meets the purpose of the study, it cannot capture changes over time. To address this limitation, a longitudinal research design may add value in monitoring changes over time and ascertaining what causes changes.

Additionally, this study focused on academic libraries thus, future studies could explore ethical practices across different types of libraries, such as public, school, and special libraries, to enable comparative analysis of implementation and challenges. Research could also examine the impact of digital transformation, emerging technologies and artificial intelligence on ethical practices, particularly regarding privacy, intellectual property and information accuracy.

Moreover, other studies might investigate library users' perspectives on ethical service delivery, assessing the effectiveness of institutional policies and professional codes, and evaluating the impact of continuous ethics training and professional development programs would offer valuable contributions.

Finally, studies focusing on cultural, organizational and contextual factors influencing ethical behaviour, as well as ethical challenges in specialized services such as research support and digital repositories, could further enrich the understanding of ethical practices in Tanzanian libraries.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Research Instruments

A: Questionnaire for Information Professionals

Dear respondents

I am Beth Kachota, a PhD candidate in the Information Studies Program at Sokoine University of Agriculture. My research focuses on ***'Ethical Practices on Service Delivery by Information Professionals in Selected Academic Libraries in Tanzania***.' Ethical practices in this study encompass the application of professional standards concerning access and use of information in service delivery. This includes ensuring equal access to information, maintaining the accuracy of provided information, addressing privacy concerns, and safeguarding intellectual property.

The study aims to contribute to upholding ethical principles and enhancing the standard of service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries. Any information shared will be used exclusively for research purposes and treated confidentially to respect your privacy. Your cooperation in this study is highly valued and appreciated.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

1. Please write the name of your University……
2. Please indicate your Sex: i. Male [ ] ii. Female [ ]
3. Please mark your age group: i. less than 30 years [ ] ii. 30-35 years [ ] iii.35-40 years [ ]

iv. 40-45 years [ ] v. Above 45[ ]

4. Please insert (✔) against your Educational level

i. PhD [ ] ii. Masters [ ] iii. 1st Degree [ ] iv. Diploma [ ] v.Other please (specify…….

5. Please indicate your professional rank

i. Library Officer [ ] ii. Principal Library Assistant [ ] iii. Library Assistant [ ]iv. Librarian Trainee/Tutorial Assistant [ ] v.Assistant Librarian [ ]vi. Librarian [ ] vii. Senior Librarian [ ]

Other please specify……

6. Please indicate your work experience in the library.
i. Less than 2 years [ ] ii.2-5 years [ ] iii. 6- 10 years [ ]iv. 11-15 years [ ] v. Above 15 years [ ]

PART II: Ethical Practices Performed by Information Professionals in Service Delivery

Section A:

7a. Are you aware of ethical practices in service delivery?
1. Yes [ ] 2. No [ ]

7b. If the answer is **Yes,** to what extent are you aware of ethical practice in service delivery using the following statement in the Likert Scale **1=Not aware 2= slightly aware 3= somewhat aware 4=Moderately aware 5=Very aware**

Categories of responses	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
I am aware of not disclosing any personal information					
I am aware of providing equal material and services for all users					
I am aware of respecting the present standard in providing services					
I am aware of advising free material and not unrestricted materials for library users					
I am aware of treating library users with fairness and respect during service delivery					
I am aware of keep data safe against improper access					

7c. If the answer is **No**, how do you adhere to ethical practice in service delivery using the following Likert scale **1= Strong Agree 2= Agree 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree 4=Disagree 5= Strong Disagree**

Categories of Responses	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Providing assistance, training, and support for utilizing various software and device					
Directing users to discover the detailed information they need					

Guiding users on the acceptable use of materials and outlining consequences for copyright infringement					
Checking materials and ensuring that the information available to users is accurate					
Providing skills for citing information from various sources					

8. Where did you get to know about ethical practices in service delivery using the following aspects **1= Strong Agree 2= Agree 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree 4=Disagree 5= Strong Disagree**

Categories of Responses	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Through library staff					
Through training/workshop					
Through my own efforts					
Through others					
Through learning					
Through online forum					
Other(please specify)					

9a.What are the ethical practices performed by information professionals in providing library services to maintain the **accuracy of provided information** using the following Likert scale **1= Never, 2= Rarely 3= Sometimes, 4 = Always, 5 = Often**

Category of Responses	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
I do verify the accuracy of information by checking valid sources					
I guide users in utilizing the relevant database list					
I do offer a current list of resources to library users					
I do participate in the exercise of removing inaccurate and outdated material from the library					
Read reference sources of information sources					
I assess the vulnerability of information sources before communicating them to users					
I read the 'About Us' section on the website to understand the source's information					

9b. What is the level of ethical practices performed by Information Professionals in the **Protection of Intellectual Property** using the following Likert scale **1= Never, 2= Rarely 3. = Sometimes, 4 = Always, 5 = Often**

Categories of Responses	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
I do limit the number of photocopies allowed per book for library users					
I provide users with clear guidelines and handouts on utilizing library materials					
I explain the fair use of materials to users					
My library provides workshops on citing material properly to users					
My library explains the policies regarding the use of materials to library users					
My library displays copyright warnings in a conspicuous location					
My library helps users with proper citations					

9c. What is the level of ethical practices performed by Information Professionals to ensure **equal access to information**using the following Likert scale **1= Never, 2= Rarely 3. = Sometimes, 4 = Always, 5 = Often**

Categories of Responses	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Guiding users in finding relevant resources, answering inquiries					
Providing information-searching skills					
Ensure the availability of a computer with internet connectivity					
Providing a list of current materials					
Marketing library resources					
Provide reference services					
Help users locate information resources					

9d. What is the level of ethical practices performed by information professionals in the **protection of privacy Issues** in service delivery using the following Likert scale **1= Never, 2= Rarely 3. = Sometimes, 4 = Always, 5 = Often**

Categories of Responses	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Do not share search inquiries					
Restrict access to personal information to unauthorized personnel					
Do not share the user's name list					
Do not share borrowing records					
Do not share circulation records or personal information of the user					
Do not disclose personal identifier information without the user's consent					

10a. How do you rate **confidentiality** in performing the ethical practice in service delivery using the following Likert scale **1=Very poor 2=Poor 3=Good 4=Very Good 5=Excellent**

Categories of Responses	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Limiting access to records of the users					
Disclose the list of the borrowing items for each library uses					
Prevent unauthorized access to user accounts.					
Ensuring regular monitoring tracking user activities					
Data securing					
Frequency of guidelines in the provision of library services					

10b. How would you rate the **reliability** of the following services to library users using the following Likert Scale **1=Very Reliable 2=Reliable 3= Neither Reliable nor Unreliable 4=Unreliable 5=Very unreliable**

Services	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Online services					
Print services					
Photocopying Services					
Circulation service					
Reference services					

10c: How would you rate the **accessibilit**y of the following services to library users using the following Likert Scale **1= Not Reliable2=SlightlyReliable 3= Moderately Reliable 4=Reliable 5=Highly Reliable**

Services	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Online services					
Print services					
Photocopying					
Circulation services					
Reference service					

10d. How quickly do you evaluate the **timing** of responses to user requests for assistance using the following Likert **Scale 1=Very slow 2=Slow 3=Neither Slow nor Fast 4=Fast 5=Very Fast**

Services	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Circulation					
Searching information					
Reference service					
Interlibrary loan					

PART III: Perception of Information Professionals on Ethical Practices in Service Delivery

11. What are the services provided by information professionals in the Academic Library using the following aspects1**= Strong Agree 2= Agree 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree 4=Disagree 5= Strong Disagree**

Services	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Circulation					
Information search and Access					
Reference service					
Research support service					
Library orientation					
Other services please specify……					

12a. Are you aware of ethical guidelines/principles in providing service delivery in academic libraries?

1= Yes [ ] 2= No [ ]

12b. If the answer is Yes, to what extent do you consider with the following ethical guidelines/policy in the provision of service delivery using this aspects **1= Never, 2= Rarely 3= Sometimes, 4 = Always, 5 = Often**

Guidelines/Policy	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
General Library guidelines					
Library service Policy					
American Library Association (ALA) guidelines					
International Federation of Library Association(IFLA) guidelines					
Collection Development Policy					
Others (please specify) ……					

12c. If the answer is No, to what extent information professional responsible for ensuring ethical practice in service delivery using the following aspects scale **1= Strong Agree 2= Agree 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree 4=Diagree 5= Strong Disagree**

Category of Responses	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Responsible for organizing material for library user based on their needs					
Responsible for updating collection to ensure the relevancy and currency of materials					
Assisting library users in finding material through databases					
Responsible for removing outdated and damaged materials from the collection					
Read reference sources of information sources					
Responsible for resolving user queries in providing service					
Responsible for participating in professional associations and conferences to network and share knowledge					

13**.** What are the perceptions of information professionals on ethical practices using the following Likert scale **1= Strong Agree 2= Agree 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree 4=Disagree 5= Strong Disagree**

Categories of Responses	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Service delivered by Information Professionals are shaped by a range of norms which include ethical and legal one					
Ethical aspects of information professionals enhance information services by librarians					

Ethical issues improve service delivery in the library					
Ethical issue ensures access to information resources					
Effectively communicate the availability of resources within the library to users					
Approaching users politely when needed assistance					
Ensures every user's satisfaction in their visit to the library					

PART V: Factors Influencing Ethical Practices among Information Professionals in Academic Libraries

14. Are there any factors that influence your adherence to ethical practices in service delivery?

1= Yes 2= No

15.Based on your understanding of ethical practices, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the following factors influence ethical practices in service delivery?

Use the following Likert scale: **1 = Strong Influence 2 = Moderate Influence 3 = Neutral 4 = Low Influence 5 = No Influence**

Factors	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Staff Morale					
Enforcement by the library management					
Ethical training					
Ethical guidelines					
Fair treatment of users					
Awareness of ethical issues					
Competency					
Individual values and beliefs					
Others(please specify) …… ……					

16. What strategies can be used to ensure ethical practice in providing services using the following Likert **1= Strong Agree 2= Agree 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree 4=Diagree 5= Strong Disagree**

Strategies	1	2	3	4	5
Training for staff					
Establishment of a code of ethics in library professional					
Presence of clear ethical guidelines					
Promote a culture of honesty and ethical behavior.					
Regular supervision within the library					
Establishment of the ethics committee within a library					
Integrating ethics education into the library curriculum					
Others(Please specify) ……. …….					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

B: Interview Questions for Library Directors

Dear respondent,

I am Beth Kachota, a PhD student in Information Studies Programme at the Sokoine University of Agriculture. I am conducting research on "**Ethical Practices on Service Delivery by Information Professionals in the Selected Academic Libraries in Tanzania**". For the purpose of this study, Ethical practices in this study encompass the application of professional standards concerning access and use of information in service delivery. This includes ensuring equal access to information, maintaining the accuracy of provided information, addressing privacy concerns, and safeguarding intellectual property.

Any information provided will be used only for the purpose of this research and treated confidentially to uphold your privacy. I will greatly appreciate your cooperation**.**

PART 1: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESPONDENT

Please state the name of the University library…….

Please state your designation……

State your highest qualification……

State the duration you have served in this position (in years) in this library ……..

Please state your sex …….

Questions

1. How does your library ensure ethical practice to information professionals in the provision?
   of library services?
2. In your opinion do you think information professionals provide service in an ethical?
   manner?
3. In your views, what is the importance of ethical practice in providing services in academic?
   libraries?
4. How do you enforce information professionals in upholding ethical practices within the
   library environment?

5. In what ways do you support ongoing education and training for information professionals to stay updated on best ethical practices?
6. How do you ensure that information professionals are well-informed about the ethical guidelines and principles that should be followed in service delivery?
7. Do you face any challenges that affect ethical practices on service delivery by information? professionals in your library?
8. Which strategy can you recommend to the academic library to improve ethical practice in the provision of service delivery?

C: Focus Group Discussions for Information Professionals

What is your stand on the following issues related to **Ethical Practices in Service Delivery?**

1. How do you asses that you're doing ethical practices in service delivery?
2. What are your perceptions of ethical practices in service delivery?
3. What influences the performance of ethical practices in service delivery?
4. In your opinion, what factors affect ethical practice in service delivery?
5. What ethical principles or guidelines should guide ethical practices in service delivery?
6. Can you share any personal experiences, positive or negative, related to the ethical practices of service delivery?
7. What suggestions do you have for improving ethical practices in service delivery in academic libraries?

Appendix 1: Research permits

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE
DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES,
RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND CONSULTANCY
P. O. Box 3151, CHUO KIKUU, MOROGORO, TANZANIA
Telephone: +255 23 264 0013, 023 264006-9 E-mail: drpgs@sua.ac.tz,
Website: www.dprtc.sua.ac.tz

Our Ref: SUA/DPRTC/PLS/D/2022/0002/12 **Date:** 19th February, 2024

Ms. Beth KACHOTA
Department of Informatics and Information Technology
SUA, Morogoro

Ufs: The Head
Department of Informatics and Information Technology
SUA, Morogoro

Forwarded
20/02/2024

Dear Ms. Kachota,

Re: **APPROVAL OF YOUR PhD RESEARCH PROPOSAL**

Please refer to the above-captioned subject.

2. This is to inform you that, the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies, Research, Technology Tfansfer and Consultancy (DPRTC) has noted the approval made by the Board College of Natural and Applied Sciences for your PhD research proposal. Therefore, you are hereby permitted to embark on data collection as per your approved research proposal titled: **"Ethical Practices on Service Delivery by Information Professionals in Tanzania Selected Academic Libraries"**

3. In addition to the permission granted, please be notified that, you are required to present yourself at the office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic, Research and Consultancy (DVC-ARC), along with this letter, to kindly request for research clearance letter.

Wishing you all the best in your research work.

Yours sincerely,

Director
Postgraduate studies, Research,
Technology Transfer and Consultancy
Sokoine University of Agriculture
P. O. Box 3151, Morogoro
TANZANIA

P. L. Mresa
For: **DIRECTOR**

Cc: The Principal, College of Natural and Applied Sciences
The Chairperson, College Postgraduate Studies Committee
Supervisors: Dr. B. Tarimo and Dr. S. Hokororo

CLEARANCE PERMIT FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN TANZANIA

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR
P.O Box 3000, CHUO KIKUU, MOROGORO, TANZANIA.
Phone: +255 (023) 2640006/7/8/9, Direct Line: +255 (023) 2640015,
E-mail:vc@sua.ac.tz, Website: https://www.sua.ac.tz

Please refer to:
Our Ref: SUA/ADM/R.1/8/1227

Date: 27th February, 2024

The Vice Chancellor,
University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM),
P.O. Box 35091,
DAR ES SALAAM.

The Vice Chancellor,
University of Dodoma (UDOM),
P.O. Box 259,
DODOMA.

The Vice Chancellor,
Mzumbe University (MU),
P.O. Box 1, Mzumbe,
MOROGORO.

RE: UNIVERSITY STAFF, STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS' CLEARANCE

The Sokoine University of Agriculture was established by University Act No. 7 of 2005 and SUA Charter, 2007 which became operational on 1st January 2007 repealing Act No. 6 of 1984. One of the mission objectives of the University is to generate and apply knowledge through research. For this reason, the staff and researchers undertake research activities from time to time.

2. To facilitate the research function, the Vice Chancellor of the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) is empowered to issue research clearance to staff, students, research associate and researchers of SUA on behalf of the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology.

CLEARANCE PERMIT FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN TANZANIA

3. The purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Ms. Beth Jacob Kachota** a bonafide **PhD (Information and Library Science)** student with Registration number **PLS/D/2022/0002** of SUA. By this letter **Ms. Beth Jacob Kachota** has been granted clearance to conduct research in the country. The title of the research in question is ***"ETHICAL PRACTICES IN SERVICE DELIVERY BY INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS IN TANZANIA SELECTED ACADEMIC LIBRARIES"***.

4. The period for which this permission has been granted is from **March, 2024** to **February, 2025**. The research will be conducted in **your University.**

5. Should some of these areas/institutions/offices be restricted, you are requested to kindly advise the researcher(s) on alternative areas/institutions/ offices which could be visited. In case you may require further information on the researcher please contact me.

6. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and facilitation of this research activity.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Maulid W. Mwatawala
FOR: VICE-CHANCELLOR

VICE CHANCELLOR
SOKOINE UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE
P.O.BOX 3010
MOROGORO, TANZANIA

c.c. Director, DPRTC, SUA. - To note in file.
c.c. Student – **Ms. Beth Jacob Kachota**

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
MZUMBE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF VICE CHANCELLOR

Tel: +255 023 2931212
Fax: +255 023 2931213
Mobile: +255 0754 604029
E-mail: vc@mzumbe.ac.tz
Website: www.mzumbe.ac.tz

P.O. BOX1
MZUMBE
MOROGORO, TANZANIA

In replying please quote
Ref. No. AL.3/267/01/141

01st March, 2024

Vice Chancellor,
Sokoine University of Agriculture,
P.O. Box 3000,
MOROGORO.

RE: PERMIT TO ACCESS DATA FOR FIELD RESEARCH AT MZUMBE UNIVERSITY

The caption above refers.

2. This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter with ref. No. SUA/DPRTC/PLC/D/2022/0002/12 dated 19th February, 2024 in which you introduced **Ms. Beth Kachota** as bonafide student of Sokoine University of Agriculture. You also informed that the said student is conducting research entitled **"Ethical Practices on Service Delivery by Information Professionals in Tanzania Selected Academic Libraries."** and would like to access the data at Mzumbe University.

3. I am glad to inform you that the office of the Vice Chancellor, Mzumbe University has granted permission for her to carry out data collection exercise at the University as requested by your office. Alongside this permission, the researcher will be required to carry this letter with her anytime she is involved in data collection for the purpose of identification. Upon arrival at MU for the purpose of data collection, she should report to the office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Planning Finance and Administration) for logistical arrangements. Should there be a need to extend time to complete the assignment, she should communicate the same in writing to the office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Research and Consultancy).

4. I wish her success.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof. Eliza Mwakasangula
For. VICE CHANCELLOR

Cc: Ms. Beth Kachota (Student)

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM

OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR

Ref. No: AB4/12(C) Date: 04 March, 2024

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: REQUEST FOR RESEARCH CLEARANCE

The purpose of this letter is to introduce to you **Beth Kachota** who is a bonafide student of the Sokoine University of Agriculture and who is at the moment required to conduct research. **Beth Kachota** has been permitted to conduct a research titled **"Ethical Practices in Service Delivery by Information Professionals in Selected Academic Libraries in Tanzania."**

1. The period for which this permission has been granted is from **05 March, 2024 to 31 July, 2024**.

2. It will be appreciated if you will provide any assistance that may enable the candidate achieve the desired research objectives.

Yours sincerely,

William A.L Anangisye

VICE CHANCELLOR

Cranford Pratt Building, University of Dar es Salaam, P.O. Box 35091, Dar es Salaam.
Phone: +255 22 2410500-8 Ext. 2084, Direct: +255 22 2410700, Email: vc@admin.udsm.ac.Q, Website: www.udsm.ac.tz

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
THE UNIVERSITY OF DODOMA

CB.64/172/01/205 **04th March, 2024**

To: All Principals, Deans, Directors,
The University of Dodoma.

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR Ms. BETH KACHOTA

Reference is made to the heading above.

2. The aforementioned is a Bonafide student of the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA) pursuing **PhD in Information and Library Science**. She has received research clearance and plans to conduct research at the University of Dodoma (UDOM).

3. On this basis, I kindly introduce him to you and request your esteemed office for any support she may need while conducting research at your College/School/Institute and Directorate. The title of his study is ***"Ethical Practices on Service Delivery by Information Professionals in Tanzania Selected Academic Libraries***. She will conduct her research from March to July 2024.

4. Kindly do not hesitate to contact the undersigned in case of any queries.

Sincerely,

Dr. Julius Ntwenye
For: Director of Research, Publications and Consultancy

Copy: Vice Chancellor
Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic, Research and Consultancy

Directorate of Research, Publications and Consultancy (DRPC), The University of Dodoma, P.P.O Box 259,
Benjamin Mkapa Street, Benjamin Mkapa Building,41107 Dodoma, Tanzania.
Tel +255 262310118, Email drpc@udom.ac.tz , Website: www.udom.ac.tz

Appendix 2: Journals address
Paper I



Journal of Access Services

Routledge

ISSN: 1536-7967 (Print) 1536-7975 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/wjas20

Ethical practices in library service delivery among information professionals: Insights from academic libraries in Tanzania

Beth Kachota, Ronald Benard & Silver Hokororo

To cite this article: Beth Kachota, Ronald Benard & Silver Hokororo (25 Aug 2025): Ethical practices in library service delivery among information professionals: Insights from academic libraries in Tanzania, Journal of Access Services, DOI: 10.1080/15367967.2025.2544717

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/15367967.2025.2544717

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Paper II



Public Services Quarterly

Routledge

ISSN: 1522-8959 (Print) 1522-9114 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/wpsq20

Perceptions of ethical practices in service delivery among information professionals in academic libraries in Tanzania

Beth Kachota, Ronald Bernard & Silver Hokororo

Paper III



Original articles

IFLA Journal
1–11
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Ethical practices and professional responsibilities in upholding confidentiality in academic libraries in Tanzania

Beth Kachota[1], Bernard Ronald[1] and Silver Hokororo[2]

Paper IV



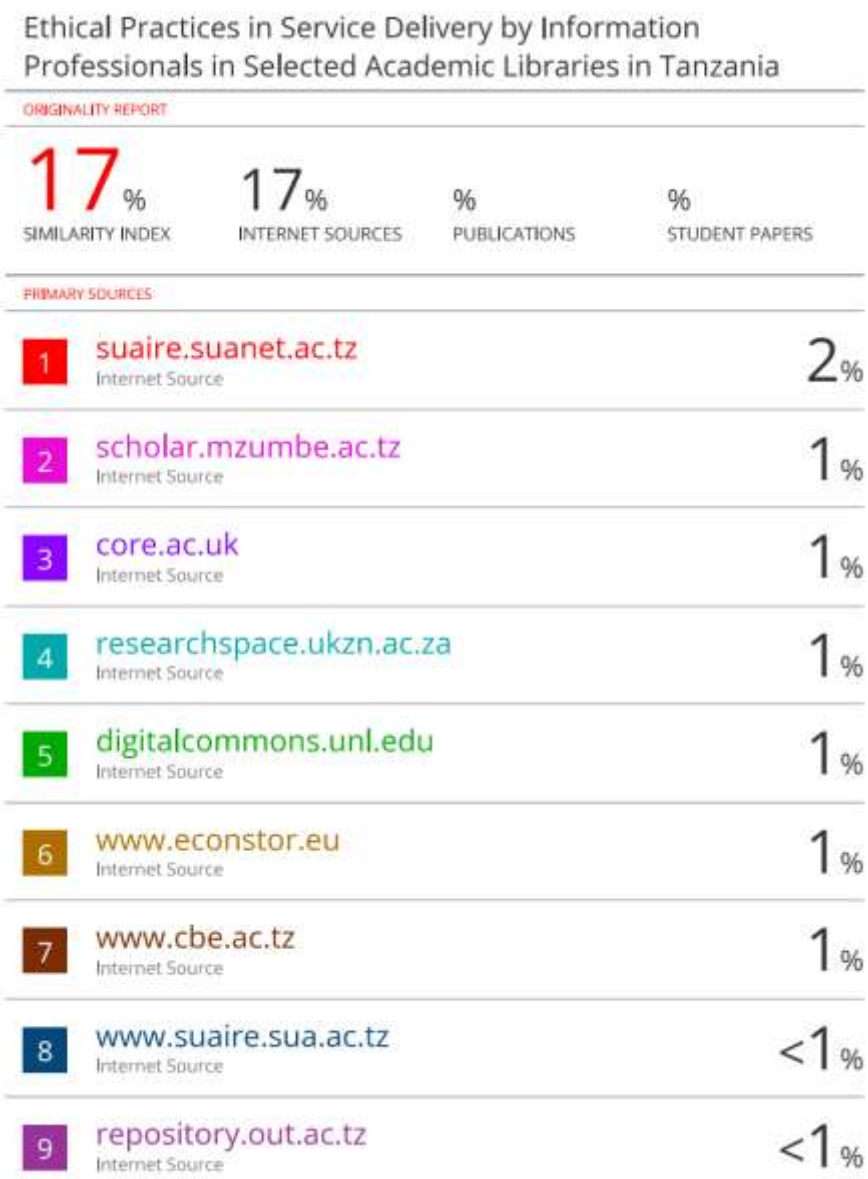
Journal of Library Administration

ISSN: 0193-0826 (Print) 1540-3564 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/wdia20

Factors Influencing Ethical Practices in Service Delivery Among Information Professionals in Tanzanian Academic Libraries

Beth Kachota, Ronald Bernard & Silver Hokororo

Appendix 3: Plagiarism Report



Ethical Practices in Service Delivery by Information Professionals in Selected Academic Libraries in Tanzania

ORIGINALITY REPORT

17%	17%	%	%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	suaire.suanet.ac.tz Internet Source	2%
2	scholar.mzumbe.ac.tz Internet Source	1%
3	core.ac.uk Internet Source	1%
4	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	1%
5	digitalcommons.unl.edu Internet Source	1%
6	www.econstor.eu Internet Source	1%
7	www.cbe.ac.tz Internet Source	1%
8	www.suaire.sua.ac.tz Internet Source	<1%
9	repository.out.ac.tz Internet Source	<1%



Kuhusu Tasnifu Hii

Tasinifu hii ilichunguza maadili katika utoaji wa huduma miongoni mwa wataalamu wa taarifa katika maktaba za vyuo vikuu teule nchini Tanzania, UDSM, SUA, MZUMBE na UDOM. Utafiti ulilenga kutathmini utekelezaji wa maadili, mitazamo ya wataalamu, wajibu wa kitaaluma na sababu zinazoathiri maadili hayo. Utafiti uliongozwa na nadharia ya mwelekeo wa tabia iliyopangwa, nadharia ya utaaluma na nadharia ya wajibu wa kimaadili, ukitumia mbinu mseto za utafiti. Matokeo yalionesha kuwa usawa wa upatikanaji wa taarifa na ulinzi wa faragha za watumiaji vilikuwa maadili yaliyotekelezwa zaidi, wakati ulinzi wa haki miliki ulipata kipaumbele kidogo na usahihi wa taarifa ulikuwa wa wastani. Wataalamu wengi walionesha mtazamo chanya kuhusu maadili katika kuboresha huduma ingawa utekelezaji wake ulikuwa si thabiti kwa baadhi yao. Aidha ilibainika kuwa mafunzo ya maadili, msaada wa uongozi, utamaduni wa taasisi na utekelezaji wa sera vinaathiri maadili zaidi kuliko sifa za kidemografia za wataalamu na mazingira ya kazi ya kila siku.