PERCEPTION OF LIBRARIANS ON IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR ENHANCING JOB PERFORMANCE IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN NORTH-WEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the perception of librarians on in-service training for enhancing job performance in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study in line with the objectives. Descriptive research design was used and the target population of three hundred and twenty-one librarians in three selected federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria was used for the study. A close ended structured questionnaire was designed and used. Frequency counts, percentages, mean scores and standard deviation were statistical tools used for data analysis. Results showed that most of types of in-service training listed were available, most of the university libraries do not organise regular training for their personnel or sponsor librarians for training on annual basis and among others. The study recommended that university libraries should organise regular training and re-training for librarians and implore them to utilise other ways of training such as short courses, virtual conferences, workshops and seminars which are more effective and less expensive. There should be good and flexible existing training policy; conditions and requirements attached to training by the universities management should be made flexible, and staff should be motivated by regular promotion as at when due and best performing staff should be rewarded.

Keywords: Enhancement, University libraries, In-services training, Job performance, Librarians, Perception, North-West Nigeria

Introduction

University libraries are those libraries established in universities to support and strengthen the academic programmes of such institutions of learning as they contribute to the total development of their users' community by broadening their intellectual horizons and inculcating in them a lasting desire to study and carry out research. The main functions of university libraries are to acquire, organise, preserve and disseminate information thereby supporting the objectives of university. Furthermore, university libraries provide information services such as: circulation, reference, technical, serial, user education, reprographic, current awareness (CAS), selective dissemination of information (SDI), referral, information technology

and document delivery services. For university libraries to be successful in performing these services depends on the quality of their staff which can only be achieve through regular training and re-training.

Many university libraries therefore spend huge sums of money on the training of librarians for better performance; considering the vital roles of libraries and their respective librarians. The vision, mission and strategies which are selected by universities as a guide for meeting these functions, form the foundation on which the roles of university library are based. Therefore, university libraries cater for the information needs of the universities by providing reading materials for the various programmes of the university. There are different bodies that establish universities such as federal, state and private organisations. However, the focus of this study is on federal universities being established and funded by federal government of Nigeria.

Librarians have the responsibility of acquiring, organising, preserving and disseminating information. Librarians perform a wide range of services such as technical, reader, reference, serial and administrative services in the university libraries. Librarians are believed to be the backbone of the services offered by the university libraries on their different job description. Librarians working in federal university libraries are expected to possess adequate knowledge and skills in order to carry out library operations. Saidu, Saka and Kur (2020) defined a librarian as one who undergo Library and Information Science (LIS) training in any approved institution of learning and has obtained first or higher degree in librarianship and perform professional duties such as selection and acquisition, cataloguing and classification, conducting reference services, bibliographic services etcetera. Furthermore, the librarian must be committed to organisational goals and objectives; and need to abide by the ethics of the profession.

Education and training are essential in making a good librarian, but also important, is the personality of the librarian. In support of this assertion, Oduagwu cited in Obot, Bamgbose and Okoro (2018) stated that the need for staff training cannot be over-emphasised, pointing out that such training improves efficiency morale, provides for succession and raise the standard of personnel. The librarian's personality is very essential in delivering effective services. This entails his or her relationship and attitude towards library users, colleagues and management. To be able to achieve success, a librarian must have satisfaction with his or her work, with working conditions, and an extrinsic and intrinsic job performance (Bamgboye, 2013). In a related assertion, this would create an enabling environment for both the library staff and users. It is also equally obvious that the quality of library services is dependent to a great extent on the quality of the staff; his or her background, training, motivation and experience. Therefore, job performance of librarians can be determined by in-service training programmes put in place to enhance their performance and so deserve serious attention.

In-service training is concerned with activities that focus on improving the job knowledge, performance and productivity of the library staff. It entails education, training and re-training of staff to acquire job knowledge, skills, abilities, increase efficiency and improve competencies of librarians on the job in order to contribute to the achievement of the organisational goals. Saha and Chand (2017) defined in-service training as a process of raising productive potentialities of manpower resources in terms of knowledge, skills and capabilities through appropriate mechanisms such as education and training, counselling, career planning, performance or self-appraisals, awards or rewards. In-service training benefits both the individual and the institution. With regards to the individual, the acquisition of new knowledge

of skills promotes job competencies for performance upgrades and promotion. The knowledge gained from in-service training programme may reduce job related stress and increase interest, thereby promoting job performance. With regard to the institution, in-service training programme offers institutions with a corporate strategy for dealing with change. In-service training could be formal and informal. Formal in-service training is the formal education for certification and formal attendance at conferences, workshops, seminars and short courses to update librarians job knowledge in their area of professional practice. This usually takes place in a formal setting. Informal in-service training, on the other hand, is achieved by training library staff on the job, for instance, job rotation, internal or in-house training, assigning responsibilities to staff in the library, coaching and mentoring and learning through action. Saka and Ibrahim cited in Osadebe, Ewa and Njoku (2018) identified seminars, clinics, workshops, study tour, conferences, orientation programmes, organised visits, participatory management, formal professional library education and short specialised or tailored courses as some of the professional development programmes available to librarians in Sub-Sahara Africa. In view of the above, the focus of this paper is to determine the perception of librarians on in-service training for enhancing job performance in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria

Statement of the Problem

The workforces of any organisations including libraries are responsible for its success and failure. The working environment of the library personnel is fast changing which demands new skills and competencies for them to perform their job effectively and efficiently. In-service training of library personnel constitutes an integral aspect of library management. For university libraries to achieve maximum productivity in terms of providing adequate and relevant information services to patrons, library management is expected to give adequate attention to in-

service training. A situation where librarians working in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria have inadequate in-service training, knowledge, skills and abilities might incapacitate them from doing their work efficiently and effectively especially in the 21st Century information age where library services are evolving in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in service delivery.

The need for in-service training and continuous professional education to acquire more knowledge and skills cannot be over emphasised. Preliminary investigation has shown that the lack of good and flexible existing training policy, lack of conducive enabling working environment, conditions and requirements for training and among others were factor that caused inadequate training which made the librarians working in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria perform their work below expectation. It is against these backdrops that the researcher intends to investigate the perception of librarians on in-service training in enhancing job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the Study are to:

1. identify types of available in-service training programmes in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria;

2. determine the perception of librarians on in-service training in enhancing job performance in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria;

3. find out the impeding factors to job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What types of in-service training are available in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria?

2. What is the perception of librarians on in-service training in enhancing job performance in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria?

3. What impeding factors are affecting job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria?

Literature Review

Saidu, Saka and Kur (2020) conducted a study to investigate the perception of librarians on staff development in enhancing job performance in State Public Library Boards in North-Central, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey and explanatory research method. The population of the study comprised of sixty-two (62) librarians working in state public library boards in six (6) states in North-Central geo-political zone of Nigeria. Data collection instrument was questionnaire. Data were analysed through frequency counts and percentages, mean and standard deviation to answer the two research questions. The result showed that holders of first degree in librarianship as the highest of the respondents and that staff development programmes were not adequately provided and there was no significant relationship between staff development and job performance among librarians in state public library boards in North central geo-political zone of Nigeria. The study concluded that the possession of first degree in librarianship will enhance high level of job performance while non-provision of opportunities for staff development can lead to poor or low level of job performance among librarians.

Eyo and Afebende (2019) conducted a study to investigate staff development and job performance of library personnel in public universities in South-South, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey design of correlation type. The population of the study comprised of

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762 librarians, para-professionals and library assistants working in thirteen (13) public university libraries in South-South, Nigeria. Data collection instrument was questionnaire. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used for data analysis. The result showed that staff development was essential for job performance of library personnel. The study concluded that the quality of staff development programmes adopted by library management to develop library personnel in public universities in South-South, Nigeria could determine and enhance the level of job performance of library personnel.

Obot, Bamgbose and Okoro (2018) conducted a study to investigate education and training of library and information professionals for National Integration and Development in tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States of Nigeria. The study adopted survey design method. The population of the study comprised of 91 librarians working in the eight (8) tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States. Data collection instrument was a researcher-developed questionnaire. Hypothesis was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed a high positive correlation (0.61) between education of information professionals and national integration and development. The study concluded that education of information professional was a strong determinant of national integration and development. The study recommended among other things that government and stakeholders must rise to the challenge of supporting the education and training of information professionals so as to foster national integration and development through the custody and dissemination of information materials by educated and trained information specialists.

Osadebe, Ewa and Njoku (2018) conducted a study to examined academic librarians and continuous professional development programmes in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study was a

descriptive survey guided by four specific objectives and one hypothesis. The population of the study comprised 165 academic librarians registered with the Nigerian Library Association, Enugu State Chapter. The instrument used for the study was a structure questionnaire. Data collected were analysed using percentages, means and T-Test. The findings of the study showed that inadequate government support, lack of support from donor agencies, inadequate facilities to train with and personal financial constraint were among challenges facing academic libraries in Enugu State. The study concluded that sponsorship to CPD programme should not be left in the hands of the individuals concerned and library institutions. The study recommended that government and donor agencies should take over the sponsorship of librarians to CPD.

Mohammed, Akor, Alhassan and Abdullahi (2017) conducted a study to investigate the influence of training on the job performance of professional and para-professional library staff in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprised of 60 professional and 84 para-professional library staff from all the tertiary institutions. The instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistical tools such as: frequency tables and mean scored were used to analysed the collected data. The findings of the study revealed that training policies were available in tertiary institution libraries in Niger State and conditions attached to training of library staff negatively affect their job performance. The study concluded that steady training will influence their job performance in tertiary institution libraries in Niger State. It was recommended that conditions for staff training programme should be made easy by the management of tertiary institutions as this will allow many library staff who are willing to go for training to do so.

Goshie, Jimada, Abdullahi and Aliyu (2017) conducted a study on continuing professional development for information professionals through the Nigerian Library

Association (NLA). The study adopted survey research method. The population of the study consisted of all the information professionals of the Federal University Libraries in North Central States of Nigeria. The instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire. Frequency counts and simple percentage were used to analyse collected data. Findings revealed that information professionals were constrained with the issue of sponsorship in terms of funding and time for attending the programmes. The study concluded that professional development programmes organised for librarians would be of importance to the information professionals because the skills they acquired in these programmes would help them to work in both the traditional and electronic environment.

Elango (2011) investigated the impact of Human Resource Development and ICT on Library staff in university libraries in North West, India. The study used survey research design and frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation to analysed the collected data. The instrument used was structured questionnaire. Findings from the study revealed that about 50% of the respondents lack the ICT skills for library operations. It was concluded that the curriculum of Library and Information Science be changed towards the new trend of librarianship, upgrading skills of staff at all levels, giving full academic and management status to the professionals.

Teresa (2011) conducted an intensive study on staff learning and how Library Assistants can learn more effectively. The study dwelt on Library Assistants (LA) as the respondents and how they learn in a university library in Hong Kong. The objectives of the study were to explore, analyze and interpret the learning issue of the Library Assistants (LA). The study interpreted the findings under different headings such as – typology of learners, perception of learning needs, effective learning modes, learning needs and work background, organizational culture and

identity, legitimate peripheral participation, motivation to learn, barriers to learning, multi-skilling and job rotation human resource development etc. It was concluded that, the study tries to justify the need of job rotation and multi-skilling.

Nonthacumjane (2011) carried out a quantitative research on library staff training policies and standard in academic libraries in India. The researcher adopted content analysis using secondary sources of data like journals, newspapers, unpublished thesis etc. to review literature over a 14-year time frame from 1997-2010. Findings from the study revealed that the key skills and competencies required for the new generation of LIS professionals include personal skills, generic skills and discipline specific knowledge. Findings from the study also revealed that metadata, database development and database management system, user needs, digital archiving and preservation, collection development and content management systems are some of the important aspect which the new LIS professionals need to have knowledge. It was concluded that LIS professionals need to be able to identify who are the target groups or users of the library. The wide range of personal attributes for LIS people like flexibility, creativity, critical thinking, ethical understanding, social responsibility and problem solving skills are vital for the future.

Igbokwe (2011) carried out a study to examine job satisfaction and performance of librarians in federal university libraries in South East, Nigeria. The study used descriptive survey method. The population of the study consisted of 110 librarians in the four federal university libraries in South East, Nigeria. The data collection instrument was questionnaire. The data collected was analysed using mean, percentages and frequency count. Findings revealed that lack of opportunity for training can affect their job performance, factors like salary increment, concrete job description will to a very great extent enhance the job performance of these librarians.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted and the target population and subject of the study were three hundred and twenty-one librarians working in selected federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria. These include: Kashim Ibrahim Library; Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria; Bayero University Library, Kano and Nigerian Defence Academic Library, Kaduna. A close ended structured questionnaire was designed. Frequency counts, percentages, mean scores and standard deviation were statistical tools used for data analysis. A total of 321 copies of questionnaire were administered to librarians in the selected federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria. A response rate showed the retun of 315 copies of the questionnaire representing 98 percent. A mean score of 2.50 was acceptable and considered as agree or available while 2.49 and below was unacceptable and considered as disagree or not available.

Results of the Study

Research Question One: What types of in-service training programmes are available in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria?

Table 1: Types of available in-service training programmes in federal university libraries

S/N	In-service Training Methods	$\bar{x}$	SD	DEC
1.	Conferences	4.45	.647	Available
2.	Workshops	4.38	.537	Available
3.	Study Tours	2.33	.432	Not Available
4.	Seminars	4.20	.598	Available
5.	Clinics	2.35	.441	Not Available
6.	Career advancement or formal professional library education	4.33	.531	Available
7.	Internal or In-house training	4.37	.545	Available
8.	Orientation Programmes	4.34	.622	Available
9.	Job rotation	4.42	.557	Available
10.	Assigning responsibilities	4.41	.649	Available
11.	Peer Coaching	4.41	.649	Available
12.	Mentoring	4.49	.679	Available
13.	Short courses	2.22	.428	Not Available

It is obvious from Table 1 that majority of the respondents indicated availability of the following in-service training methods: Conference, workshop, seminar, career advancement or formal professional library education, internal or in-house training, orientation programmes, job rotation, assigning responsivities, peer coaching and mentoring as the mean scores were above bench mark mean of 3.50 criterion point which indicated availability. On the other hand, respondents indicated non-availability of study tours, clinics and short courses as the mean scores were below bench mark mean of 3.50 criterion point which indicated non-availability.

This finding corroborates the finding of Osadebe, Ewa and Njoku (2018) who identified conferences, seminars, workshops, orientation, organised visits, mentoring, virtual conferences, formal professional library education and peer coaching to be available while clinic as a professional development programme not widely available in academic libraries in Enugu State, Nigeria. This finding does not corroborate the finding of Saka and Ibrahim (2012) who identified clinics, study tour, organised visits, participatory management, short specialised or tailored courses and among others as some of the professional development programmes available to librarians in Sub-Sahara Africa.

Research Question Two: What is the perception of librarians on in-service training in enhancing job performance in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria?

Table 2: Response on the perception of Librarians on in-service training in enhancing job performance in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria

S/N	Statements	$\bar{x}$	SD	REMARK
1	Enhance my competency to perform my job or tasks better	4.52	.559	Agreed
2	Enhance my performance in contributing my quota to the overall development of the library effectively	4.45	.577	Agreed
3	Enhance my performance in terms of working relationship with my colleagues in the office	4.35	.656	Agreed
4	Enhance my performance by being punctual to work	4.33	.632	Agreed
5	Enhance my performance with regular training organised by the library	2.33	.432	Disagreed

6	Enhance my performance in terms of communication skills used in assisting the library users	4.34	.652	Agreed
7	Enhance my performance when my organisation sponsored me to attend conferences, seminars and workshops on annual basis	2.35	.441	Disagreed
8	Enhance my competency in widen my intellectual horizon and work efficiently	4.34	.622	Agreed
9	Enhance my performance to provide quality library services	4.40	.617	Agreed
10.	Enhance my performance to facilitate planning in the library and the institution at large	4.27	.695	Agreed

Table 4 revealed that majority of the respondents agree with eight (8) statements out of ten (10) statements on the perception of librarians on in-service training in enhancing job performance in federal university libraries in North- West, Nigeria as the mean scores were above the bench mark mean of 2.50 criterion point which indicated agreement. This is an evidence that in-service training benefits both the individual and the institution. To an individual, it improves their capacity, efficiency, morale and raise their standard. With regards to institution, in-service training enables the organisation to grow and achieve its objectives.

This is in line with the assertion of Pan, Jurilin and Hovde (2010) cited in Osadebe, Ewa and Njoku (2018) who stated that continuous professional development benefits both the individual and the institution. With respect to the individual, the authors opined that the ongoing process of acquiring new information and skills promote job competences for performance upgrades and promotion. The authors further asserted that the enhanced competency gained from continuous development programme may reduce job- related stress and increase interest, thereby promoting job satisfaction. With regards to the institution, professional development programme offers institutions a corporate strategy for dealing with change. This finding corroborates the finding of Mohammed, Akor, Alhassan and Abdullahi (2017) who reported that training has positively influence on the job performance of library staff in tertiary institutions in Niger State. Consequently, this finding corroborates the finding of Saka and Haruna (2013) who averred that

seminar, conferences, workshops, on-the-job training, stimulation and extension training enhanced job performance of library personnel in faculties' libraries of University of Maiduguri.

Research Question Three: What impeding factors are affecting job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria?

Table 3: Response on the impeding factors affecting job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria

S/N	Statements	$\bar{x}$	STD	REMARK
1	Lack of job description	3.90	1.163	Agreed
2	Lack of opportunity for training in the aspect of ICT	3.85	1.082	Agreed
3	Self-sponsor to attend conferences, workshops and seminars before reimbursement	3.93	1.056	Agreed
4	Level of management interest in my well being	3.85	1.094	Agreed
5	Little opportunity to use personal initiative on my job	3.72	1.119	Agreed
6	When available ICT facilities are not functioning	3.80	1.05	Agreed
7	When my reward is not commensurate to my input	3.73	1.09	Agreed
8	Lack of cooperation among colleagues	3.70	1.19	Agreed
9	Insufficient ICT facilities in the library	3.86	1.15	Agreed
10	When my job does not have high status and it is negatively affecting my performance	3.75	1.19	Agreed
11	Lack of motivation	3.89	1.07	Agreed
12	Lack of existing good and flexible training policy	3.99	1.02	Agreed

It is obvious from Table 3 that respondents agree with all the twelve (12) items on impeding factors affecting job performance of librarians in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria as all the mean scores were above the bench mark mean of 2.50 criterion point which indicated agreement. From their responses, it is obvious that majority of the librarians working in federal university libraries in Nigeria lack adequate training. This could be attributed to lack of good existing training policies, conditions and requirements attached to training by the universities management.

This finding corroborates the findings of Mohammed, Akor, Alhassan and Abdullahi (2017) who reported that conditions as well as requirements for the training has adverse effect on job performance of librarians and library officers in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria

while Ogbonna (2018) discovered low extent of sponsorship/attendance and inadequate staff were among others. Consequently. This finding corroborates the findings of Saidu, Saka and Kur (2020) who reported that librarians in state public library boards in North-Central, Nigeria have not been enjoying adequate staff development.

Recommendations

1. Federal university libraries should implore librarians to utilise other ways of training such as study tours, clinics, short courses, virtual conferences, workshops and seminars which are more effective and less expensive as compare to other ways of training.
2. Federal university libraries should organise regular training and re-training for librarians. Federal government of Nigeria and donor agencies should complement the efforts of university libraries by providing funds to support in-service training of their personnel.
3. Management of federal university libraries in Nigeria should provide solar inverter system or stand-by electrical generators in the libraries to serve as alternative to power outage.
4. There should be good and flexible existing training policy and conditions and requirements attached to training by the universities management should be made flexible.
5. Staff should be motivated by regular promotion as at when due and best performing staff should be rewarded.

Conclusion

Based on the major findings, the study concludes that research question one revealed that majority of the respondents indicated that most of the in-service training listed were available in

university libraries under study. Data collected on research question two revealed that most of the university libraries do not organise regular training for their personnel and sponsor librarian for training on annual basis. Data collected on research question three revealed that majority of the respondents agree with all the impeding factors listed. This implies that there would be high level of performance among librarians in federal university libraries in North-West, Nigeria if university libraries organise regular training for librarians and sponsor each librarian for training on annual basis.

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