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Influence of Staff Development Programs on Library Staff Job Performance in Universities in Benue State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of staff development programs on library staff job performance in universities in Benue State. Six research objectives with corresponding research questions were raised and four hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The entire population of the study was 172, which constituted of 74 librarians from Benue State University, Makurdi, 80 from Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University Makurdi and 18 from University of Mkar, Mkar. Census sampling technique was used. The instrument was validated by 3 experts (2 from Library and Information Science and a Measurement and Evaluation experts). The instrument was trial tested on 30 Library Staff of Federal University, Lafia and the instrument yielded a high reliability coefficient of 0.971. Data collected were analyzed using percentages, mean and standard deviation while the null hypotheses were tested using Chi-square. The findings of the study revealed that there is lack of development programs for library staff in universities in Benue state; workshop has influence on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State and conference has influence on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State. Also, it was found that coaching has influence on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State and library staff encountered challenges that affect their job performance in universities in Benue State. Based on the findings, the study concluded that staff development programs can increase the quality of services rendered for greater productivity in organizations. Additionally, there would be high level of job performance among librarians in university libraries in Benue state, Nigeria if university libraries organize regular workshops and coaching programs, support library staff to attend conferences and sponsor them for training on annual basis.

Keywords: Influence, Staff Development, Job Performance, and Programs

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Introduction

Organizations are established with the primary purpose of fulfilling certain objective(s) or goal(s) through an effective blend of both human and material resources. Libraries in Nigerian universities have been making a significant contribution to the mandate of their parent institution, which is, teaching, research, and community services geared towards the social, political, and economic development of the country. These libraries provide bibliographic and user services to staff, students, and the immediate communities of their respective institutions, which is significant and crucial to the attainment of the institution's academic, intellectual, and other interests of its staff and students. This position is supported by Abdulsalami, Okezie and Agbo (2013) who asserted that university libraries are essential contributors to knowledge generation and serve a wide spectrum of knowledge seekers. They provide vast information resources and services which support the curriculum of these institutions. These libraries have two main complementary purposes which are; supporting curriculum and research of faculties and students.

For university education to make a significant impact on national development, its teaching methods must be effective and in line with the 21st-century instructional delivery, it`s research has to be relevant to the national development; its results have to be disseminated to both government and industries; and its services have to be efficient and effective (Chandan, 2002). According to Amusa, Iyaro, and Ajani (2013), library personnel, as human resources in academic libraries, are the activators of functions and services therein, as they possess skills in collection development, technical processing of information sources as well as education and services. In fact, in a typical Nigerian academic library, library personnel are classified into three, namely: professional librarians, who are academic library officers, who are middle-level managers and others, are library personnel and technical personnel. Job performance is the discharge of statutory duties or functions based on workers' fields of specialization which are geared towards the attainment of the institution's goals and objectives.

Chukwu (2010) opines that effective job performance is attainable when an institution adopts segregation of duties with clear corporate objectives, plans, policies and duties of the employee in mind. He states further that management control system should be designed in such a way that access to assets is limited to the authorized personnel to avoid being misused, damaged and stolen. Other strategies adopted by Chukwu (2010), include that transactions must be authorized or approved by a responsible and appropriate official. For instance, over time must be authorized by an appropriate officer. With the advent of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), the role and position of libraries and librarians has dramatically changed.

Staff development constitutes one aspect of the human resource management processes in any organization. It is the most powerful tool of any organization's success. According to Parvin and Kabir (2011) training and development is necessary for the maintenance of the human resource base of the organization and must be viewed as an integral part of the core organizational strategy. Rizqi and Ridwan (2015) Opined that all libraries need to have efficient staff in order to provide a good library service to the public they hope to serve, whether that readership is using a Public, University, School or Private library.

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Exposure to new products and skills is a key factor in staff development. According to Babalola and Nwalo (2019), staff development is the process by which individuals, groups, or organizations, institutions and society develop abilities (individually and collectively), to perform functions, solve problems, set and achieve objectives. Staff development involve acquiring skill and knowledge, Machara and Jain (2016) posits that staff development enable one to be aware of new possibilities and empowered by gaining new skills upgrading their old skills.

Moreover, the rising demand in information generation, access and dissemination; the technological discovery of the modern time has changed the academic libraries functions and procedures beyond the old system of operation. It has brought more challenges to the academic library staff, more so, users' needs for information increase due to the state of the arts in libraries. These have necessitated the implementation of various staff development strategies to ensure staff acquired skills for effective service delivery. However, the extent to which these developments strategies have influence service delivery in academic libraries in Benue State is a subject of debate. User community in university libraries in Benue State complains of poor service deliveries, frustration in accessing information requires for study and research among others. The above informed the reason to investigate the influence of staff development strategies on university libraries in Benue state of Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Libraries and librarians perform a fundamental role within the university community by providing information services to their users/clientele within and outside the university community. Their task performance is not encouraging thereby leading to a demonstration of lack of dedication to assigned duties. The conducive work environment in organizations tends to enhance the job performance of librarians which includes punctuality to the place of work, effectiveness to task, the quantity of work out, and many more. In achieving the job performance of librarians which is on the decline, it is intended that librarians perform their duties in a conducive work environment which is to be provided and put in place by the library management. This is shown by the librarian's attitude to work, where librarians go to work late, reduced quantity of work output, increased friction and so on which may be as a result of a poor work environment. Ademobi and Akintomide (2015) reports that a dissatisfied staff will constitute a nuisance to the organization and this, in turn, will result in low performance. However, there may not be enough literature on the extent to which the work environment contributes to the low job performance of librarians in university libraries in Benue State Nigeria. Hence the need to investigate the influence of staff development strategies in University libraries in Benue state of Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives are to:

1. Identify staff development programmes in university libraries in Benue State Nigeria.
2. Determine the influence of workshop on job performance of staff in university libraries in Benue State Nigeria

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Research Questions
The study was guided by the following research questions;

1. What are the staff development programmes offered in university libraries in Benue State Nigeria?
2. What is the influence of workshop on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The study tested the following hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

HO_1: There is no significant influence of workshop on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State Nigeria

HO_2: There is no significant influence of conferences on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State Nigeria

Methodology

The entire population of the study was 172, which constituted of 74 librarians from Benue State University, Makurdi, 80 from Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University Makurdi and 18 from University of Mkar, Mkar. Census sampling technique was used to draw the sample while a self-developed titled "Influence of Staff Development Programmes on library staff in University Libraries in Benue State Questionnaire (ISDPLSULBSQ)" was used in data collection. The instrument was validated by 3 experts (2 from Library and Information Science and a Measurement and Evaluation experts). There corrections were used to refine the instrument. The instrument was trial tested on 30 Library Staff of Federal university, Lafia and the instrument yielded a high reliability coefficient of 0.971 which means that the instrument was reliable and can perform the job it was designed to do. Data collected were analysed using percentages, mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while the null hypotheses were tested using Chi-square.

Results
The results of the study are presented according to research questions answered below
Research Question One

Research Question One: What are the staff development programmes offered in university libraries in Benue State Nigeria?

To answer research question one, the analysis of frequency and percentage counts on the types of collection development policies available in university libraries in Benue State is presented in Table 1.

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Table 1: Frequency and percentage counts on staff development programmes offered in universities in Benue State

S/N	Policies	Frequency			Decision
		N	Yes	No	
1	Conferences	172	103 (59.9)	69 (40.1)	Accepted
2	Internal and external training programs	172	71(41.3)	101 (59.7)	Rejected
3	Job shadowing	172	42(24.4)	130 (75.6)	Rejected
4	Coaching	172	79 (46)	93 (54)	Rejected
5	Workshops	172	109(63.4)	63(36.6)	Accepted

Table 1 shows that, item 1 and 5 have percentage scores above the decision point of 50% which signifies accepted. This means that conferences and workshops are development programs offered in university libraries in Benue state. Item 2,3 and 4 have percentage scores less that the decision point of 50% signifying not accepted. This means that development programs such as internal and external trainings, job showing and coaching are not offered to librarians by universities in Benue state.

Research question two: What is the influence of workshop on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State Nigeria?

To answer research question two, the analysis of mean scores and standard deviation on influence of workshop on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Mean scores and standard deviation analysis on the influence of workshop on library staff job performance in universities in Benue State

S/N	ITEMS	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Decision
6	Workshops have a positive influence on the job performance of library staff in university libraries in Benue State, Nigeria	172	3.04	0.16	Accepted
7	workshops contribute positively to the adoption of new ideas or practices to improve job performance of library staff in university libraries in Benue State, Nigeria	172	3.14	0.17	Accepted
8	Workshops contribute to fostering a culture of continuous learning and development of library staff in university libraries in Benue State, Nigeria	172	3.37	0.17	Accepted
9	Participating in workshops enhances the morale of library staff	172	3.15	0.16	accepted
10	Attending workshops brings improvement in the correct use of tools, machines and methods	172	2.68	0.15	Accepted
	Cluster Mean Score and Standard Deviation		**3.08**	**0.16**	**Accepted**

Key: N= Number, **$\bar{x}$**= Mean, **SD**= Standard Deviation

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Table 2 shows that, all the items have mean scores above the decision point of 2.50 and the cluster means scores and standard deviation was 2.90 and 0.16. This shows that workshop has influence on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State.

Discussion

The study investigated staff development programmes offered in university libraries in Benue State Nigeria and found that staff development programs were not adequately provided to staff of universities in Benue state. From the response of respondents, it was found that, the only staff development program offered to them by university libraries in Benue state were conferences and workshops. Staff development programs like coaching, internal and external training and job shadowing programs which can enhance job performance were not available. This finding is in agreement with that of Cobblah and Van der Walt (2016) who in their study on staff training and development programmes and work performance in the university libraries in Ghana reported that despite the importance of it, not many staff have the opportunity of participating in them. In the study conducted by Eze (2012) on staff Training Programmes in Nigerian Public Libraries: The Case of Enugu State Public Library also found that library staff gains certain benefits from training like promotion, professional and personal development, acquisition of new skills and techniques expose library staff to work based tasks and expose library staff to experience that will provide the relevant learning opportunities for effective provision of library services. The study indicates a need for the clear identification of each worker's training need, formulation of training policy statements and the consideration of all workers when planning for training as ways of improving training and development of library staff in Enugu State Public Library.

Again, the study investigated the influence of workshop on library staff job performance in universities in Benue state and found that participation in workshops by library staff significantly influence their job performance. Respondents agreed that workshops contribute positively to the adoption of new ideas or practices to improve job performance. They also agreed that workshops contribute to fostering a culture of continuous learning and development of library staff; knowledge gained from attending workshops brings improvement in the correct use of tools, machines and methods and it also boost their moral to work thus enhancing their job performance. Ahmad, Iqbal, Javed and Hamad (2014) also found that workshop helps one to pass on to colleagues' ideas and methods that he/she has developed or finds important thus creating a sense of community or common purpose among its participants. They also stated that it improves the professional qualifications of employees and it helps participants build a sense of unity, cooperation and partnership. It is also a good place to discuss and develop different strategic methodologies for conveying the new programme to other participants.

On the influence conferences on library staff job performance in universities in Benue state, the study found a significant influence. This implies that participation in conferences helps library staff to improve their performance competency; it prepares library them for professional growth; sharpens library their knowledge and skills; widen their skills base and understanding of their functions and it provides them with enhanced competitive edge over other players in the sector. All the items measuring this objective have mean scores above the benchmark of 2.50. Abubakar

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(2016) outlining the benefits of conference stated that it makes participants to connect and communicate with professional experts; it strengthens professional build-out and entails new career prospects, diversifies opinions and promising research approaches, improves entrepreneurial guidance and instill technical foresightedness and improves presentation and communication skills. The finding agreed with that of Chukwu (2010) whose study on impact of conference attendance on job performance of professional librarians of tertiary institutions in Imo State, Nigeria found that conference attendance impacts professional librarians in their job performance through helping them maintain greater focus towards my job; helping them achieve their work goals; stay up to date with new processes and procedures relating to their job. The study also found that it helps them to enjoy teamwork rather than achieving results alone; it gives them the ability to utilize more wealth of professional expertise and experience in performing their duties; makes them diversify their knowledge as well as acquaints them with what obtains in sister organizations.

The finding of the study on the influence of coaching on library staff job performance in universities in Benue state found a significant influence. All the items have a mean scores of above benchmark of 2.50. This implies that it exposes them to work base tasks, it gives guidance and feedback; encourages the development of a high performance work environment; helps library staff to carry out a task more efficiently as well as carry out task efficiently. Also, Podolchak, Rashkevych and Karkovska (2020) conducted a study on the influence of coaching on the development of staff skills in Lviv Polytechnic National University, Lviv, Ukraine and found that coaching improves job performance, helps staff to carry out a task more efficiently and helps staff to work one-on-one with his/her direct boss to improve job performance and enhance experience. The study also revealed that, external training improves manpower development, ensures continuity of leadership and improves employee performance.

The findings on challenges encountered in accessing staff development programmes on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State shows that some of the constrains of include lack of necessary training facilities and funds for developing library programmes; lack of due process in staff selection to attend workshops and funds to attend conferences as well as poor budgetary allocation and late release. The study is in agreement with that of Aboh, Faga, Abubakar and Odu (2016) who carried out a study on the challenges and strategies to enhance staff development for effective library services in special libraries in Benue State. The study found problems associated with staff development in the special libraries to include lack of fund for developing library programmes, poor budgetary allocation to special libraries, lack of more sponsored programmes for staff development, discrimination against library staff by the management of parents' organizations and lack of due process in staff selection for trainings.

The finding on the strategies that will enhance staff development programs on library staff job performance showed that adequate provision of training facilities, Improved funding for sponsoring library staff programmes, fairness and equity in the process in staff selection to attend workshops, sponsoring library staff to attend conferences as well as budgetary allocation timely release are strategies that can solve challenges that affect library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue state.

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This finding agreed with of Aboh, Faga, Abubakar and Odu (2016) who carried out a study on the challenges and strategies to enhance staff development for effective library services in special libraries in Benue State recommended establishment of a well written staff development policy, placement of non-qualified personnel to head libraries should be checkmated by regulatory bodies, discrimination against library staff by parent organizations should be discouraged and provision of adequate training facilities. Also, the finding is in agreement with that of Uta (2018) who recommended in his study on the Prospects and constraints of staff development in the University of Malawi Libraries that libraries should consider budgeting for Continuing Professional Development (CPD), continuous funding and time, Continuing Professional Development approach to staff development in academic libraries and introduction of an education levy to benefit skills and training needs for higher education institutions.

Summary of the finding

The following were the summary of major findings of the study.

1. There is lack of development programs for library staff in universities in Benue state.
2. Workshop has influence on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State.
3. Conference has influence on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State.
4. Coaching has influence on library staff job performance in university libraries in Benue State.
5. Library staff encountered challenges that affect their job performance in universities in Benue State.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that staff development programs can increase the quality of services rendered for greater productivity in organizations. Additionally, there would be high level of job performance among librarians in university libraries in Benue state, Nigeria if university libraries organize regular workshops and coaching programs, support library staff to attend conferences and sponsor them for training on annual basis.

Recommendations

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

1. Universities in Benue State should organize development programs for library staff to improve library staff job performance in universities in Benue state.
2. The management of universities in Benue State should organize workshops for their Librarians regularly to improve their job performance.

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