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Staff Development through workshop as a Correlate of Library Service Delivery in Abia State Public Universities

Oluchi V. Uzochukwu (MLIS, CLN)
University Library, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. Abia State, Nigeria
oluchiuzochukwu7@gmail.com

Abstract
This study examined staff development through workshop as a correlate of library service delivery in Abia State public university libraries. The correlational research design was adopted, and a total enumeration sampling technique was used to include all 37 librarians across selected public university libraries in Abia State. A structured and validated questionnaire titled "Workshop Participation for Staff Development and Service Delivery Questionnaire (WPSDSDQ)" was designed to collect data for the study. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The single null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance using the linear regression. The findings shows that librarians participate in different types of workshops and provide different library services such as collection development, reference services, user education, and cataloguing. Furthermore, the result showed a significant positive correlation between workshop participation and library service delivery, indicating that regular participation in workshops promotes professional communication, accountability, knowledge sharing, and overall service delivery. The study concluded that workshops are an impactful and cost-effective professional development strategy that should be systematically integrated into the operational practices of university libraries. The study recommended that institutional support for regular, outcome-oriented workshop participation be enhanced as a means of improving library service delivery in public university libraries.

Keywords: Staff Development, Workshop Participation, Library Service Delivery, Public University Libraries.

Introduction

Libraries play a crucial role in fostering research, academic success, and community development in today's information-driven world. Public university libraries in Abia State enhance teaching, learning, and research in higher education by offering access to information resources and professional support services. Academic libraries function as client-focused entities that support institutional goals through extensive resources and quality services (Bawack, 2019; Akinola, 2019).

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Public university libraries deliver services such as information storage, retrieval, indexing, interlibrary loans, user education, and bibliographic support (Tom-George, 2022; Bokoh et al., 2023), alongside ICT-driven services including OPAC, circulation, reference, and web-based services (Patel, 2015). The Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (2019) classifies these into technical, public, extension, electronic, and consulting services, essential for meeting the diverse needs of students, faculty, and researchers (Anyaegbu & Wali, 2021).

The effectiveness of these services depends on librarians' competencies, which are enhanced through continuous professional development via seminars, conferences, and workshops. Such activities equip librarians with skills to manage emerging technologies, modern information practices, and evolving service standards, improving competence, job satisfaction, and service delivery (Shiri et al., 2023; Abba, 2018).

Workshops are particularly significant as practical, focused, and cost-effective training that enables librarians to apply skills in automation, digital resource management, user services, and ICT applications (Nnadozie et al., 2017; Kaeophanuek et al., 2018). However, limited access to workshops in many public university libraries in Abia State has led to slow responses, outdated technologies, and limited innovation, highlighting gaps in staff preparedness.

In view of these challenges, this study investigates the correlation between staff development through workshop participation and library service delivery in public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Workshops are a key staff development strategy for librarians, enabling skill acquisition, professional knowledge updates, and improved service delivery in academic libraries. In public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria, librarians' engagement in workshops is constrained by limited institutional support, inadequate funding, and ineffective staff development programmes. Consequently, many librarians cannot consistently participate in workshops that could enhance their professional expertise.

Insufficient workshop participation may lead to outdated practices, limited use of innovative technologies, and inefficiencies in library service delivery. This situation raises concerns about the scope and quality of services provided by librarians and their capacity to meet evolving user needs.

Despite the recognized importance of workshops, empirical evidence on the specific activities attended, services delivered, and the relationship between workshop attendance and service

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delivery is limited. This gap calls for a systematic investigation to determine whether workshop participation significantly enhances librarians' performance and service outcomes.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to analyse the relationship between staff development through workshop participation and library service delivery in public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Assess the workshop activities attended by Librarians that will support development of staff for service delivery
2. Find out the services delivered by librarians in public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria; and
3. Examined the relationship between workshop attendance by librarians in public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria, and their service delivery.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the workshop activities attended by Librarians that will support development of staff for service delivery
2. What are the services delivered by librarians in public university libraries in Abia State?
3. What is the relationship between workshop attendance by librarians in public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria, and their service delivery?

Hypotheses

The null hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H_0: There is no significant relationship between librarians' attendance at workshop and library service delivery in public university libraries in Abia State.

Literature Review

Workshops serve as platforms for knowledge exchange that promote collaboration, professional development, and enhanced service delivery. This review explores this theme by integrating theoretical perspectives, conceptual understandings, and empirical findings.

Theoretical Framework

The SECI model (Socialization, Externalization, Combination, Internalisation) by Nonaka (1991) and refined by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) provides a framework for understanding knowledge-sharing in libraries, explaining how tacit and explicit knowledge is created, transferred, and transformed through continuous interaction.

In workshops, these processes occur as librarians collaborate in small groups. Socialization involves sharing tacit knowledge through interaction and demonstrations. Externalization

converts tacit knowledge into explicit forms via discussions and presentations. Combination synthesises explicit knowledge from diverse sources, while Internalization occurs when librarians apply new skills in daily work, reinforcing learning and improving service delivery.

This cycle demonstrates how workshops support continuous knowledge conversion, innovation, capacity building, and user-focused library services. Workshop participation can thus be seen as a structured avenue for knowledge creation and sharing, aligning with the SECI framework and highlighting professional development's role in sustaining effective library services.

Conceptual Framework

Workshops are widely recognized as a vital form of professional development. Hornby (2020) and Encyclopaedia Britannica (n.d.) define a workshop as an interactive, often informal session focused on teaching, problem-solving, or collaboration on specific topics. Typically short and intensive, workshops emphasize practical skill development through active participation and small-group learning (Bigabenkya & Binta, 2024, cited in Stone, 2010; Ibrahim, 2021).

Characterized by collaboration and hands-on practice, workshops foster creativity, knowledge sharing, and peer learning. For maximum effectiveness, they are often conducted in small groups of eight to fifteen participants, allowing direct engagement, questioning, and testing of new ideas (Orobor, 2008; Oluoh, 2024, cited in Richard & Ivan, 2001). Historically, workshops provided immediate feedback on applied skills, but the concept has expanded to broader educational formats aligned with modern pedagogical approaches (Eison & Stevens, 1995).

Workshops enhance productivity, efficiency, and competence (Akpakwu, 2012), while supporting career planning, performance improvement, motivation, and social interaction (Wagwu & Echedom, 2021, cited in Eke, 2011). Although participants may incur costs, professional and personal benefits typically outweigh these expenses (Engeton, 2017). Unlike conferences, workshops are tailored to specific needs, offering a practical, workbook-like experience (Ledden, 2013).

In library service delivery, workshops are indispensable for capacity building in digital resource management, cataloguing, archival preservation, and user services. They facilitate the adoption of new technologies, improve customer relations, and strengthen problem-solving skills. Moreover, they enhance motivation, job satisfaction, and retention by equipping librarians with the competencies necessary for effective outreach and community engagement. Ultimately, workshops ensure the relevance, efficiency, and quality of library services (Elujekwute et al., 2023).

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Empirical Review

Several studies have documented the positive impact of staff development, including workshop participation, on job performance across professions. Elujekwute et al. (2023) examined professional development and job performance among librarians in government polytechnic libraries in North-Central Nigeria, focusing on workshop attendance. They found a significant positive relationship, highlighting workshops' role in enhancing professional skills and service delivery.

Similarly, Hussaini (2023) explored the influence of staff development programmes, including workshops, on senior secondary school teachers in Sokoto State. Using descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation, the study found that teachers who attended workshops applied modern instructional strategies more effectively, improving performance. Ibrahim (2021) reported similar findings in Niger State, using descriptive research and one-way ANOVA, reinforcing the role of workshops in improving job performance. Although these studies focused on teachers, the principle applies to librarians.

Conversely, Wagwu and Echedom (2021) conducted a correlational study among university librarians in South-South Nigeria and found a weak, statistically non-significant relationship between workshop attendance and job performance.

In summary, empirical evidence largely suggests that workshop participation positively influences professional performance across educational and library contexts. These findings support the rationale for the present study, which investigates the correlation between workshop attendance and library service delivery among librarians in public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria.

Methodology

A correlational research design was adopted. The population comprised thirty-seven (37) librarians in public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria. Using total enumeration, all thirty-seven librarians were included in the study.

Data were collected via a structured questionnaire titled *Workshop Participation for Staff Development and Service Delivery Questionnaire (WPSDSDQ)*. The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by three experts: two from the Department of Library and Information Science and one from the Department of Measurement and Evaluation at Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike, and one from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education.

Reliability was determined using Cronbach's alpha. A pilot with fifteen (15) librarians not in the main study yielded a coefficient of 0.992, indicating excellent internal consistency (George & Mallery, 2003; Okwu, 2022).

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Of the thirty-seven questionnaires administered, thirty-five were correctly completed and retrieved, giving a 95% response rate.

Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean scores and standard deviations, with a criterion mean of 2.50, addressed the research questions. Pearson Product Moment Correlation examined relationships between workshop participation and service delivery, while regression analysis tested the null hypothesis at a 0.05 significance level. Relationships were interpreted using Creswell's correlation coefficient scale, and hypotheses were evaluated by comparing the p-value with 0.05 (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Frey, 2018).

Result and Findings

The results are provided in line with the research objectives.

Research question 1: What are the workshop activities attended by Librarians that will support development of staff for service delivery?

The response rates on the types of services delivered by the personnel of the university libraries in Southwestern, Nigeria are presented in Table 1

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of responses by librarians on the delivery of the following services in the public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria

CLUSTER B4: Librarians' attendance at workshop activities will support:

S/NO	Statement	Mean	STDEV	Decision
1	Database Training	3.57	0.502	Agreed
2	Digital Literacy Workshop	3.66	0.482	Agreed
3	Information Literacy	3.69	0.471	Agreed
4	Customer Service Workshop	3.57	0.502	Agreed
5	Library Spaces & Facilities Management	3.49	0.507	Agreed
6	Technical Services Training	3.57	0.502	Agreed
7	Collection Development Discussion	3.51	0.507	Agreed
8	Technology Integration Workshops	3.57	0.502	Agreed
9	Staff Development Workshops	3.63	0.490	Agreed
10	Evaluation and Assessment Techniques	3.69	0.471	Agreed
	Cluster Average	3.59	0.494	Agreed

KEY: SD =Standard Deviation, Criterion Mean =2.5

The analysis of librarians' participation in workshop activities in public university libraries in Abia State shows generally positive engagement. Across ten workshop areas, mean scores exceeded the criterion of 2.5, indicating agreement with participation. Notably, Information

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Literacy (M=3.69, SD=0.471) and Evaluation and Assessment Techniques (M=3.69, SD=0.471) were rated highest, while Library Spaces & Facilities Management received the lowest mean (M=3.49, SD=0.507). The overall cluster mean of 3.59 (SD=0.494) demonstrates consistent participation, with slight variation across workshop types.

Research question 2: What are the types of services delivered by the personnel of the university libraries?

The response rates on the types of services delivered by the personnel of the university libraries in Southwestern, Nigeria are presented in Table 2

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of responses by librarians on the delivery of the following services in the public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria

S/N	**Librarians offer the following library Services in my University library**	MEAN	SD	DECISION
1	Collection Development	3.89	0.323	Agreed
2	Loan (Books) Services (LS)	3.71	0.458	Agreed
3	Reference and Information Services (RIS)	3.80	0.406	Agreed
4	Current Awareness Services (CAS)	3.74	0.443	Agreed
5	Indexing/Abstracting Services (IAS)	3.80	0.406	Agreed
6	Institutional Repository Services	3.74	0.443	Agreed
7	Bindery and Reprographic Services (BRS)	3.77	0.426	Agreed
8	Inter-library Loan Services (ILLS)	2.14	0.550	Disagreed
9	Cataloguing and Classification Services (CCS)	3.91	0.284	Agreed
10	Scholarly Database Search and Retrieval Services	3.69	0.471	Agreed
11	Book Reservation Services (BRS)	3.74	0.443	Agreed
12	Library Orientation and User Education (LO/UE)	3.66	0.482	Agreed
13	Provision of Library Spaces & Facilities	3.74	0.443	Agreed
14	Community Outreach and Engagement Programmes	3.63	0.490	Agreed
15	E-Services (e.g., Wireless Internet Access and Other Electronic Services)	3.63	0.547	Agreed
16	Bibliographic Services	3.60	0.553	Agreed
	Cluster Average	3.64	0.448	Agreed

KEY: SD =Standard Deviation, Criterion Mean =2.5

The study examined librarians' ratings of 16 service categories. Most services scored above the criterion mean of 2.5, indicating general agreement on their delivery. Cataloguing and classification (M=3.91), collection development (M=3.89), and reference/indexing and abstracting (M=3.80) were highest, while other services, including book loans, scholarly database searches, bindery/reprographic, e-services, and outreach, ranged from 3.60–3.77.

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Inter-library Loan Services was the only poorly rated service (M=2.14, SD=0.550). The overall cluster mean was 3.64 (SD=0.448), reflecting consistent service provision.

Research Question 3: What relationship exists between librarians' attendance at workshops and service delivery in public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria?

The answer to research question four is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Relationship between librarians' attendance at workshops and library service delivery

		WKS	LSD
WKS	Pearson Correlation	1	.547*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	35	35
LSD	Pearson Correlation	.547*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	35	35

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). WKS = Workshops, LSD = Library Service delivery, N = Number of respondents

The outcomes from the correlation analysis in Table 3 show that there is a moderately positive relationship between librarians' attendance at workshops and library service delivery (r =.55). The variables are positively correlated, indicating that as attendance at workshops increases, library service delivery also increases.

Hypothesis

H0: There is no significant relationship between librarians' attendance at workshops and library service delivery in public university libraries in Abia State.
The result of the test of hypothesis is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Significant Relationship between Workshop and Library Service Delivery

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig. P-value
1	Regression	142.631	1	142.631	14.071	.001[b]
	Residual	334.511	33	10.137		
	Total	477.143	34			

a. Dependent Variable: LSD

b. Predictors: (Constant), WKS

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The outcomes from the regression analysis in Table 4 show a p-value of 0.001, which is less than the alpha value of.05 (p-value<.05). This implies that there is a significant relationship between the attendance of librarians at workshops and delivery of services in public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between attendance of librarians at workshops and library service delivery in public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria, was rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The study found that librarians participate in workshops mainly to acquire hands-on skills and evaluative competencies that enhance service quality, resource management, and user satisfaction. Workshops related to technical services, evaluation and assessment techniques, and staff development were rated highest, indicating librarians' recognition of their relevance to effective service delivery. Positive ratings for database training, digital literacy, and technology integration further demonstrate librarians' awareness of the need to adapt to emerging technologies in academic library environments. Workshops on information literacy, customer service, and collection development also reflect librarians' responsibilities in supporting users and sustaining relevant collections.

These findings are consistent with Elujekwute et al. (2023) and Ibrahim (2021), who reported that regular workshop attendance positively influences staff performance. However, the findings differ from those of Wagwu and Echedom (2021), who reported a non-significant relationship between workshop attendance and job performance. Such variations may be attributed to differences in institutional support, funding structures, and the scope of workshop programmes.

The study also revealed that public university libraries in Abia State generally perform well in core services such as reference services, lending services, and collection development. In contrast, interlibrary loan services recorded lower mean scores, indicating a notable service gap. Moderate ratings for database search and retrieval as well as indexing and abstracting services suggest that although these services are available, their effectiveness could be improved. These variations in service performance highlight the uneven development of library services across functional areas.

The findings align with earlier studies that identified essential academic library services such as electronic databases, reference services, user education, circulation, indexing, bibliographic support, and research assistance (Omotoso, 2019; Izu, 2020; Bamigboye et al., 2020; Aliyu & Kabir, 2022; Ilori & Owolabi, 2022). In particular, Ilori and Owolabi (2022) emphasized reference, circulation, and online services as central to teaching, learning, and research.

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Furthermore, the study established a significant relationship between librarians' attendance at workshops and library service delivery. This relationship suggests that workshop participation enhances librarians' professional competence, adaptability, and capacity to respond effectively to the changing information needs of users. The finding supports previous research that links professional development activities with improved service delivery outcomes (Elujekwute et al., 2023; Ibrahim, 2021).

Implications of the Study

The findings of this study have practical and policy relevance for academic libraries in Abia State and similar contexts. The significant link between workshop participation and library service delivery shows that structured professional development enhances librarians' competence, adaptability, and responsiveness to users. Emphasizing hands-on, evaluative, and digital skills reflects the shift toward technology-oriented, user-centered services. Library managers should integrate regular workshops into staff development policies to strengthen service quality and align operations with modern academic demands.

Conclusion

This study examined workshop participation as a staff development strategy and its relationship with library service delivery in public university libraries in Abia State, Nigeria. The findings indicate that librarians' attendance at workshops significantly relates to the quality of library services provided. Workshop participation enhances librarians' professional competence and supports effective delivery of core and emerging services, although gaps remain in specialized areas such as interlibrary loan. The study concludes that workshop participation is a strategic tool for strengthening library service delivery, underscoring the need for sustained institutional support for librarians' continuous professional development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, several key recommendations have been identified to improve library services in public universities in Abia State.

1. Library management in public universities should develop and enforce policies aimed at strengthening all aspects of library operations, thereby maintaining high standards in service delivery.
2. Periodic assessments of library services should be conducted to ascertain strengths and opportunities for improvement. This process will ensure that library services remain dynamic and responsive to the needs of users, fostering ongoing improvement in service delivery.
3. Public universities libraries should organise and promote attendance at workshops aimed at improving the practical skills and knowledge of librarians since they provide practical experience that can result in more effective library services.

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