Assessment of Training and Development of Library Staff in Federal University Libraries in Nigeria

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Abstract

The study assessed the training and development strategies employed in federal university libraries. The survey method was adopted for this study using a questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. A stratified random sampling technique was used to come up with the six federal universities selected from each of the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. The responses were analysed descriptively using frequency distribution and a percentages table, while the inferential statistics were analysed using ANOVA. The result of the study showed that the training strategies most employed by the federal university libraries in Nigeria are on-the-job training and skills training. It is recommended that federal university libraries should adopt best practice, by encouraging university library staff to go for training outside the university or abroad to acquire technical skills, which can increase their technical abilities and improve their job- related competencies.

Introduction

The management of people at work should include their training and development. One of the many ways of overcoming deficiencies in employees' performance at work is by training and development. Most shortfalls of staff, as they relate to job or task performance, can be refreshed through training. Training is the effort initiated by an organization to foster learning among its workers, while development is the effort that is oriented more towards broadening an individual's skills for future responsibility.

Continued advances in technology are having a profound effect on the workforce, especially in Nigerian university libraries. This compels library staff to continually upgrade and update their technical skills/ job skills as skills become obsolete over a period of time. Employees have to be well-equipped with skills, knowledge, ability, and competence to be able to deliver effectively. According to Engeton (2017), "a manager will not be successful if he has subordinates who are not well equipped with skills, knowledge, ability and competence" (5). This view is strengthened by Peacock (2012) who noted that "never before in our history has there been a more compelling argument for training, retraining and continuing education" and advised that "it

is time to continue the education process that makes employees so valuable in the rapidly changing workplace". Peacock gave reasons why retraining should occur. These are: "the need to keep pace with new technology, company reorganization or relocation, job obsolescence, and the desire for more challenging work, more money, or advancement" (1).

Training is the process of change used to develop specific skills, usually for a job. It is also a planned process to modify attitude, knowledge, skill, or behaviour through a learning experience to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities. The purpose of training in the work environment is to develop the abilities of workers/staff and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organization (Bloisi, 2007). According to Bloisi (2007), "the role of training is to enable employees to master the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviors that will enable them to improve their performance on the job" (218). Library functions have been affected by technology, meaning that all librarians across the spectrum need continuous training in order to keep up with the ever-changing technological innovations (Long and Applegate 2008, as cited in Edge 2011). This is particularly true in the case of those librarians who have been in the profession long enough to attain status as senior managers and in the case of librarians whose education was prior to the widespread use of technology in librarianship. Edge (2011) identified various types of continuing education that librarians can and do pursue. They include such formal options as credit or non-credit courses, professional association conferences, professional association workshops, and teleconferencing or videoconferencing, as well as more informal methods such as following e-mail discussion lists, reading professional literature, and simply having discussions with colleagues. Both informal and formal methods should ideally be used together in helping librarians remain up to date with technology.

Statement of the Problem

Advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has led to the emergence of electronic resources such as library management systems, digitization software, databases, etc. All these have brought about some profound changes in services delivery and operations of libraries, especially in Nigerian university libraries. These changes can have an influence on the way library management train their staff.

The researcher has observed over the years as head of a library that librarians are facing challenging issues such as inadequacy of competent staff to perform library tasks such as: use of e-resources including automation and digitization software, access to world library catalogues, databases, online cataloguing and classification, and the ability to provide quality and efficient service delivery to the university community. This problem may be due to inappropriate

employment of training strategies. If the problem is not addressed, it will deprive the Nigerian university libraries of having capable staff to perform their jobs efficiently, especially in utilizing the vast resources available on the internet that facilitate quick and efficient service delivery to their users.

In spite of the fact that there are measures to address these problems, especially in the area of training, i.e. the training workshops organized by the Nigerian Library Association, the Librarian Registration Council of Nigeria, and the huge sum of money spent on training staff by the Tertiary University Fund, the problem still persists. This is very evident in the way libraries are still struggling with the application of technology in their work, more especially automation and digitization of their services. Further, Solarin, et al. in Egunjobi, et al. (2018) stated that 75% of libraries in Nigerian universities are still not fully automated, and 20% are not automated at all.

The objective of this research is to assess the training and development strategies in federal university libraries in Nigeria. The following null hypothesis was tested: There is no significant difference among the federal universities in Nigeria in their training and development strategies employed in their libraries

Literature Review

The literature review looked at training across professional disciplines from various countries for a range of perspectives.

Conceptual Explanation

According to Cole (2002), "training is any learning activity, which is directed towards the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills for the purpose of an occupation or task." Cole further stated that there are benefits associated with a well-trained workforce, as "the organization will turn out a high standard of goods or services, probably in a more cost-effective manner than others, and therefore with a better chance of achieving organizational goals, be they profit-oriented or service-oriented" (330). He specified potential benefits as:

- Maintenance of a sufficient and suitable range of skills amongst employees, the development of knowledge and skills in the workforce
- The harnessing of experience and other forms of on-the-job development in a planned way, achievement of improved job performance and productivity
- Improved product quality, improved services to customers, and increased motivation amongst employees

Training and development focuses on providing knowledge, skills, and abilities specific to a particular task or job. Training is focused on the short-term, and seeks to teach skills that can be applied immediately (SHRM, 2002). Examples of training activities according to SHRM (2002) include learning specific job tasks or procedures, and learning how to operate a piece of equipment or mastering a piece of software. SHRM also asserts that development activities are broader in focus and are aimed at increasing the long-term capabilities of employees to perform their current and future job specifications. Examples of developmental activities identified by SHRM (2002) include formal education, mentoring, and special assignments. Adeyanju (2010) has observed that an organization can develop and enhance the quality of the current employees by providing comprehensive training and development. Adeyanju (2010) also advised that training of staff should be embarked upon on a regular basis at home and overseas. This way, personnel will be kept abreast of newer technologies, which will in turn bring about improvement in the library.

Staff Training and Development Strategies

There are different types of training strategies, which are designed to impart new skills and to improve existing skills and competencies of employees. University of Mumbai (2020) listed methods that are generally used to provide training as:

- On-the-job training: this type of training is imparted on the job at the workplace. The training may be a specific job, experience, coaching, specific project, etc.
- Off-the-job or off-site training: this type of training takes place away from the workplace; it is often in a form of special courses, lectures, conferences, case studies, etc.
- Induction: this is the introduction of new employees to the job. The employees are introduced to the practices, policies and purposes of the organization.

Similarly, Millem, et al. (2011) listed several methods for training strategies, namely:

- On-the-job training carried out in the workplace
- Team training: training to solve problems more effectively in groups, where observation and feedback are required during the training process
- Mentoring: training that can be delivered through mentoring, as the mentors possess advanced knowledge, skills, and abilities in problem solving, conflict resolution etc. that are of use to the mentee.

- Simulation: simulations and virtual environments are able to mimic terrain, equipment breakdowns, etc.
- Seminars: these bring trainees together in small groups for regular meetings, focusing on specific topics.
- Field trips and tours: these give staff the opportunity to experience a situation away from the workplace and to obtain practical information about their job function
- E-learning: use of information technology to enhance and support education and learning processes and provide a variety of learning strategies and applications to exchange information and acquire skills.

Relevance of training and development

Organizations that encourage learning, training, and development make an intentional effort to improve not only current performance but also the future performance of employees. Bloisi (2007), gave reasons for training as encouraging an employee to learn new skills and develop old ones, and listed the advantages as:

- Ensures that their employees have the capabilities and skills to enable them to be more effective in the workplace
- Create an understanding of how to work more effectively as part of a team, and the employee's role in contributing to the organization
- Ensure that the organization's culture emphases innovation, creativity, and learning.
- Increase their knowledge of competitors and how employees learning new skills can lead to competitive advantage
- Ensure employees are flexible and able to respond to change, which in turn provides them with increased job security as they can move around the organization when their jobs become obsolete
- Encourage acceptance of diversity so that employees have a greater understanding of each other

In the same vein, Frost (2019) advocated that training might build employees' confidence in the sense that employees may have a stronger understanding of the workplace, which may in turn lead to better performance. Bartel, et al. 1994, as cited in Munjuri (2011) asserted that organizations could improve the quality of the work of current employees by providing

comprehensive training and development activities. Munjuri (2011) also observed that evidence suggests that investments in training produce beneficial organizational outcomes.

Watermen et al. (1994) as cited in Tzafrir (2005) stated that training could be treated as an investment in organizational human assets. According to Tzafrir (2005), firms that offer training and employee development are making a visible investment in employees. Among its positive outcomes is an increase in employee ability for the individual employee who has undertaken the training. According to exchange theory, this investment can create a moral obligation in employees to see that the organization gets its money's worth.

Owotunse, et al. (2018), in their study on the impact of training and development on employee performance and productivity among staff of Kogi State Polytechnic, Nigeria, shows that the independent variable, which is training and development, has a positive impact on employees' performance and productivity. Similarly, Salah (2016) investigated the relationship between training and development, and employee performance and productivity of employees in private sector transportation companies. The study revealed that training and development were positively correlated and had a statistically significant relationship with employee performance and productivity. In a related study, Tahir et al. (2014) investigated the impact of employee performance on productivity of employees of a bank. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between the two variables, training and development (independent variable), and employees' performance and productivity (dependent variable).

Tanveer (2015) conducted a study on the impact of training and development on employees' performances in some banks. The major findings are that most of the employees agreed that training and development had a positive impact on their job knowledge, work quality and quantity, which are all linked to their performance either strongly or moderately. In summary, the study concluded that training and development positively impacts employee performance. Schuler & Jackson (1987), as cited in Tan (2011), pointed out that training helps employees to master knowledge, skills, and abilities which would contribute to innovation in term of products, production processes, and management practices in daily operations. Tan went further to state that "training develops knowledge, skill and ability of employees to perform effectively in their jobs that will lead to higher organizational innovation" (4).

Stressing the relevance of training and development for librarians, Connor (2009) as cited in Lockhart and Majal (2012) stated that "an academic library's single most valuable resource is its workforce. Without educated, well-trained, and motivated librarians and library staff, an academic library program is ill prepared to meet the needs of its clientele or the challenges that face institutions of higher education" (3).

Researchers, such as Oduwole (2005), Iwhiwhu (2009), Okiy (2005), in their studies on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) challenges in Nigeria, revealed that training of librarians is required for application of information technology in order to improve the activities of university libraries. Oduwole (2005) stated that "one of the major constraints on the use of automation software was poor computer literacy on the part of librarians" (289). Oduwole recommended retraining of librarians in software use to improve the application of information technology on cataloguing activities in Nigerian university libraries. Iwhiwhu observed a similar result in his study on the challenges of effective information delivery. The study revealed that there is an inadequate workforce and recommended a staff training program on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for university libraries in Nigeria.

According to Yerima, et al. in Egunjobi, et al. (2018), many staff in academic libraries in Nigeria were trained in traditional librarianship. They added that training and retraining is not given a priority and that is why library automation has yet to be taken up fully in many academic libraries. Similarly, Solarin, et al. in Egunjobi, et al. (2018) states that some libraries have initiated training in computer literacy for staff, yet such trainings are not sufficient for what it takes to effectively manage library automation. Furthermore, they stated that 75% of libraries in Nigerian universities are still not fully automated while 20% are not automated at all

All these studies focused on the different types of strategies for acquiring skills required of employees to perform their duties effectively. Simply put, training leads to learning, which leads to doing better work, which in turn leads to increased performance (Reference for Business, 2015).

Methodology

This study used a survey research design and a questionnaire was used to collect the data. The sampling technique adopted was the stratified random sampling technique to come up with the six federal universities selected from each of the six geopolitical zones of North-West, North- East, North-Central, South-West, South-East and South-South in Nigeria. The stratified random technique, according to Kothari and Garg (2014), is generally used in order to obtain a representative sample when a population is divided into several subpopulations that are individually more homogeneous. Forty-two heads of division in the six federal university libraries were purposely selected as respondents and were served the research instrument because of their experience and competence to respond to the questions. The responses were analysed descriptively using frequency distribution and a percentages table. Statistical Package for the

Social Sciences was used to analyse the descriptive data, while the inferential statistics were analysed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Data Analysis

The 42 respondents from the university libraries studied were requested to indicate the type of training and development strategies they employed in the respective university libraries. Table 1 presented the analysis of their responses.

Table 1: Types of Training and Development Strategies Studied in Nigerian University Libraries

Training Strategies	University Libraries Studied																	
	UAM			UDUS			MAID			CAL			M.O			U.I		
	E	OE	U	E	OE	U	E	OE	U	E	OE	U	E	OE	U	E	OE	U
On-the-job training	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Off-the-job training	5 (2.3)	2 (4.7)	0 (0.0)	5 (11.9)	1 (2.3)	1 (2.3)	3 (7.1)	4 (9.5)	0 (0.0)	5 (2.3)	1 (2.3)	1 (2.3)	5 (11.9)	2 (4.7)	0 (0.0)	5 (2.3)	2 (4.7)	0 (0.0)
Induction training	4 (9.5)	3 (7.1)	0 (0.0)	3 (7.1)	3 (7.1)	1 (2.3)	4 (9.5)	3 (7.1)	0 (0.0)	5 (2.3)	1 (2.3)	1 (2.3)	4 (9.5)	3 (7.1)	0 (0.0)	4 (9.5)	3 (7.1)	0 (0.0)
Upgrading training	5 (2.3)	2 (4.7)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (9.5)	3 (7.1)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (14.2)	1 (2.3)	0 (0.0)	6 (14.2)	1 (2.3)	0 (0.0)
Skills training	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Professional training	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (14.2)	1 (2.3)	0 (0.0)
Long term training	5 (11.9)	2 (4.7)	0 (0.0)	4 (9.5)	2 (4.7)	1 (2.3)	4 (9.5)	2 (4.7)	0 (0.0)	6 (14.2)	1 (2.3)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (14.2)	1 (2.3)	0 (0.0)
Associations organized training	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (14.2)	1 (2.3)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (14.2)	1 (2.3)	0 (0.0)	7 (16.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

Key: UAM=University of Agriculture Markudi, UDUS=Usman Danfodio University Sokoto, MAID= University of Maiduguri, CAL=University of Calabar, M.O. =Michael Okpara University, U.I. =University of Ibadan

E=Employed, representing Employed and Highly Employed. OE=Occasionally Employed, representing Occasionally Employed and Rarely Employed U=Undecided representing only undecided

Table 1 revealed that the staff training and development strategies that were highly employed represented by ''E'' by all the university libraries studied were "on-the-job training" 7 (16.6%) as well as "skills training" also 7 (16.6 %). However, the least employed training and retraining strategy was "induction training."

The reason for the high response rate for the employment of on-the -job training in the libraries studied may be attributed to the financial implications involved, while the reason for the low response rate for off-the-job training may be attributed to the fact that it takes place away from the workplace, which involves employee training at a site away from the actual work environment which may be sometimes out of the country. This has some financial implications. The technological challenges according to Peacock (2012) are compelling library staff to continually upgrade and update their technical skills and job skills. Nigerian university library staff should therefore be encouraged to ensure that they acquire relevant skills in order to improve their performance in their university libraries, as the extent to which employees perform their jobs effectively depends on their skills. This implies that any university library that fails to encourage off- the-job training, which encourages obtaining a wider range of skills and advancements in the field, may not likely be receiving training and skills at levels needed for enhanced performance of their staff in their jobs.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics using "One-Way ANOVA" on significant difference among the federal university libraries studied in their training and development strategies they employed in their university libraries

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1.00	7	34.1429	4.63424	1.75158	29.8569	38.4288	26.00	40.00
2.00	7	29.2857	8.44027	3.19012	21.4798	37.0917	16.00	39.00
3.00	7	33.7143	5.67786	2.14603	28.4631	38.9654	27.00	40.00
4.00	7	32.5714	3.86683	1.46152	28.9952	36.1477	29.00	40.00
5.00	7	36.1429	4.25944	1.60992	32.2035	40.0822	29.00	39.00
6.00	7	37.2857	2.62769	.99317	34.8555	39.7159	34.00	40.00
Total	42	33.8571	5.55931	.85782	32.1247	35.5895	16.00	40.00

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of the hypothesis computed. The total number of respondents, represented by N, was 42. The figures 1.00, 2.00, 3.00, 4.00, 5.00 and 6.00 represented the university libraries studied, while the various means and standard deviations on the training and retraining strategies employed were presented in the table. Table 3 presents the summary of the hypothesis computed.

Table 3: Analysis of difference among the federal universities studied on the training and development strategies they used

ANOVA

Responses	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	277.429	5	55.486	2.018	.099
Within Groups	989.714	36	27.492		
Total	1267.143	41			

Table 3 shows that the F – calculated value is 2.018 and the P value is 0.099 which is greater than α = 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is retained. This showed that there is no significant difference in the staff training and development strategies employed by the federal university libraries studied. In order to determine the significant difference among the university libraries in their training and development strategies, the data was subjected to Post-hoc Scheffe Test of multiple comparison. The comparison is presented in table 4.

Table 4: Post Hoc Scheffe Test of Multiple Comparisons of the federal university libraries on the training and development strategies employed

Dependent Variables	Universities		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
		UDUS	4.85714	2.80266	.700	-5.0064	14.7207
		MAID	.42857	2.80266	1.000	-9.4350	10.2921
	UAM	CAL	1.57143	2.80266	.997	-8.2921	11.4350

Training and Development		M.O.	-2.00000	2.80266	.991	-11.8635	7.8635
		U.I.	-3.14286	2.80266	.936	-13.0064	6.7207
		UAM	-4.85714	2.80266	.700	-14.7207	5.0064
		MAID	-4.42857	2.80266	.775	-14.2921	5.4350
	UDUS	CAL	-3.28571	2.80266	.924	-13.1492	6.5778
		M.O.	-6.85714	2.80266	.330	-16.7207	3.0064
		U.I.	-8.00000	2.80266	.177	-17.8635	1.8635
		UAM	-.42857	2.80266	1.000	-10.2921	9.4350
		UDUS	4.42857	2.80266	.775	-5.4350	14.2921
	MAID	CAL	1.14286	2.80266	.999	-8.7207	11.0064
		M.O.	-2.42857	2.80266	.979	-12.2921	7.4350
		U.I.	-3.57143	2.80266	.895	-13.4350	6.2921
		UAM	-1.57143	2.80266	.997	-11.4350	8.2921
		UDUS	3.28571	2.80266	.924	-6.5778	13.1492
	CAL	MAID	-1.14286	2.80266	.999	-11.0064	8.7207
		M.O.	-3.57143	2.80266	.895	-13.4350	6.2921
		U.I.	-4.71429	2.80266	.725	-14.5778	5.1492
		UAM	2.00000	2.80266	.991	-7.8635	11.8635
		UDUS	6.85714	2.80266	.330	-3.0064	16.7207
	M.O.	MAID	2.42857	2.80266	.979	-7.4350	12.2921
		CAL	3.57143	2.80266	.895	-6.2921	13.4350
		U.I.	-1.14286	2.80266	.999	-11.0064	8.7207
		UAM	3.14286	2.80266	.936	-6.7207	13.0064
		UDUS	8.00000	2.80266	.177	-1.8635	17.8635

U.I.	MAID	3.57143	2.80266	.895	-6.2921	13.4350
	CAL	4.71429	2.80266	.725	-5.1492	14.5778
	M.O.	1.14286	2.80266	.999	-8.7207	11.0064

Key: UAM=University of Agriculture Markudi, UDUS=Usman Danfodio University Sokoto, MAID= University of Maiduguri, CAL=University of Calabar, M.O. =Michael Okpara University, U.I. =University of Ibadan

Table 4 indicates that after comparison of all six university libraries, there are similarities among all six university libraries. From the table above, it is evident that none of the university libraries carried asterisk (*) against it in the mean difference, which shows that there is no significant difference in the staff training and development strategies employed by the federal university libraries studied, therefore the hypothesis is retained. Nigerian university libraries should ensure that off-the-job trainings are encouraged for their staff to explore new ideas from experts to bring to their workplace

Summary

The training strategies most employed by the Nigerian university libraries were on-the-job training and skills training. Findings from inferential statistics analysis shows that there is no significant difference among the federal universities in their staff training and development strategies employed in their university libraries.

Conclusions

Training is concerned with learning skills and knowledge for performing a specific job, while development is career-centered and is concerned with learning skills and competences for future growth. Both training and development impart to employees the basic knowledge for performing their jobs effectively, and each complements the other. The current trend in university libraries worldwide is application technology for performing library functions and providing effective and efficient services delivery to their users. To effectively do that, staff need to learn skills and knowledge to perform specific tasks. The study revealed that the staff training and development strategies that were highly employed in all the university libraries studied were on-the-job training and skills training.

Recommendation

In view of the finding, it is recommended to give training and development of library staff a priority to adapt to the changes taking place in the field of librarianship and to get the best out of them. The training strategy that is most effective in organizations and is recommended in the literature, especially in developed countries, is on-the-job training (University of Mumbai, 2020). In the case of Nigeria, considering the fact that on-the-job is not yielding the desired result, off-the-job or off-site training should be encouraged. Nigerian university library staff should be encouraged to go for training abroad so that they can upgrade and update their skills and learn from specialists or experts in the field in order to increase their technical abilities and bring the latest advancements in librarianship to their workplaces.

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