Full Length Research

Staff Development Programmes in Imo State University Library, Owerri

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This study has examined staff development programmes using Imo State University library staff as the focal point. In line with the above, three research objectives and research questions respectively guided the study. The study employed survey research design, and rating scale designed in four likert format was used as the instrument of data collection. The entire librarians of Imo State Universality library were used as the study population/sample. The data collected were presented in tables and analyzed using frequency counts, mean and standard deviation. It was discovered that the available staff development programmes in IMSU library are in-service training and attendance to conferences, seminars, workshops etc. Also, the study revealed that staff are encouraged either on individual or institutional sponsorship to attend to conferences, seminars, workshops etc. to abreast themselves of new knowledge and skills for effective operational services delivery in the library. The study identified finance, lack of management interest and lack of regular training as some of the major challenges affecting staff development in IMSU library. Based on these findings, it was recommended that the library should intensify their effort on the use of in-service training, and also incorporate on-the-job training, study visit and training programme by international organization as the veritable means to develop their staff to perform their functions effectively. The government, school management and leadership of the library respectively should provide the needed finance and training facilities as well as clear cut motivational/development policies that would engender easy accessibility and optimal use of staff development programmes in the library. This will invariably encourage staff to perform optimally in library.

INTRODUCTION

The hallmark of every organization is its human factor. The effectiveness of academic libraries depends on the efficiency of their staff development programme (Ike, 2012). However, the term staff development covers a broad range of activities designed to provide staff with knowledge and skills that are directly related to their role and responsibilities in the library. The major area of staff development programme is through training of human resources in that organization.

In general, training/development refers to a planned effort by which organizations facilitate employees' learning of job related competencies. These competencies include knowledge, skills, or behavior that are critical for successful job performance. The goals of development are for employee to master the skills, knowledge and behaviors emphasized in the training

programme and to apply them to their day to day activities. Staff development therefore holds the key to unlock the potential growth and development opportunities, to achieve organizational effectiveness and to achieve a competitive edge. In this context, organizations train and develop their employees to the fullest advantage in order to enhance their effectiveness (Devi & Shaik, 2012).

Apparently, scholars have identified many development methods that have been effective in encouraging organizational performance and effectiveness – especially in public sector organizations-of which the library is one. For the purpose of this study, we are going to focused on: orientation/induction, on-the-job training, in-service training, job rotation, seminar, conference and workshop. In the Nigeria library organizations, Orientation/Induction Training is given immediately after employment to introduce the new staff members to their position. This is mainly concerned with acquainting new employees with the organization. This training is aimed at getting all new entrants familiarize with the organization's goals, structure, culture, work standard and other conditions of employment (Obi-Anike and Ekwe, 2014). Also, on-the-job training involves assigning a new employee to an experienced supervisor or senior coworker in the library. The idea is that in the cause of carrying his routine assignments, the trainee learns by observing the superior or coworker and working with the actual equipment or materials that will be used when the training is completed (Onah, 2005). On-the-job training is received directly on the job, and so it is often called "job instruction" training.

Not only that seminars, workshops and conferences create forums for participants to discuss on participating basis. Consequently, opportunities are provided for participants to pool ideas, to discuss ideas and facts, to test assumptions and to draw conclusions. These methods are expected to help develop the problem – solving and decision – making facilities of the personnel as well as present new and complicated issues for deliberation.

When the library staff are highly developed, it will help to motivate them in doing their job. Allan, Gadon and Willits (2001) define motivation as an inner state of mind that causes a person to behave in a way that endures the accomplishment of stated goals. In this case, staff development as veritable instrument of motivation is very essential to guarantee optional performance staff in any organization, especially in the academic library.

To this end, staff development programmes such as seminar, workshop, and other in-service programme will serve as a motivation to staff. Such staff development programme will help to achieve efficiency and effectiveness on the staff, spur the staff into effective action on the job, encourage the library staff to put in their best and thereby serve the library users very effectively.

Statement of Problems

Staff development is one of the basic areas which focuses on training and manpower empowerment. It has been observed that many scholars have actually written on issue of staff development, but the issue on staff development progammes as it concerns academic library staff has not been researched on very actively so as to understand its impact, benefits and challenges to academic library staff.

The inherent problem identified is that many employers have attempted several programs to motivate their employees, yet they have not considered every category of staff in the library. Based on the above, this study focuses on examining staff development programmes of library staff, using Imo State University library, Owerri as case study.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study focuses on staff development programmes in Imo State University, Owerri. The specific purposes are:

1. To ascertain the staff development programmes available in Imo State University library, Owerri.
2. To determine the extent of accessibility of these programmes to staff in enhancing their functionality in the library studied.
3. To identify the problems affecting staff development programmes in the library studied.

Research questions

Base on above stated objectives of the study, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the staff development programmes available in Imo State University library, Owerri?
2. To what extent does these programmes made accessible to staff in improving their functionality in the library studied?
3. What are the problems affecting staff development programmes in the library studied?

Staff Development

Many scholars have examined the concept of staff development. According to Ubah (2015), the term staff development covers a broad range of activities designed to provide staff with knowledge and skills that are directly related to their role and responsibilities in the work they

do. The goals of staff development are for employee to master the skills, knowledge and behaviors emphasized in the training programme and to apply them to their day to day activities. Staff development is the engine for organizational effectiveness and high productivity because it helps employees develop skills that enable them to succeed in the current job and develop for the future; helps the organizations create a workforce that is able to cope with change, meet the increasing demand and challenge posed by the ever changing environment; and prepare the future administrators, management/leaders of the organization (Onah, 2005).

Precisely, development is a process of assisting managerial employees to upgrade their capability to plan and diagnose managerial problems (Agulanna and Awujo, 2011). It also improves their competence, leadership skills and decision-making capabilities. Development, which is aimed at the managerial employees, has a longer duration than training. In the same direction, Fanibuyan (2001) asserts that, development programme generally aimed at educating supervisory employees above and beyond the immediate technical requirement of the job and have a main objective of the improvement of the effective performance of all managers.

Also, development involves preparing employees for higher responsibilities in future. Development according to Ezeuwa (2009) can be seen as the use of human resources to quantitatively change man's physical and biological environments to his benefits or ever seen as involving the introduction of new ideas into the social structure and causing alterations on the patterns of the organization and social structure.

Meanwhile, staff development is a sufficiently complex concept to defy simple definition. It is generally accepted however, that staff development refers to the process whereby employees of an organization enhances their knowledge and skills in directions that are advantageous to their role in the organization (Marriss, 2011). Sherman (2014:1) asserted that staff development to mean programmes that offer training and continuing education to employees or help employees plan their own professional growth.

Methods Adopted for Staff Development Programmes in the Library

There are different approaches or ways adopted by libraries in which staff could be exposed to enhance their capabilities, knowledge and skills. Ajidahun (2007) enumerated the three common development ways in which researchers on management, career development etc. usually adopted, and which are also considered very relevant for the development of library personnel. They are:

1.   **Study visits:** Library personnel with theoretical knowledge of library and information science may broaden and update their knowledge by touring to other libraries to acquaint themselves with new practice and emerging issues that are evolving in the profession. This library trip method has been proved successful in enhancing the functionality of the staff as well as engender overall growth of the library.

2.   **In-service training:** Staff of the library do periodically expose to in-house training and workshop to improve their capacity. Ofoegbu (2014) stated that many librarians have resorted to organizing internal training programmes for their staff; in some libraries, this need is so real and obvious that there are staff training officers who coordinate all the training programmes usually done at different levels. The training will help staff to update their knowledge for professional competence. Akinpelu (2002) defined in- service training as an in-house programme for staff in many government and business enterprises. It is widely used for continuing education for teachers as well as librarians, bankers and industrial workers.

3.   **Industrial attachments:** Librarians in training are sent to at least six weeks to three months tutorship on industrial experience for more practical exposure cum learning. The exposure actively prepares librarians to face challenges in the job on which they may find themselves working.

4.   **On-the-job training**: This kind of training includes cross-training, which moves the trainee from one department or unit to another. It can be an ongoing process that does not disrupt normal organization operations. It minimizes the problems of transfer of learning associated with the other methods of training.

5.   **Training programmes by International Organizations**: Some international organizations according to Adeniji (2010) have interest in human development programmes in Nigeria and other parts of Africa and have put in place training programmes that of great benefit to library students and staff of institutions of higher learning. Such organizations like the Macarthur Foundation, African Economic Research Consortium and Mortenson Centre for International Libraries.

6.   **Institutional training programmes**: Institutions of higher learning are expected to play a vital role in the training and re-training of professionals and other interested individuals. In many of the academic institutions in this country especially the universities, part-time and full time courses of study and correspondence or distant learning programmes are offered for staff to upgrade themselves through individual or institutional

sponsorship (Lynn, 2006). This was earlier on asserted by Mathis (2007) who stated that many professions require periodic postgraduate study in order to maintain certification for practice. Many universities, polytechnics and colleges offer diploma and degree courses for intending library workers and librarians for improvement of their skills and knowledge.

7.   Conferences, Seminars and Workshops: Librarians as well as other professionals do acquire professional growth through conferences, seminars and workshops. Gutek (2007) defined conferences, seminars and workshops as a meeting on specialized subject area and often held in a day or more to discuss a topic of interest relevant to the organization (Eze, 2012). Attendance to conferences, seminars and workshops can be local/national or international, and this aims to encourage staff of the library to improve relations among libraries as well as exposing them to wider experiences for job efficiency (Ofoegbu, 2014).

Theoretical Framework

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's hierarchy of needs would be adopted. Abraham H. Maslow (1943) has the idea that individuals work to satisfy human needs, such as food and complex psychological needs such as self-esteem. He coined the term Hierarchy of Needs to account for the roots of human motivation. He stated that if the needs and desires of individuals are realized, they will be motivated. He however, stated that needs are of hierarchy and priority and he classified them into the following five (5) levels:

1.   Physiological Needs: Needs required to sustain life such as: air, water, food, and sleep. These are needs that are basic to existence.
2.   Safety and Security: Once physiological needs are met, one's attention turns to safety and security in order to be free from the threat of physical and emotional harm. Such needs maybe fulfilled by: living in a safe area, medical insurance, job security, and financial reserves.
3.   Social Needs: Once lower level needs are met, higher level motivators awaken. Social needs are those related to interaction with others and may include: friendship, belonging to a group, and giving and receiving love.
**4.   Esteem Needs:** After a person feels that he or she belongs, the urge to attain a degree of importance emerges. Esteem needs can be categorized as both external and internal motivators. Internally motivating esteem needs are those such as self-esteem, accomplishment, and self-respect. External esteem needs are those such as reputation, social status, and recognition (Iwu, 2011).
5.   Cognitive needs: It includes the needs to know, understand and explore.
6.   Aesthetic needs: It involves the need for summetry order and beauty.
7.   Self-Actualization: Is the summit of Maslow's motivation theory. It is about the quest for reaching one's full potential as a person. They are said to have frequent occurrences of peak experiences, which are energized moments of profound happiness and harmony. According to Maslow, only a small percentage of the population reaches the level of self-actualization.

Maslow Hierarchy of Needs
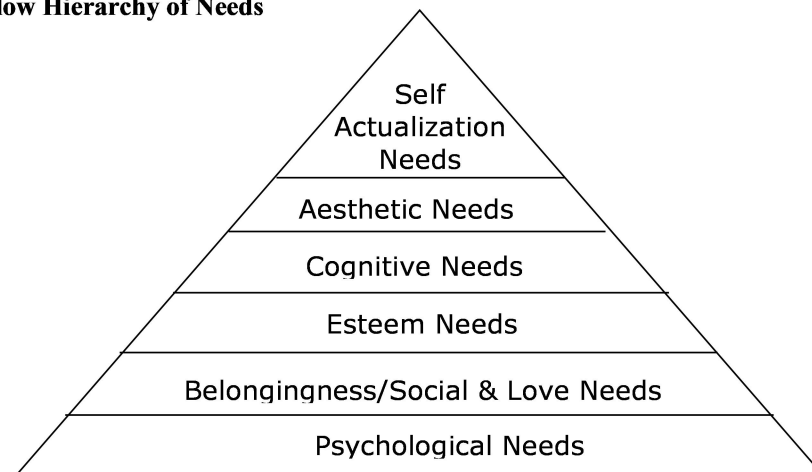
Source: Okeke (2010): Administrative Theories and Thoughts. Enugu: Noble Publishers Ltd.

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Maslow theory has far-reaching implications for library staff. Their development is embracing; using this theory to analyze the subject matter, it becomes a fact that the library staff need to be motivated through human resources development programme. Such development which can motivate the academic library staff to perform their functions well include seminar, workshop, attending conferences and other forms of in-service training. When the staff are motivated through such methods, they will be encouraged to come to work early, attend to library users well, organize information resources in library very effectively and encourage collection development of the library resources.

Research Design and Procedure

Survey design was used in the study. The population/sample of this study is made up of the entire 15(fifteen) library staff in Imo State University. Based on the fact that population is small and accessible, the census enumeration sampling techniques was used in the study. The study used rating scale as an instrument for data collection.

Also, table and mean frequency and standard deviation were employed to analyse the collected data. In the use of mean frequency, any mean up to 2.5 and above were accepted and below were rejected.

Data Analyses

Research Question 1: What are the staff development programmes available in Imo State University library, Owerri?

Table 1: Staff Development Programmes for Imo State University Library, Owerri

S/N	Question Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	∑X	X	St. D	Dec.
1	Study visits	3	1	10	1	15	36	2.40	0.87	Negative
2	In-service training	12	2	1	-	15	55	3.70	0.57	Positive
3	On-the-job training	8	5	2	-	15	32	2.13	1.45	Negative
4	Training programmes by International Organizations and institutional training programmes	1	-	8	6	15	26	1.73	0.64	Negative
5	Conferences, seminars and workshops	13	1	1	-	15	57	3.80	0.54	Positive

From the data analysis in the research question one above, it was discovered that only item 5 and item 2 were positive. This is because item 5 has a mean and standard deviation of 3.80(0.54) and item 2 has a mean and standard deviation of 3.70(0.57), while it was items 1, 3, and 4 were negative. This is because item 1 has a mean and standard deviation of 2.40(0.87), item 3 has a mean and standard deviation of 2.13(1.45), and item 4 has a mean and standard deviation of 1.73(0.64), hence the items 5 and 2 have the mean scores of 2.5 and above respectively. We therefore conclude here that conferences, seminars and workshops; in-service training are the staff development programmes available in Imo State University, Owerri, Owerri.

Research Question 2: To what extent does these programmes made accessible to staff in improving their functionality in the library studied?

Table 2: Extent of Accessible of Staff Development Programmes in Imo State University Library, Owerri

S/N	Question Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	∑X	X̄	St. D	Dec.
6	Staff are encouraged to go for training, seminars, conferences etc	7	5		2	15	47	3.13	1.10	Positive
7	Staff are sponsored wholly or partially for furthering their studies	6	4	2	3	15	43	2.86	1.33	Positive
8	The environment are made conducive for staff development and programmes to strive	2	6	2	5	15	35	2.3	1.20	Negative
9	Policies are made flexible for organizing and enhancing training and development	1	5	6	3	15	34	2.26	0.90	Negative

From the data analysis in the research question two above, it was discovered that item 10 and 11 were positive. This is because item 10 has a mean and standard deviation of 3.13(1.10) and item 11 has a means and standard deviation of 2.86(1.33), while it was items 12 and 13 were negative. This is because item 12 has a mean and standard deviation of 2.3(1.20) and item 13 has a mean and standard deviation of 2.26(0.90), hence the item 10 and 11 have the mean scores of 2.5 and above respectively. We therefore conclude here that staff development programmes in the library studied at to an averagely extent been accessed hence her staff are encouraged to participate or attend to conferences, seminars and workshops as well as being sponsored wholly or partially by the institution for furthering their studies.

Research Question 3: What are the problems affecting staff development programmes in the library studied?

Table 3: Problems Affecting Staff Development Programmes in Imo State University Library, Owerri

S/N	Question Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	∑X	X	St. D	Dec.
10	Inadequate finance	8	6	1	-	15	52	3.5	1.02	Positive
11	Lack of management interest/bad leadership	5	4	3	3	15	31	2.1	1.29	Negative
12	Lack of training facilities	9	3	2	1	15	50	3.3	0.94	Positive
13	No clear motivational/ development policies	5	6	3	1	15	45	3.0	0.89	Positive

From the data analysis in our research question three above, it was discovered that items 13, 15 and 16 respectively were positive while only one item was negative. This is because item 13 has a mean and standard deviation of 3.5(1.02), item 14 has a mean and standard deviation of 2.1(1.29), item 15 has a mean and standard deviation of 3.3(0.94), and item 16 has a mean and standard deviation of 3.0(0.89); hence some of the items has a mean of 2.5 and above while item 14 has none. We therefore conclude here that inadequate finance, lack of training facilities and clear motivational/development policies respectively, are the major problems affecting staff development performance in the Imo State University library, Owerri.

Discussion of Results

Staff Development Programmes Available in Imo State University Library, Owerri

Based on our data analysis in line with research question one, it was discovered that in-service training and attendance to conferences, seminars and workshops are staff development programmes available in Imo State University library Owerri. This findings is in line with the submission of Oforegbu (2006) which observed that internal training and conferences, seminars and workshops are the common training programmes virtually fund in libraries to develop the staff. In this case, such development programmes have been positively maximized by library staff.

Extent of Accessibility of Staff Development Programme in Imo State University Library, Owerri

Based on the data analysis in line with research question two, it was revealed that library staff are encouraged to attend to training, seminar, conference etc. Also, it was revealed that library staff are sponsored wholly or partially by the institution for furthering their studies. This

findings supports the submission of Lynn (2006) which stated that staff of the library avail themselves with institutional sponsorship training programmes to improve their knowledge and skills.

Problems Affecting Staff Development Programmes in Imo State University Library, Owerri

Based on our data analysis in line with research question three, it was discovered that inadequate finance, lack of training facilities and clear motivational/development policies respectively, are the problems affecting staff development programmes in Imo State University library. This result is in line with the views of Onah (2005) and Akpanabia (2015) which believe that lack of finance, low level of management interest in development programmes, lack of training facilities and bad leadership are some of the major challenges affecting staff development in higher institutions.

CONCLUSION

It has been discovered that the staff of IMSU library as well as other academic libraries have a variety of training

needs ranging from acquiring further education and skills to training in handling users and library materials efficiently. While some programmes like library trip, job orientation and other on-the-job training programmes are indaequately provided for the staff in the past decades, things are no longer the same these days, as was found from findings of this study that seminar and conferences as well as attendance have invariably exposed staff to innovative and competent experiences that engender efficiencies in the library operation towards achieving of the organizational goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The library should also make use of on-the-job training, study visit and training programme by international organization in developing their staff to perform their functions effectively.
2. Adequate motivational/development policies should be well formulated to guide the staff development programme accessibilities and implementations in our academic libraries. This will invariably address the problem of favouritism and corruption meted on some staff in the library as well as enthroning job efficiency and growth in the operational existence of our libraries in Nigeria.
3. Let there be provision for adequate environment, training facilities and funds respectively that ensure hitch-free for maximizing the optimal potentials of library staff.
4. All categories of staff should be involved in the training of library staff. Training should not be focused on the professional staff alone; the other categories of staff should be given adequate consideration for overall human development that geared towards achieving the overall objectives of the libraries in Imo State University Library, Owerri and that of Nigeria at large.

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