

## Perception of Librarians on Staff Development in enhancing Job Performance in State Public Library Boards in North-Central, Nigeria

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### Abstract

*The study investigated enhancement of staff development in the efficient job performance among librarians working in public libraries and state library boards in North-central geo-political zone of Nigeria. Two research questions and one hypothesis were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Descriptive and explanatory research design was used and the target population of sixty-two librarians in the six state public library boards in North central Nigeria were adopted for the study. Structured but five-point likert scale questionnaire was designed and used. Frequency counts and percentages, mean scores and correlation coefficient were statistical tools used to answer research questions and test the null hypothesis. Results showed holders of first degree in librarianship as the highest of the respondents and that staff development programmes were not adequately provided. There was no significant relationship between staff development and job performance among librarians in state public library boards in North central geo-political zone of Nigeria. The conclusion was that the possession of first degree in librarianship will enhance high level of job performance while non-provision of opportunities for staff development can lead to poor or low level of job performance among librarians. The study recommended that the concerned state ministries of education and information in collaboration with the management of state public library boards be committed to organizing regular training programmes for librarians in North-central, Nigeria.*

**Key words:** Staff development, Capacity building, Library Boards, Librarians, Job Performance

## Introduction

Every organization, be it profit or non-profit oriented is established with certain mission and back-up with goals and specific objectives to be achieved within a given period of time. Library boards like any other organizations or institutions are established with specific objectives which are to be in line with the objectives of their parent organizations and of course ministry of education or information as the case maybe. Generally speaking, libraries regardless of type are usually established to provide information services to their clientele and include those of academic, national, special, school and public and each has specific objectives to be achieved.

A librarian is one that has undergone Library and Information Science (LIS) training in any approved institution of learning and has obtained first or higher degree in librarianship. Most of them hold positions as Heads of libraries/library schools, Director of library boards/sections/units of library and perform professional duties such as selection and acquisition, cataloguing and classification, conducting reference services, bibliographic services, etc. They are usually assisted by para-professionals in the discharge of these functions in libraries (Aina, 2004). The concept of job performance can be viewed as assigned tasks or duties being carried out by the staff and the result could be high, low or poor performance. The level of performance can be attributed to the skills been acquired by the staff during training programmes such as conferences, workshops, seminar, on-the-job training, rotation of staff (Ogbonna, 2018). The high or low level of performance of staff to some extent depends on the qualification, skills acquisition and further training of staff.

For the purpose of this paper, public libraries is the focal point of discussion, However, they are libraries that are established out of public funds and their use are not restricted to any class of people but for all. One of the objectives of establishing public libraries is to provide information resources for educational, research, leisure and academic needs of users (students, civil servants, applicants, business men, farmers, researchers, etc.). Effective utilization of information resources and provision of efficient services or information services delivery to some extent depends on provision of adequate extrinsic motivation to library personnel working in public libraries.

The concept of motivation can be viewed as any attempt made by superior officer or head of organization to stimulate or encourage worker(s) to perform efficient job in an organisation either by intrinsic or extrinsic. The former is motivation that worker(s) derive in the course of performing the job such as work itself, recognition, advancement, etc. The latter is any attempt made by superior officer to effect desirable change in the behaviour of worker(s) in order to perform efficient job and attain higher productivity level in the organization. It includes salary, staff development, participatory, communication, etc. To Ofie (nd), six factors affect motivation in an organisation and they include: salary, goal setting, good human relation, effective communication, working environment and opportunities for advancement.

Opportunity for advancement in generic phrases has to do with the development of human resources for better output (performance) hence staff development is one aspect of extrinsic motivation in any organization. The concept of staff development is used interchangeably to denote staff training, human capital

development, capacity building, human resources development, etc. According to Ifidon and Ifidon (2007), staff development programmes encompasses formal education, seminar, conferences, workshops, in-house training and participative management and to Ugwu, Chidiebere and Abari (2015), these training programmes are not only to be organised by/or in universities and colleges but also by the Nigerian Library Association (NLA). From the above mentioned, staff training and development programmes connote various ways by which library personnel can improve their performances there by contributing to the growth and development of the organization which can only be achieved through the acquisition of skills, knowledge, new ideas, and various forms of training programmes.

Nigeria as a country as at now has 36 states and Federal Capital Territory Abuja (FCT). The country is divided into six geo-political zones, namely: North-central, North-west, North-east, South-south, South-east and South-west. This study covers only north-central geo-political zone of Nigeria with focus on the study of librarians' perception of staff development in relation to their job performance in six states (Benue, Niger, Kwara, Kogi, Plateau and Nasarawa States); the study excludes FCT-Abuja.

Public libraries are type of libraries that are established out of public funds and their uses are open to all citizens regardless of tribe, religion, class or position in society. State Library Boards apart from being one of the parastatals under a Ministry (Education or Information), they oversee the affairs of public libraries that are established in various Local Government Areas. State Library Boards consists of board members, executive directors and their deputies as well as heads of various sections within library boards. The boards exercise control over public libraries through their board members and executive directors and other professional staff holding key positions. The State Library Boards ensure that public libraries perform the expected roles and provide efficient services.

However, with the positions of being heads and directors of library boards, heads of sections/units in public libraries, librarians do not meet up with the expectations of public libraries in North-Central Nigeria and hence perform below expectation. The expectations include: provision of training programme, opportunities for advancement, to enable librarians provide efficient library services. This research is set to investigate the perception of librarians about staff development and relationship existing between independent variable of staff development and dependent variable of job Performance respectively.

### Statement of the Problem

Library boards are parent institutions of the public libraries which are established to cater for the information needs of all regardless of class or race. In doing so, information resources are acquired, organized, stocked and disseminated to users on request more so that Saka (2019) enumerated several services that public libraries are expected to render more especially in this current democratic Nigeria. For efficient information service delivery and to meet user's research needs, there is the need for librarians to be equipped with skills which can only be acquired through formal and informal trainings such as professional and paraprofessional (degree/diploma) as well as

conferences, workshops, seminars, in-house training, mentoring, etc. Visits to some state public library boards and public libraries in North-Central Nigeria by the researchers revealed that users of public libraries were found to encounter difficulties in meeting their information needs as available collections were not adequately managed by librarians on one hand, and that librarians in various sections of the public libraries and the state library boards were not attending to users' requests as expected on the other hand. Related empirical evidence as revealed by Adomi and Famola (2012) reported inability of the apex library, the National Library of Nigeria, Abuja to sponsor staff to various training programmes and this was further supported by the study conducted by Ogbonna (2018) and Adekunjo, Tomomowo-Ayodele and Bamidele (2019) as the studies reported prevalence of inadequate trained staff and moderate level of capacity building among staff in public and university libraries respectively. The study is set to find out the perception of librarians about staff development (seminars, conferences, workshops and formal education) and its relationship with job performance among librarians in public libraries/ state library boards in North-Central, Nigeria.

### Research Questions

In order to effectively conduct the study and collect data, the below research questions were asked, thus;

1. What is the highest educational qualification of librarians in state public library boards in North-Central Nigeria?
2. What is the perception of librarians on staff development in state public library boards in North-central, Nigeria?

### Research Hypothesis

The below null hypothesis was tested at 0.05, level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between staff development and job performance of librarians in state public library boards in North-Central, Nigeria.

### Literature Review

Mbagwu and Nwachukwu (2010) investigated the effects of training and development on professional and paraprofessional staff in Federal University of Technology, Owerri. Descriptive statistics was used in the analysis of data. It was discovered that induction and orientation, on-the-job training, workshops, seminars and conferences simulation and extension training were the available training programme in the University. The study also revealed that training and development has enhanced job performance as majority of the respondents affirm that job performance was above average after undergone training.

In a related study, Adomi and Famola (2012) investigated training and development of 50 categories of staff in National Library of Nigeria, Abuja. The result revealed quality of library staff and service delivery as staff become more competent. Staff participated in the in-house training and departmental meetings. Major obstacle to staff training and development is the inability of the National Library of Nigeria to sponsor staff to the training programme.

A study was conducted to investigate the impact of training programmes on job performance of staff in Colleges of Education in Nigeria. Impact of acquisition of higher education; participation of short training courses on job performance of staff were the two objectives of the study. Two alternate hypotheses on significant difference were formulated to include variables of the acquisition of higher education and participation in short training courses on job performance. Descriptive survey was adopted and population of 45,058 management, academic and non-academic staff in Colleges of Education in Nigeria were the population of the study. One third of the population and 12 out of 36 states were selected for the study using stratified random sampling. Results of the study revealed that possession of higher degrees have positive impact on job performance of staff, while there was low impact on the job performance of management staff. Participation in short training courses workshops and conferences have higher/positive impact on the job performance for management and academic staff (Shehu, Iganmu and Maina, 2015).

In order to enhance high level of performance and productivity on the part of library staff, the management of various boards of National Library of Nigeria was able to put in place welfare packages which include: loans and advances, merit/service awards as well as training/sponsorship to workshops, conferences, seminars and courses. However, there is the need to revisit merit/service awards as well as training/sponsorship – hence many staff are queue as far as training/sponsorship is concern (Akidi, 2016).

Mohammed, Akor, Alhassan and Abdullahi (2017) investigated the influence of training on job performance of librarians and library officers in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria. Data were collected and analyzed through questioner and descriptive statistics respectively. The study discovered availability of policies on training though conditions attached as well as requirements for the training has adverse effect on job performance of librarians and library officers. It was discovered that respondents indicated that steady training will have positive effect on the job performance of these categories of library personnel in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria.

Ogbonna (2018) conducted a study on public library administration in six geographical zones using telephone interview and document examination. The result from the interview showed little realisation of the public library objectives. The official methods of communication in libraries were through memoranda/circulars, notice boards, interview and progress report, orientation and general meetings, conferences, telephones, (including social media) and staff unions/associations. Majority of the respondents narrated low extent of sponsorship/attendance or inadequate staff were among others.

Adekunjo, Tomomowo-Ayodele and Bamidele (2019) investigated the level of capacity building among entire 202 library staff in selected universities in south-west Nigeria. Questionnaire was the only data collection instrument used. The study reported moderate level of capacity building among library staff in the studied universities.

### **Uniqueness of the Study**

The uniqueness of the present study lies on the fact that it tries to investigate the perception of only one category of library personnel (librarians, being the professionals) in terms of staff development and its influence on job performance in state public library boards in North-Central Nigeria. This is against the previous studies (related empirical literature) that concentrated on different categories of library personnel in University, National Library and Collages of Education in Nigeria respectively.

### **Methodology**

Descriptive survey and explanatory research were adopted and the target population and subject of the study were the sixty-two (62) librarians working in state public library boards in six (6) states in North-Central geo-political zone of Nigeria. The public libraries and the state library boards include those of Benue, Niger, Kogi, Nasarawa, Kwara and Plateau States. Due to the small number of the subjects of the study (librarians), the researchers decided to adopt the entire population in the study, thus called complete enumeration or census. This idea was supported by Ibrahim (2013) who maintains that where a population is small, researcher can adopt the entire population.

Structured type of questionnaire with five-point likert scale with Strongly Agree (SA) (5); Agree (4); Disagree (D) (3); Strongly Disagree (SD) (2) and Undecided (U) (1) was designed into sections A, B, C and D to capture demographic information, staff development indices and job performance. The draft copies of questionnaire were validated by lecturers in the Department of Library and Information Technology, Federal University of Technology, Minna and 40 copies of the modified version were pre-tested on 40 staff of the National Library of Nigeria, Minna Branch as well as public services department of National Library of Nigeria, Area III Abuja respectively using split half method. Reliability coefficient of 0.98 was obtained from the pre-test. These two organizations are neither part of population, study area nor part of sample.

A total of 62 copies of the questionnaire were administered on librarians across the state public library boards in the six states within the North-Central geo-political zone of Nigeria. The response rate showed the return of 60 copies of the questionnaire. A mean score of 3.50 was considered as acceptable while 3.49 and below was unacceptable and considered as disagreed.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation of Research Findings**

Data were analysed through frequency counts and percentages, mean and standard deviation to answer the two research questions and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the null hypothesis of significant relationship between two variables i.e. staff development (independent variable) and job performance (dependent variable).

**Research Question I:** What is the educational qualification of librarians after undergoing formal professional training?

**Table 1: Highest Educational Qualification**

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage(%)
First Degree in Librarianship	57	95
Master Degree in Librarianship	03	05
PhD in Librarianship	-	-
Total	60	100

First degree in librarianship was the qualification possessed by librarians in public libraries/ state library boards in the zone. This may be accounted for the fact that it is the minimum qualification recognised by the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN). Only three librarians possessed Master degree in Library and Information Science field probably it was not a qualification or criteria for librarians to be met for upliftment or advancement in the library and information science profession. None of the respondents possessed PhD in LIS. It is not surprising as state library boards and public libraries are not academic institution whereby they can teach and embark on researches as part of criteria for promotion to the next rank.

**Research Question 2:** What is the Perception of Librarians on Staff Development?

**Table 2: Perception on Staff Development?**

S/N	Statement	Mean ( $\bar{X}$ )	SD	Remark
1.	I am motivated with regular training programme organized by the library	3.47	0.91	Disagreed
2.	My employer usually sponsor me to annual conferences	2.72	0.74	Disagreed
3.	I am motivated by the conferences, workshops and seminars attended	3.08	1.03	Disagreed
4.	My employer sponsored me to pursue higher degree programme	2.65	0.99	Disagreed
	Grand Mean	2.95	0.92	Disagreed

From the table, it was discovered that respondents disagreed with all the four statements on staff development as all the mean scores against the four statements were less than 3.50. This showed that there was neither regular training programme organized by the state library boards nor sponsoring staff to attend workshops, conferences or pursue higher degree in librarianship.

The respondents' disagreement especially with reference to item 4 attested to Table 1 where very few librarians possessed Masters' degree and with no single librarian possessing PhD degree. This could be due to inability of the parent organization to sponsor staff to pursue higher degree in various aspects of librarianship.

### Null Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between staff development and job performance of librarians in the State Library Board in North-Central Nigeria.

**Table 3: Relationship between staff development and Job Performance of librarians**

Variable	N	df	Mean	SD	R	P
Staff Development	60		11.92	1.9597		
		59			0.111	0.400
Job Performance	60		22.98	2.43		

From the table, it was discovered that the correlation coefficient = 0.111  $P > 0.05$  i.e. P value is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis was accepted and so there was no significant relationship between staff development and job performance. This showed that staff development programmes offered by the public libraries and state library boards in North-central Nigeria does not have significant relationship with the librarians' job performance. This could be true as it can be seen in the two research questions that with exception of having 57 holders of BLS, librarians were not opportuned to develop themselves in terms of seminars, conferences and workshops attendance; opportunity to pursue higher degree programme(s), etc.

### Discussion

Research question one sought for educational qualification of librarians in public libraries in the North-Central Nigeria. The result of the study showed that 57 (95%) respondents being the majority possessed first degree in librarianship. However, this is the basic professional qualification for anyone aspiring to be a registerable professional by the Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria (LRCN, 1995). This finding does not corroborate the findings of Mbagwu and Nwachukwu (2010), Adomi and Famola (2012) and Shehu, Iganmu and Maina (2015). Mbagwu and Nwachukwu (2010) discovered training and development to enhance job performance, while Adomi and Famola (2012) discovered staff participation in the in-house training and departmental meetings. Shehu *et al* (2015) revealed among other findings that higher degrees have positive impact on job performance.

Research question two sought to find out the perception of librarians on staff development. The result showed that all individual mean scores for individual items and overall mean tend to disagree with the statement hence, the mean score was less than 3.50. There was evidence that the respondents have not been enjoying adequate staff development. This finding corroborates that of Adomi and Famola (2012) who reported inability of National Library of Nigeria to sponsor their staff for training programmes.

One null hypothesis was formulated and tested. The result showed that there was no significant relationship between staff development and job performance of librarians in state public library boards in North-Central, Nigeria. It can be deduced that the training programmes offered in state public library boards were not adequate enough for librarians to perform their jobs. This can further be attributed to the findings by Mohammed, Akor, Alhassan and Abdullahi (2017) and Ogbonna (2018) who in their studies reported that conditions and requirements for training have negative influence on job performance of librarians and library officers in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria as well as reporting inadequate or low extent of staff training respectively. This finding does not agree with that of Mbagwu and



Nwachukwu (2010) hence the study reported that training and development of professional and paraprofessional staff enhance their job performance in library of the Federal University of Technology, Owerri, Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the major findings, the study concluded that Research question one revealed that majority of the respondents possessed the basic professional qualification registerable by the LRCN and can enhance or stimulate high level of job performance on the part of librarians when all things being equal. Research question two revealed that librarians have negative perception about staff development and this can have adverse or negative effect on their performances.

Null hypothesis tested revealed no significant relationship between staff development and librarians' performance which may be related to their perception in responding to research question two. The implication is that there is going to be low level of performance leading to low level of productivity among librarians in public libraries and state library boards in the North-Central geo-political zone of Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the major findings and conclusion reached, the study proffers the below practical recommendations if well addressed by the concern authority, high level of productivity would be achieved, thus: -

1. The responsible ministry (education or information) in conjunction with the management of state public library boards in the North-Central, Nigeria should encourage librarians to pursue higher programme in the field of library and information science. This can be complimented by conferences, seminars and workshop attendance.
2. The state ministries of education and information in collaboration with the management of state public library boards in the geo-political zone should commit adequate funds to procure training facilities, train-the-trainer. This if adequate can be used to organise regular training programmes for professionals.
3. The ministries, agencies and management of state public library boards in the North central geo-political zone of Nigeria should organise series of training programmes on regular basis for librarians in state public library boards and their branches in various states in North-Central, Nigeria. It is believed that the more workers undergo training programmes the more they are committed not only to their jobs but also perform efficient job in their various sections of the library. For example, there should be workshop for cataloguers, ICT librarians, library software designers/developers, etc.

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