INFLUENCE OF TRAINING ON THE JOB PERFORMANCE OF PROFESSIONAL AND PARA-PROFESSIONAL LIBRARY STAFF IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

This study investigated the influence of training on the job performance of professional and para-professional library staff in tertiary institutions in Niger State. Research question, the study adopted a descriptive survey design and had a population of 60 professional and 84 para-professional library staff from all the tertiary institutions. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency tables and mean scores. The findings of the study revealed that training policies were available in tertiary institution libraries in Niger State, the findings also indicated that conditions attached to training of library staff negatively affect their job performance, the study also indicated that the requirements for staff training are difficult to meet up with and is negatively affecting their job performance, majority of the respondents also agreed that steady training will influence their job performance in tertiary institutions library. The study recommended that conditions for staff training programmes should be made easy by the management of tertiary institutions as this will allow many library staff who are willing to go for training to do so.

Key words: Influence, Training, Performance, Professional, para-Professional, Library Staff, Tertiary Institutions, Niger State, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Tertiary institutions are higher institutions of learning. Tertiary institutions include universities as well as institutions that teach specific capacities of higher learning such as polytechnics, colleges of education, monotechnics, nursing schools and research institutes, (Iwu, 2011).

Academic libraries are libraries that are attached to any higher institution of learning. Academic libraries in Nigerian tertiary institutions have been making significant contribution to the mandates of their parent institutions. These mandates are teaching, learning, research and community services geared towards social, political and economic development of the country. Academic libraries provide bibliographic, and user services to the staff, students and immediate communities of their respective institutions. These services are significant and crucial to the achievements of

...heir academic objectives. This position was supported by Adeniran (2010) who asserted that academic libraries are essential contributors to knowledge generation and serve a wide spectrum of knowledge seekers". Also, Obajemu , Ojo, and Dekpen (2012) observed that services provided by an academic library in a university reflect the quality of teaching and research in such a university.

In order for academic libraries to perform their roles effectively, there is need for well trained staff who will manage these libraries in terms of providing information resources to users. Patience and tolerance are required in library workers; these will be achieved if management gives adequate attention to training in academic libraries from time to time. The potentials of the personnel must be identified to ensure a perfect match that would boost job performance. Identifying the potentials of employee involves analyzing his/her backgrounds with special emphasis on education and work experiences. The performance of an employee in previous tasks is a vital tool for job matching in an academic library, in most establishments, the desire to achieve optimal level of productivity is very central to managerial objectives, (Obajemu et al 2012). Institutions Librarians should be able to account for employee's

performance in previous jobs and determine whether a worker is fit for another higher job level (Saetang, Sulumnad, Thampitak and Sungkaew, 2010).

Training is the important factor that library staff look up to in order to perform their duties effectively. In higher institutions of learning, there is no denying the fact that the Library staff are the custodian of information resources and therefore must adhere to the Institution's rules and regulations. However, training do not appears to be favourable to the library staff and is therefore affecting their performance (Obajemu et al 2012). Adequate training is critical to staff and which could determine their inputs in the library.

According to Olu and John (2010) training primarily focuses on teaching organizational members how to perform their current jobs and helping them acquire the knowledge and skills they need to be effective performers. The purpose of training has been identified to include: creating a pool of readily available and adequate replacements for personnel who may leave or move up in the organization; enhancing the institution's ability to adopt and use advances in technology because of sufficiently knowledgeable staff; buildi''I'ng

more efficient, effective and highly motivated team, which enhances the institution's manpower development.

According to Agba, Ogaboh and Mboto (2013) job performance refers to task accomplished by individual employee; it is how well a worker accomplishes a given task in the library. Job performance is also measured by quality, transparent, fair and adequate standards of satisfaction. It is the total effect of workers output as defined by traits, training, staff development, role perception, abilities and other conditions of service. Staff performance is the fundamental element of any library and the most important factor for the success of the academic library and its performance. It is true that most of the libraries are dependent on its employees, but one or two employee cannot change the library's future. In the view of Saka and Haruna (2013) the organization's performance is the shared and combined effort of all of its employees. Performance is the key multi character factor intended to attain outcomes which has a major connection with planned objectives of the library.

Effect of training and job performance is that part of the performance management process in which an employee's contribution to library during a specific period is assessed. This enables the management to see whether library staffs are doing well or not, whether they are contributing negatively or positively to the library. According to Valez, (2008) the underlying objective of assessing individual performance is to improve the performance of the individual employee, thereby leading to improvement in the performance of the library as a whole. Effect of job performance is one of the ranges of tools that can be used by librarians to manage performance effectively, in that it provides data which feeds into the elements of the performance process. As noted by Mathis and Jackson (2008), the system is often the link between additional pay and rewards that employees receive, and their job performance, if used effectively.

Training and re-training of library staff are essential part of library management and have become paramount in all aspect of operation in modern world. The emergence of training has made the concept of training and re-training a necessity for all concerned. Hence to be operationally effective, every organization has to embrace this concept.

Statement of the Problem

Training of library staff forms an integral aspect of library management. For academic libraries to achieve maximum performance in terms of providing adequate and current information resources to staff and students, library management is expected to give adequate attention to training. A situation whereby library staff are not allowed to go for training, they would not be able to discharge their duties effectively and efficiently especially in the 21st century where library services are evolving in the use of information communication technology in service delivery. The need for continuous training and retraining of library staff in tertiary institutions cannot be over emphasized. Preliminary investigations carried out by the researcher in some of these institutions seem to suggest that library staff perform their duties below expectation. One wonders what factors are responsible for this poor job performance on the part of library staff especially as it was observed that large number of students and other users who need services of the staff were patronizing the library. It is on this backdrop that the researchers intend to find out the influence of training on the job performance of library staff in tertiary institutions of learning in Niger State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the training policies of professional and paraprofessional library staff in tertiary institutions in Niger State?

2. What are the conditions attached to staff training of professional and paraprofessional library staff?

3. What is the influence of training on the job performance of professional and paraprofessional library staff?

4. What are the solutions for improved training exercise of professional and paraprofessional library staff?

Literature Review

Many scholars have written a lot on staff training and job performance of librarians and other workers in various organizations thus: In the words of Eze (2012), training is a short term process utilizing a systematic and organized procedure by which non-managerial personnel learn technical knowledge and skills for a definite process. This definition is found lacking because training should be for managerial and non-managerial staff. A personnel training scheme, (PTS) as Abba & Dawha (2009) called it, is one that seeks to improve work performance. They saw this as a

systematic approach to staff development and continuing education that is usually in form of a programme of learning opportunities aimed at ensuring that workers continue to acquire and adapt their skills and knowledge to a changing environment. They stressed that a well-trained worker knows the scope and expectations of their jobs and will be able to add building blocks to his/her expertise as he/she progresses. Everybody needs self-development professionally. By attending seminars, workshops and conferences, the managerial staff can improve professionally. Training is a public or private education programmes directly applicable to work situation.

According to Garba (2010), library staffs are the image makers of the libraries. They should be people with skills in acquiring, organizing, storing and dissemination of information. How satisfied a user will be solely depends on the ability of the library staff in meeting the users' information needs. Training staff is expensive. If the training results in desired performance, then the investment of time and energy has been worth it. If training is ineffective, then the funds associated with training are wasted and additional monies must be spent to retrain the same employee or retrain another employee (Garba, 2010). The most important resources of

an organization are its human resources, the people who supply the organization with their work, talent and creativity would be achieved through training and development of library staff who will best help the organization meet its goals. He also stated that adequate training is one way to enhance an employee's talent and ability to cope with rapid changes. When there are lapses or loopholes in work efficiency and expected productivity, it means that the library workers involved need more and better skills and knowledge to be gained through training. Academic libraries need a staff that is well versed in all facets of work in order to provide their users with excellent services.

According to Agba, Ogaboh and Mboto (2013) Job performance refers to task accomplished by individual employee; it is how well a worker accomplishes a given task in an organization. Job performance is the fundamental element of any organization and the most important factor for the success of the organization and its performance. It is true that most of the libraries are dependent on its staff, but one or two staff cannot change the organization's future. The performance of academic library is the shared and combined effort of all of its employees. Job performance is the key multi character factor intended to attain outcomes which has a major

connection with planned objectives of the organization (Saka and Haruna, 2013).

Library staff must develop confidence and computer competencies acquired through training to make decisions about what patrons need to know. Job performance and efficiency in service delivery can only be ensured through adequate training of library staff. Eze (2012) agreed that training programmes should be directed towards improving efficiency and job performance. She further enumerated other benefits of training to include reduction in cost, reduced turnover, human resources reserve, fast decision, continuity of effort, improvement in employee morale, availability for future personnel needs of the library, improvement in health and safety, reduced supervision, personal growth and library stability.

According to Akor, (2010), training policies should be reviewed in all the government owned tertiary institutions in order to favor library staff so as to motivate them for a very simple reason that, a motivated employee is a high producer and performer. In today's workplace, especially in Nigerian tertiary institution libraries, various plans such as good training programmes, conducive promotional procedures, prompt reward contingent upon

performance are being put in place towards having a motivated workforce.

Many organizations want their employees to perform to the best of their abilities, yet staff training remains a difficult factor to manage. Iwu (2011) observed that employees' aspirations and target do not always match with what their employer can provide. It has been suggested that proper training which is part of motivation can significantly influence the attitude of workers towards their jobs and hence affect the performance of such employees on the job. For employers who successfully motivate their staff through regular training, it often translates to less absenteeism and turnover, greater satisfaction and commitment and ultimately higher productivity or performance in the work place. There is need to understand why people choose to perform satisfactorily; why some people appear to be committed to their jobs and others are often absent. There is also need to find out what rewards and incentives individuals value so that where possible, it could be provided. People are usually willing to work harder when they expect to benefit by doing so.

Unfavourable training programme make library staff unhappy with the work or compensation

according to Gbenu (2013), but it can also indicate unsafe or unhealthy conditions, or that too few employees give satisfactory performance because of poor training. A number of other issues such as lack of career opportunities and challenges, dissatisfaction with the job-scope or conflict with the management have also been cited as the reason for low job performance by Kolawole (2013). A number of factors are responsible for employee low job performance.

Methodology

For the purpose of this study, descriptive survey research method was adopted. A total of 194 professional and para-professional library staff from 13 government owned tertiary institutions formed the target population of the study. However, since the population is not large and it is manageable, the researchers used the whole population for the study. Bernard (2012) supported this idea by asserting that if a population of a study is less than two hundred (200), the entire population should be used for the study. Questionnaires were the instrument used for data collection. A total of 194 copies of questionnaire were drafted and distributed out which 144 were returned and found usable. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, percentages, mean and standard deviation (SD).

Findings and Discussion

Table 1: Availability of training policies in tertiary institutions library

S/No	Response	Yes	NO	Total
1	Professionals	70 100%)	0	70 (100%)
2	Paraprofessionals	71 (96%)	3 (4%)	74 (100%)

Table 1 showed that 70(100%) of the respondents indicated that they have training policy in their institutions. It thus implies that the institutions have training policy for professional library staff. For the paraprofessionals, majority of the respondents that is 71(95.9%) indicated that they have training policy while 3(4.1%) of the respondents indicated that training policy was not available. It thus implies that the institutions have training policy for paraprofessional staff in tertiary institution libraries in Niger State. This finding corroborates that of Saka and Haruna (2013) who found out that if seminars/conferences; workshop attendance, on-the-job training, stimulation and extension training policies were available and implemented; job performance of library personnel would be enhanced.

Table 2: conditions attached to training of library staff in tertiary institutions

S/No	Statements	Cadre	4	3	2	1	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	I have to serve the library for two or more years before allowing me to go for training.	Professionals	32(45.7%)	32(45.7%)	3(4.3%)	3(4.3%)	2.54	.582	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	5(6.8%)	62(83.8%)	7(9.5%)	-	2.97	.405	Agreed
2	I can only be sponsored for a conference if I have a paper to present.	Professionals	11(15.7%)	53(75.7%)	4(5.7%)	2(2.9%)	3.10	.455	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	12(16.2%)	56(75.7%)	6(8.1%)	-	3.08	.490	Agreed
3	I have to sign a bond with the management before study (part time/full time).	Professionals	14(20%)	53(75.7%)	2(2.9%)	1(1.4%)	3.16	.470	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	14(18.9%)	57(77.0%)	3(4.1%)	-	3.15	.459	Agreed
4	Sometimes training funds may not be available, you have to sponsor yourself.	Professionals	12(17.1%)	49(70%)	9(12.9%)	-	3.04	.550	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	12(16.2%)	56(75.7%)	6(8.1%)	-	3.08	.490	Agreed
5	Sometimes you may not get full time study fellowship; you may only be allowed to go on part time basis.	Professionals	19(27.1%)	50(71.4%)	1(1.4%)	-	3.26	.472	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	18(24.3%)	54(73.0%)	2(2.7%)	-	3.22	.476	Agreed
6	The payment for conference attendance is always done after the conference.	Professionals	19(27.1%)	48(68.6%)	3(4.3%)	-	3.23	.516	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	18(24.3%)	55(74.3%)	1(1.4%)	-	3.23	.455	Agreed

Key : 4=strongly agreed, 3=agreed, 2=disagreed, 1=strongly disagreed, $\bar{x}$=mean, SD=standard Deviation

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The mean and standard deviation scores of respondents concerning their result from Table 2 showed the various conditions attached to training of professional and paraprofessional library staff in tertiary institutions in Niger State. The respondents were asked to indicate whether serving the library for two or more years before allowing them to go for training affect their job performance in the under study institutions. Item 1 in Table 4.4 has a mean of 2.54(SD=.582) for professionals and 2.97(SD=.405) for paraprofessionals, indicating that the respondents agreed that serving the library for two or more years before allowing them to go for training has affected their job performance. Similarly, item 2 has a mean of 3.10(SD=.455) for professionals and 3.08(SD=.490) for paraprofessionals, indicating that the respondents have agreed respectively that they can only be sponsored if they have a paper to present. Also, the respondents agreed in item 3 which has a mean of 3.16 (SD=.470) for professionals and 3.15(SD=.459) for paraprofessionals indicating that they have to sign a bond with the management before study (part time/full time).

Furthermore, item 4 has a mean of 3.04(SD=.550) for professionals and 3.08(SD=.490) for paraprofessionals indicating that the respondents agreed that sometimes training funds may not be available, you have to sponsor yourself. Item 5 which has a mean of 3.26 (SD=.472) for professionals and 3.22(SD=.455) for paraprofessionals indicating that respondents agreed that sometimes you may not get full time study fellowship; you may only be allowed to go on part time basis and in item 6 which has a mean of 3.23 (SD=.516) for professionals and 3.23(.516) for paraprofessionals also indicating that the respondents have agreed that the payment for conference attendance is always done after the conference. From the Table all had a fairly mean score which is above 2.5 marks on a 4-point Likert scale indicating agreement. The result therefore showed that almost all the respondents across the professional and paraprofessional staff agreed that conditions attached to training negatively affect their job performance. The finding of this study is in line with the findings of Abba & Dawha (2009) in a study on the assessment of personnel training needs of library staff in Federal University of Technology, Yola, Nigeria. The results of their findings showed that conditions attached to library staff before allowing them to go for training are very difficult to satisfy, they believed the purpose of allowing them to go for training is for them to come back and add value in library services as such there should not be too many conditions before allowing them to go.

Table 3: The influence of staff training on job performance of library staff in tertiary institutions in Niger State.

S/No	Statements	Cadre	4	3	2	1	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Training opportunity encourages me to perform my duties better.	Professionals	20 (28.6%)	49 (70%)	-	1 (1.4%)	3.17	.564	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	16 (21.6%)	57 (77.0%)	1 (1.4%)	1 (1.4%)	3.20	.437	Agreed
2	Training opportunities have widen my horizon and I work harder	Professionals	18 (25.7%)	46 (65.7%)	6 (8.6%)	-	3.24	.494	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	16 (21.6%)	56 (75.7%)	2 (2.7%)	-	3.19	.459	Agreed
3	Library users are attended to effectively without delay because staff are trained.	Professionals	18 (25.7%)	50 (71.4%)	2 (2.9%)	-	3.24	.432	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	21(28.4%)	52 (70.3%)	1 (1.4%)		3.27	.477	Agreed
4	Training improves my professional practice to contribute my quota to the overall development of the library.	Professionals	16 (22.9%)	54 (77.1%)	-	-	3.23	.487	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	21 (28.4%)	49 (66.2%)	4 (5.4%)	-	3.23	.538	Agreed
5	Training improves my working relationship with colleagues in the office.	Professionals	17 (24.3%)	52 (74.3%)	1 (1.4%)	-	3.23	.423	Agreed
		Paraprofessional	22 (29.7%)	50 (67.6%)	2 (2.7%)	-	3.27	.505	Agreed
6	It improves my attitude to work such as increasing my punctuality to work.	Professionals	20 (28.6%)	50 (71.4%)	-	-	3.23	.456	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	20 (28.7%)	54 (73.0%)	-	-	3.27	.447	Agreed
7	Training improves my ability to attend promptly to request from clients.	Professionals	19 (27.1%)	48 (68.6%)	3 (4.3%)	-	3.27	.448	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	20 (27.0%)	52 (70.3%)	1 (1.4%)	1 (1.4%)	3.26	.472	Agreed
8	Training improves my communication skills used in assisting users.	Professionals	20 (28.5%)	46 (65.7%)	2 (2.9%)	2 (2.9%)	3.23	.516	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	18 (24.3%)	56 (75.7%)	-	-	3.24	.432	Agreed

Key: 4=strongly agreed, 3=agreed, 2=disagreed, 1=strongly disagreed, $\bar{x}$ =mean, SD=standard deviation

Concerning the influence of staff training on job performance of professional and paraprofessional library staff in tertiary institutions from Table 3, Item 1 which has a mean of 3.17(SD=.564) for professionals and 3.20(SD=.437) for paraprofessionals indicating that the respondents agreed that training opportunity has encouraged them to perform their duties better. Furthermore, item 2 which has a mean of 3.24 (SD=.494) for professionals and 3.19(SD=.459) for paraprofessionals indicating that the respondents agreed that training opportunities have widen their horizon and they work harder. Also item 3 which has a mean of 3.24 (.432) for professionals and 3.27(SD=.477) for paraprofessionals indicating that the respondents are in agreement that library users are attended to effectively without delay because staff are trained.

Similarly, item 4 has a mean of 3.23 (SD=.487) for professionals and 3.23(SD=.538) for paraprofessionals showing that the respondents are in agreement that training improve their professional practice to contribute their quota to the overall development of the library. Furthermore item 5 has a mean of 3.23 (SD=.423) for professionals and 3.27(SD=.505) for paraprofessionals showing that the respondents are in agreement that training improved their working relationship with colleagues in the office. Similarly item 6 has a mean of 3.23 (SD=.456) for professionals and 3.27(SD=.447) for paraprofessionals showing 2017

that the respondents agreed that training improved their attitude to work such as increasing their punctuality to work. Also in item 7 which has a mean of 3.27 (SD=.448) for professionals and 3.26(SD=.472) for paraprofessionals showing that the respondents agreed that training has improved their ability to attend promptly to request from clients and item 8 which has a mean of 3.23 (SD=.516) for professionals and 3.24(SD=.432) for paraprofessionals showing that the respondents agreed that training has improved their communication skills used in assisting users. From their responses, the respondents agreed therefore that training has positive influence on the job performance of library staff.

Saka & Haruna (2013) corroborates the finding of this study they found out that seminars/conferences; workshop attendance, on-the-job training, stimulation and extension training enhanced job performance of library personnel in faculties' libraries of University of Maiduguri. Also Saka (2008) in his findings discovered significant relationship between education qualification and job performance of library staff in University of Maiduguri. This indicated that the more training and knowledge library staffs are exposed to, the better their job performance.

Table 4: The solutions for improving training exercise of library staff in tertiary institutions.

S/No	Statements	Cadre	4	3	2	1	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Training funds should be made available and accessible for staff undergoing training programme by the management.	Professionals	20 (28.6%)	45 (64.3%)	3 (4.3%)	2 (2.9%)	3.29	.515	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	17 (23.0%)	55 (74.3%)	2 (2.7%)	-	3.16	.528	Agreed
2	Only training that would improve the effectiveness of library staff should be allowed by the management.	Professionals	17 (34.3%)	52 (74.3%)	1 (1.4%)	-	3.05	.594	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	15 (20.3%)	48 (64.9%)	11 (14.9%)	1	3.21	.562	Agreed
3	Training programmes should be designed to solve problems and to fill the gaps in employee performance.	Professionals	21 (30%)	47 (67.1%)	1 (1.4%)	1 (1.4%)	3.20	.500	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	25 (33.8%)	48 (64.9%)	1 (1.4%)	-	3.32	.469	Agreed
4	Training that would bring about changes and enhance organizations' effectiveness should be encouraged.	Professionals	22 (31.4%)	47 (67.1%)	1 (1.4%)	-	3.20	.492	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	29 (39.2%)	45 (60.8%)	-	-	3.39	.589	Agreed
5	Library staff promotion should be rapid and consistent.	Professionals	19 (27.1%)	49 (70%)	2 (2.9%)	-	3.03	.477	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	21 (28.4%)	52 (70.3%)	1 (1.4%)	-	3.27	.492	Agreed
6	Number of years staff spent before promotion to the next grade level should be reduced.	Professionals	19 (27.1%)	50 (71.4%)	-	1 (1.4%)	3.30	.511	Agreed
		Paraprofessionals	23 (31.1%)	49 (66.2%)	2 (2.7%)	-	3.28		Agreed

Key: 4=strongly agreed, 3=agreed, 2=disagreed, 1=strongly disagreed, $\bar{x}$=mean, SD=standard deviation

Table 4 concerning the solutions for improving training exercise of professional and paraprofessional library staffs in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Item 1 has a mean of 3.36 (SD=.483) for professionals and 3.20(SD=.468) for paraprofessionals indicating that the respondents agreed that training funds should be made available and accessible for staff undergoing training programme by the management. It was also observed that item 2 has a mean of 3.23 (SD=.456) for professionals and 3.05(SD=.595) for paraprofessionals indicating that the respondents agreed that only training that would improve the effectiveness of library staff should be allowed by the management. Similarly, item 3 has a mean of 3.30 (SD=.492) for professionals and 3.32(SD=.500) for paraprofessionals indicating that the respondents agreed that training programmes should be designed to solve problems and to fill the gaps in employee performance. Also, item 4 which has a mean of 3.30 (SD=.492) for professionals and 3.39(SD=.492) for paraprofessionals. From their responses, it becomes clear that both the professional and paraprofessional agreed that training that would bring about changes and enhance organizations' effectiveness should be encouraged. These finding corroborate that of Obisi (2011) who found that training and promotion is the tonic employees need to enhance their performance and potentials that will in turn enhance organization effectiveness. Nigerian organizations should face realities, serious approach to training requires careful systematic and planned training and development activities. Nigerian organizations should invest more in training and development as money invested in the employees is like money kept in a safe deposit, which appreciates in value over time.

Summary of the Major Findings

The major findings of this study are as follows:

1. The study revealed that training policies are available in tertiary institution libraries in Niger State for professional and paraprofessional staff.

2. The study found out that the respondents have agreed that conditions attached to training of library staff in tertiary institutions in Niger State have negatively affected their job performance.

3. The study revealed that library staff agreed (both the professional and paraprofessional) that training has influenced their job performance in tertiary institutions library.

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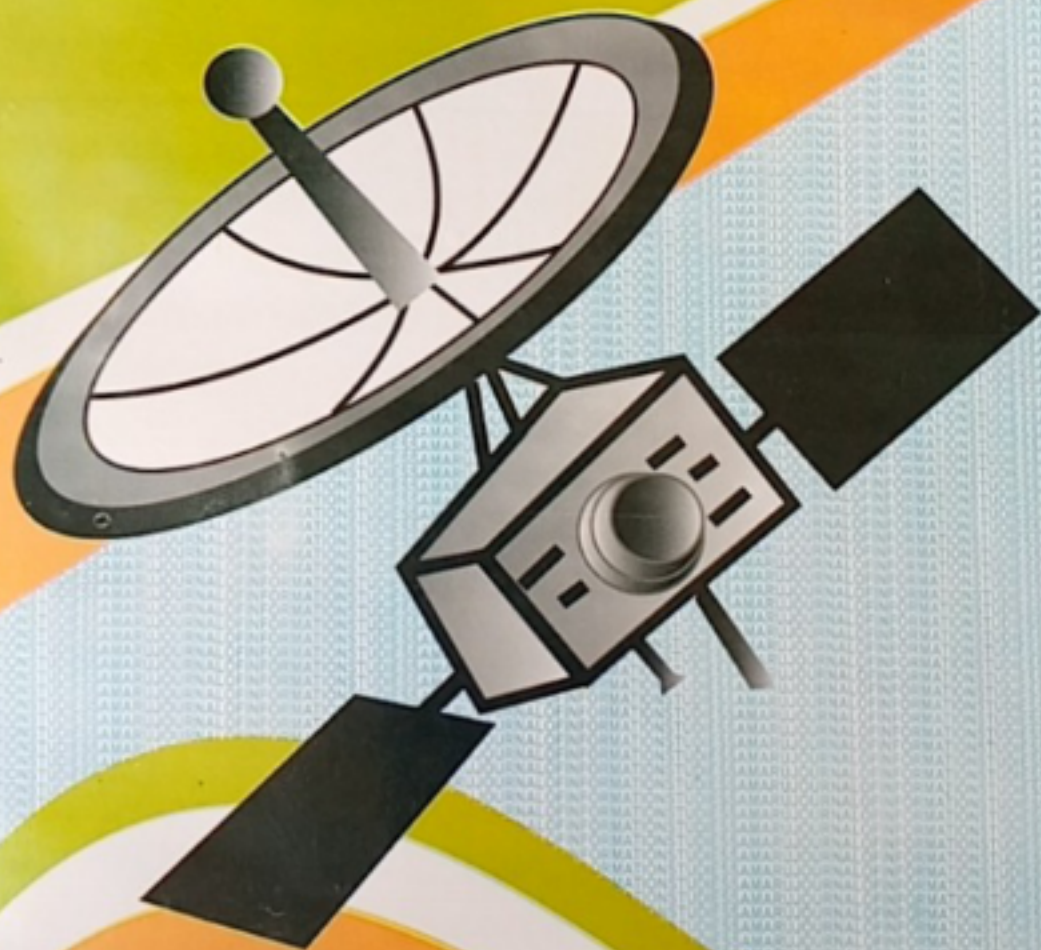
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