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Extent of Practices of Staffing and Funding for Conflict Management in College of Education Libraries in South-East and South-South, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the extent of practices of staffing and funding for conflict management in college of education libraries in south-east and south-south, Nigeria. The study was carried out using a descriptive research survey method, and two research questions were drafted to guide the study. A sample size of 528 members of colleges of education library staff in South East and South-South, Nigeria was drawn and used for the study a purposive sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was used to collect relevant data for the study. The questionnaire was validated through consultation by 3 research experts. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used to ascertain reliability of the questionnaire, and this gave, $r = 0.88$, which certifies that the questionnaire was appropriate for data collection for the study. Data collected was analysed using Mean, \bar{X} , and Standard deviation, SD, and the result partly showed that staffing and funding practices are carried out for conflict management for enhanced service delivery in college of education libraries. The study concluded that if practices of staffing and funding were maximally channeled to managing conflicts in college libraries, service delivery of the college staff would be enhanced. It was recommended that there should be appropriate allocation and utilization of fund meant for library programs, policies and projects to avoid lapses in implementations of well through conflict management policies for the libraries.

Keywords: Staffing, Funding, Conflict Management, Service Delivery, College Library.

Background to the Study

Organizations around the world exist to achieve a set of stated goals. The extent to which the goals are achieved, depend on the management's ability to subdue contending conflicts (Oyeshola, 2005). In the college of education libraries as an organization contend with conflicts of different dimension on daily basis. Conflict is considered as a state of disagreement over issues of substance or emotional antagonism which may arise due to anger, mistrust or personal clashes. In the same vein, Azamosa (2004) perceives conflict in working environment to involve a range of behaviour and attitudes that is in opposition

between leaders on one hand and working people on the other hand. But, since conflict is often perceived as an obstacle to effective service delivery of college libraries, it has to be properly managed to avert such dangers.

Conflict management entails utilization of management functions, such as staffing and funding to bring about peace and harmony in college libraries (Irene, 2014). The place of staffing as the main gate to recruiting and harnessing the library's human resource cannot be over emphasized. This is because a variety of staff are employed to render services in the libraries to benefit students, lecturers, administrative members of the academic community as well as potential users of library through the provision of services. Ekpo (2016) posited that staffing has to do with the recruitment of potential employees, training and developing them in line with tasks to be performed, assigning them to defined positions of responsibilities in accordance with their competencies and specialization, as well as maintaining them. Combining staffing and funding help the college libraries to deliver enhanced services.

Funding which is the monetary function that enables the library achieve its objectives. Echezona (2008) asserted that finance is very crucial to any human endeavour, and so college libraries cannot be an exception. In other words, no excellent service can be rendered in the college library without adequate funding, which involved professional staff, materials, modern information storage and retrieval systems. Krautter (2013) pointed out that the amount of funding that a library receives directly influences the quality of its services. Azamosa (2004) added that a well-funded library with well trained staff will meet-up the kind of standard services needed to be rendered in college libraries. Enhanced service delivery is achievable whenever adequate funding is mobilized and appropriated to the college libraries.

However, it is important to point out that conflict management cannot effectively influence services delivery in colleges of education, except if its implementations were

adequately carried out through effective staffing and funding practices by the college librarian management. This is to say that a clear understanding of appropriate managerial practices will go a long way to help in achieving peace and harmony in the college libraries, and make the work of the library staff easier. Thus, the present study was propelled by the need to find out the extent of practices of staffing and funding that could aid in conflict management in college libraries. The need was based on the realization that the two management practices are the core elements of management which if well accomplished would help in to restore and maintain peace and harmonious work environment at the various college libraries (Ucha & Sunday, 2014). Therefore, the thrust of this study is to investigate the extent of practices of staffing and funding for conflict management in college of education libraries in South-East and South-South, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The overall objective of this study was to examine the extent of practices of staffing and funding for conflict management in college of education libraries in South-East and South-South, Nigeria. Specifically, this study investigated the extent to which:

1. Staffing is carried out for conflict management for enhanced service delivery in college of education libraries in South East and South South zones in Nigeria.
2. Funding is carried out for conflict management for enhanced service delivery in college of education libraries in South East and South South zones in Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. To what extent is staffing carried out for conflict management in college of education libraries in South-East and South-South, Nigeria?

2. To what extent is funding carried out for conflict management in college of education libraries in South-East and South-South, Nigeria?

Method

The procedures adopted in carrying out this study are discussed under the following headings: research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instrument for data collection, validation of the instrument, reliability of the instrument, administration of the instrument, and method of data analysis.

Research Design

The study adopted descriptive survey design. Orji, Mando and Ajaegbo (2017) asserted that descriptive survey design is used when a researcher intends to elicit responses from a relatively large number of respondents by administering pertinent instruments for collecting primary data on a portion of the population known as sample. This research design is appropriate for the study because it seeks to administer questionnaire on the sample/population of respondents with regards to staffing and funding practices for conflict management for enhanced service delivery in college of education libraries in south East and south South zones in Nigeria.

Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques

The entire population of 528 members of colleges of education library staff in South East and South-South, Nigeria was used as sample for the study. The sample was drawn using a non-randomized purposive sampling method, which guarantees a researcher the liberty to decide on sample size to use for a study based on his discretion.

Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument that was used for data collection is a structured questionnaire titled Staffing and Funding Practices for Conflict Management in Libraries Questionnaire (SFPCMLQ). The instrument is divided into two parts namely, part A and part B. Part A collected personal data of the Library Staff. Part B was made up of 10 items which is built into two clusters. The questionnaire response type is a 4 point rating scale, and in each section, respondents was required to tick (√) in appropriate columns, in order to indicate for each item their honest rating. The rating scale were Strongly Agree (4); Agree (3); Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1) for the clusters.

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument was face and content validated through consultation with three Veteran Researchers in Library and Information Science, Educational Psychology and Measurement and Evaluation from University of Nigeria Nsukka and Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. They were given draft copies of the instrument together with the title of the purpose of the study and research questions. All the inputs of the validators incorporated in the final draft of the questionnaire.

Reliability of the Instrument

The questionnaire (SFPCMLQ) was pilot-tested for reliability in South-South geo-political zone of the country. It was administered on 25 Librarians and 10 Para professionals of both the public colleges of education in the geo-political zone. The administration was carried out by test-retest technique, using an interval of one month. Pearson's product moment was used to obtain co-efficient of reliability ($r = 0.88$) which confirmed the instrument's consistency in measuring what it is expected to measure.

Administration of the Instrument

The researcher administered the instrument with the help of five assistants. The assistants were colleagues of the researcher, who hold post-graduate qualifications in Library and Information Science from Universities in Nigeria, and have many publications in reputable local and foreign journals. They are vastly experienced in research works, although they were still briefed by the researcher on what is to do. The administration of SFPCMLQ was done by hand, for both distribution and collection, to minimize chances of loss. A total of five hundred and twenty eight copies of SFPCMLQ were distributed and retrieved.

Method of Data Analysis

The data obtained for the study was analyzed using descriptive measures, particularly: Mean, \bar{X} , and Standard deviation, SD. These two descriptive measures were used to analyse all the responses relating to the research questions. Thus, any items with Mean, \bar{X} , values ranging from 2.50 and above was accepted. On the other hand, any item with Mean, \bar{X} , value that is less than 2.50 was not accepted.

Results

This section dealt with presentation of results from the analysis of data. It is presented in tables, and in line with research questions.

Research Question 1: To what extent is staffing carried out for conflict management in college of education libraries in South-East and South-South, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean responses of the extent to which staffing is carried out for Conflict Management in College of Education Libraries in South-East and South-South Nigeria.

Sn		Geographical Zone				Overall		R	D
		SE		SS		Mean	SD		
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
1	Meeting human resource needs is carried out in the colleges of education libraries to enhance	3.66	.70	3.62	.81	3.64	.75	1 st	VHE

	service delivery								
2	Training personnel in line with tasks to be performed in colleges of education libraries for enhanced libraries for enhanced service delivery	3.56	.80	3.52	.79	3.54	.79	2 nd	VHE
3	Recruitment of potential employees in the colleges of education libraries for enhanced service delivery	3.17	.90	3.06	1.04	3.12	.97	3 ^{ed}	HE
4	Assigning personnel to defined positions of responsibilities with their competencies and specialization in college of education for enhanced service delivery	3.01	.94	3.12	.88	3.06	.91	4 th	HE
5	Filling positions with adequate and qualified personnel in colleges of education libraries for enhanced service delivery.	2.97	.94	3.02	.97	2.99	.95	5 th	HE
Cluster mean		3.27	.86	3.27	.90	3.27	.88		HE

Key: Very High extent =VHE; High Extent =HE; Low Extent =LE; Very low Extent =VLE, R=Rank; d= Decision; SS =South South; SE= South East

The mean responses as presented on Table 1 indicated that to a very high extent meeting human resource needs is carried out in the colleges of education libraries to enhance service delivery (\bar{X} =3.64, SD=.75) and training personnel in line with tasks to be performed in colleges of education libraries for enhanced libraries for enhanced service delivery (\bar{X} =3.54, SD=.79). The table also shows that the respondents indicated that to a high extent, recruitment of potential employees in the colleges of education libraries for enhanced service delivery (\bar{X} =3.12, SD=.97); assigning personnel to defined positions of responsibilities with their competencies and specialization in college of education for enhanced service delivery (\bar{X} =3.06, SD=.91), and filling positions with adequate and qualified personnel in colleges of education libraries for enhanced service delivery(\bar{X} =2.99, SD=.95).

Also, the overall mean showed that meeting human resource needs is carried out in the colleges of education libraries to enhance service delivery (\bar{X} =3.64, SD=.75) is ranked

highest, while filling positions with adequate and qualified personnel in colleges of education libraries for enhanced service delivery(\bar{X} =2.99, SD=.95) is ranked lowest as regards to extent staffing is carried out as a conflict management practice enhances service delivery in college of education libraries. Finally the overall mean score of 3.27 shows that the level staffing is carried out as a conflict management practice enhances service delivery in college of education libraries is to high extent.

Looking at the two geographical zone in the study, it is observed that South East respondents have equal mean (\bar{X} =3.27, SD=.88) with South East respondents (\bar{X} =3.27, SD=.90), indicating that absence of variation in staffing practices that are carried out as conflict management is carried out in both zones.

Research Question 2: To what extent is funding carried out for conflict management in college of education libraries in South-East and South-South, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean responses of the extent to which funding is carried out for Conflict Management in College of Education Libraries in South-East and South-South Nigeria.

Sn		Geographical Zone				Overall		R	D
		SE		SS		Mean	SD		
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	Adequate funding is carried out on payment of salaries and allowances of library staff members which ensure their commitment as needed for enhanced service delivery	3.17	.91	3.07	.92	3.11	.91	1 st	HE
2	Adequate funding on employment of needed manpower for enhanced service delivery in the colleges of education libraries	2.61	1.08	2.82	1.04	2.73	1.06	2 nd	HE
3	Adequate funding of training and retraining programmes are implemented for library staff members so as to keep them abreast of current practices for enhanced service delivery	2.43	1.21	2.55	1.11	2.50	1.15	3 rd	HE
4	Adequate funding is carried out on acquisition of functional library and other supporting	2.49	1.23	2.45	1.27	2.47	1.25	4 th	LE

	equipment and materials needed for enhanced service delivery at the libraries								
5	Adequate funding is carried out on maintenance and preservation of library equipment and materials needed for enhanced service delivery	2.24	1.21	2.41	1.26	2.33	1.24	5 th	LE
Cluster mean		2.59	.58	2.66	.82	2.63	1.12		HE

Key: Very High extent =VHE; High Extent =HE; Low Extent =LE; Very low Extent =VLE, R=Rank; d= Decision; SS =South South; SE= South East.

The mean responses as presented on Table 2 indicated that to a high extent Adequate funding is carried out on payment of salaries and allowances of library staff members which ensure their commitment as needed for enhanced service delivery (\bar{X} =3.11, SD=.91); adequate funding on employment of needed manpower for enhanced service delivery in the colleges of education libraries (\bar{X} =2.73, SD=1.06) and adequate funding of training and retraining programmes are implemented for library staff members so as to keep them abreast of current practices for enhanced service delivery (\bar{X} =3.50, SD=.91). The Table also shows that the respondents indicated that to a low extent adequate funding is carried out on acquisition of functional library and other supporting equipment and materials needed for enhanced service delivery at the libraries (\bar{X} =2.47, SD=1.25) and adequate funding is carried out on maintenance and preservation of library equipment and materials needed for enhanced service delivery (\bar{X} =2.33, SD=1.24)

Also, the overall mean showed that adequate funding is carried out on payment of salaries and allowances of library staff members which ensure their commitment as needed for enhanced service delivery (\bar{X} =3.11, SD=.91) is ranked highest, while adequate funding is carried out on maintenance and preservation of library equipment and materials needed for enhanced service delivery (\bar{X} =2.33, SD=1.24) is ranked lowest as regards to funding carried out in conflict management for effective service delivery in college of education libraries.

Finally the overall mean score of 2.63 shows that the level of funding carried out in conflict management for effective service delivery in college of education libraries is to high extent.

Looking at the two geographical zone in the study, it is observed that South South East respondents have a greater mean (\bar{X} =2.66, SD=.82) as against the South East respondents with (\bar{X} =2.59, SD=.58), indicating that greater coordination is carried out as conflict management is carried out in south South than in south East.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this research were discussed based on the research questions. It is discussed under the following subheadings:

Extent to which Staffing is carried out for Conflict Management for enhanced Service Delivery in College of Education Libraries.

The finding on table 1 reveals that items concern with the extent at which staffing is carried out in conflict management for effective service delivery were at varying extent. Items such as meeting human resource needs is carried out in the colleges of education libraries and training personnel in line with tasks to be performed in colleges of education libraries are carried out to a very high for enhanced libraries service. Also to a high extent, recruitment of potential employees in the colleges of education libraries; assigning personnel to defined positions of responsibilities with their competencies and specialization in college of education and developing personnel in line with enhancement of service delivery. In tandem, Ifidon and Ifidon (2007) asserted that for effective and efficient services in academic libraries, different groups of personnel are to be employed, trained and placed on relevant duties where they could render the most appreciable services. Supporting this, Ugwuanyi and Idoko (2012) stated that library and information services requires the services of key players or workers who would help to implement all policies and services meant for college libraries.

It is understandable that effective implementation of programmes and policies require capable human resource to bring about the desired outcome.

Extent to which Funding is carried out for Conflict Management for enhanced Service Delivery in College of Education Libraries.

Through the findings of the study on table 2, the respondents revealed that to a high extent adequate funding is carried out on payment of salaries and allowances of library staff members which ensure their commitment as needed; on employment of needed manpower for enhanced service delivery in the colleges of education libraries and on training and retraining programmes are implemented for library staff members so as to keep them abreast of current practices. In the vain, to a low extent funding is carried out on acquisition of functional library and other supporting equipment and materials needed for enhanced service delivery at the libraries and on maintenance and preservation of library equipment and materials needed for enhanced service delivery. The finding in consonance with Bhatti (2010) who stated that finance is very crucial to any human endeavour, including college libraries. He further pointed out that no excellent service can be rendered in the college library without adequate funding. Babajide (2013) supported the finding by stating that a well-funded library with well trained staff will meet-up with standard practices and services for libraries all over the world. This implies that the amount of funding that library receives directly influence the quality of its services.

Conclusion

Organisations all over the world, including college of education are often confronted with disagreements and conflicts of different magnitude and dimensions. Conflicts in every organization are not always appreciated because they often spell doom, and possess the capacity to destabilize organizational peace and harmonious operations. Whenever peace and

harmonious operations of college libraries become jeopardized, service delivery and other functions of libraries staff are derailed. Thus, in order to avert this nasty experience, conflict management through staffing and funding practices are envisaged. Hence, if the practices of staffing and funding were maximally channeled to managing conflicts in college libraries, service delivery of the college staff would be enhanced.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were put forward as a way to address and avoid escalation of conflicts in college of education libraries in South East and South South, Nigeria:

1. College management should all needed staff for the libraries are adequately recruited, well trained and posted to relevant duties, as well as monitored to ensure they discharge their duties without generating conflicts in the library. Proper placement of the staff and adequate orientation on what is required of the staff goes a long way to ensure that conflicts do not arise between staff and visitors to the library, and or among members of staff of the library in the course of carrying out their duties.
2. College management should ensure adequate funding or availability of financial resource to implement good projects and policies meant for the libraries. They should be appropriate allocation and utilization of fund meant for library programs, policies and projects to avoid lapses in implementations of well thought conflict management policies for the libraries. This will ensure hitch free delivery of services in the libraries, thereby avert unforeseen conflicts.

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