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Influence of Mentoring, Job Rotation and Library Tour on Service Delivery in Academic Libraries in Imo State.

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Abstract

This researcher investigated staff training programmes as correlate of service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. The study was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. This study adopted correlation design which also involved simple linear method. The population of this study consisted of 316 library staff in the seven tertiary institutions. A sample of 168 library staff used for this study was derived using Taro Yemen's formula of sampling distribution. Cluster random, proportionate and incidental sampling techniques were adopted. Two instruments (rating scales) were used in this study: Staff Training Scale (STS) and Service Delivery Scale (SDS). The reliability of the instruments was established using Cronbach alpha statistic which gave reliability indices of 0.73 and 0.75 for STS and SDS respectively. The research questions were answered with Pearson (r) statistics while the hypotheses were tested with t-test significance of simple linear correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study are that; there is a high positive and significant relationship between mentorship and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State; there is a high positive and significant relationship between job rotation and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State; and there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between library tours and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. Based on these findings, the researcher recommends that the management of academic libraries management should not relent in the use of mentoring since it positively relates with service delivery of librarians/library staff, The academic libraries' management should not relent in the use of mentorship since it is positively relates with service delivery of librarians; staff should not be left in a particular section or department for a very long time, and library tours should be organized.

Keywords: Academic Library, Service Delivery, Mentoring, Job Rotation, Library Tours

Introduction

Academic libraries are agencies for scholarship and research. As a result, it stands as avenues to publishing research findings in this 21st century and beyond. It is a learning zone for the procurement of wide contents of facts and information in addition to active study skills, tailored towards information literacy. Moreover, students and other researchers who cannot purchase the extensive and expensive collections of books depend on the academic libraries for support. The continuous growth of knowledge and high effective materials available online and in hard copies leading to information literacy is attributed to academic libraries. In a different development, Haliso (2011) and Slowik (2012) recognize that information sources and services from the library are very essential to refrain from bad habits and also capable of reforming and rehabilitating individuals. Academic libraries are at the vantage positions in the educational sector which contribute to strategic role in the actualization of national growth and development. The extent of involvement of academic libraries in the actualization of institutional objectives calls for active and competent library staff who will effectively render library services to users. Edie (2012) posits that without well-educated and trained digital librarians, libraries cannot reach their full potentials.

Today, academic libraries have identified the new roles of librarians/library staff and information professionals and as well found alternative means of funding the library through the services they render to their patrons. These library services are embedded and encircled by information communication technology skills. These skills need to be taught so as to deliver effective services to users. This means that most of our long-aged librarians and other library staff are incompetent to deliver the expected services to the users. In similar development, graduates of library schools are affected by the existing curriculum making them not to meet up with the international standards and practice. They therefore, need to undergo training and retraining on the new functions of librarians. This training and retraining will trigger a total commitment to duty and motivation to give the best to users. In addition, training the library staff will usher in innovation and collaboration, creativity, as these trained workers will view issues from a considerable and problem-solving points. The collaboration team and team-spirit brought in, is as a result of more knowledge and experiences acquired through training and retraining. The trained staff feels that he/she has something to contribute to the welfare of the library, having been exposed to different training techniques (Polvo, 2021).

Mentoring requires an experienced staff of any library who acts as a coach, or teacher to the inexperienced or new staff. According to Amah (2016) mentoring refers to a system of using people (librarians) with a lot of experience and knowledge to advise others (less experienced ones) at the workplace. It is used for management and supervisory training. The goal of mentoring in tertiary institutions' library is to nurture, train, teach, coach and help mentees to acquire skills among other capabilities (Zhang, Deyoe & Matveya, 2017). For Bello and Mansor (2013), mentorship has been proved to be very excellent in putting library staff back to the development of their talents, skills and career advancement thereby enhancing service delivery in the library.

Furthermore, job rotation, which is an integral process in the public services, also exists in academic libraries. It is the redeployment of academic library staff from one section of the library to another and it promotes cost effectiveness which boosts both theoretical as well as pragmatic knowledge and experiences. According to Amah (2016), Job rotation refers to the planned and coordinated transfer of staff from one job to another to acquire experience. It triggers a mastery of almost all the sections in the library and the promotion of library service delivery.

Another library staff training, which is an 'eye opener' and a quick problem solver is the study visits, otherwise, known as library tours' or 'study tours' or 'short visits', to other libraries (Lund, 2010). These study visits give the librarians the opportunity to get acquainted with library operations in other libraries. This therefore, introduces new development into their daily operations in the academic library and serves as a problem-solving tool for other difficult library challenges. Moreover, interacting with other librarians through these visits will create a rare opportunity for knowledge sharing and peer collaboration of writing of papers, and for presentation of research papers. This, in turn, improves service delivery in academic libraries.

Staff training in academic libraries should be part of the institutional documented and pragmatic policy involving library staff of all cadres. This will spur workers into commitment to duty and increase expected performance of the information professionals which is the effective delivery of library services. Furthermore, it should be noted that service delivery is usually complimented with motivation of staff without which no wholesome commitment to duty will be rendered. Hence this study examined the relationship between mentoring, job rotation, library tour and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. This study covered all the libraries of the following tertiary

institutions in Imo State: Federal University of Technology, Owerri; Imo State University, Owerri; Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education, Owerri; Federal Polytechnic Nekede, Owerri; Imo State Polytechnic, Umuagwo; Federal College of Land Resources, Oforola and Imo State College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Orlu.

Statement of the Problem

Every staff in an organization needs professional training and development. It is the responsibility of library management to train and develop library staff to deliver existing and future services to users. In the quest to develop library staff, there should be regular training programmes in form of in-service training/continuing education, mentoring, electronic training, attendance to conferences/ seminars, and workshops, job rotation for additional knowledge and experiences, and study visits to other libraries to help them understand, improve on their skills and perform their work better. However, it appears that there are lack of training and development programmes for staff in academic libraries and if there are, they are not enough and also do not address the specific needs of the staff. Little wonder Nwabueze and Igwesi (2013), state that librarians more especially the newly employed ones in academic libraries have challenges in getting to know their expectations, routines, standards and organizational culture. The authors discovered that both new, mid-career and career librarians face challenges in the areas of assimilation, isolation, work satisfaction and stress. Causes of these challenges could be inexperience, uncertainty about their expectations, nervousness, among others. They therefore need professional development to perform their roles toward the achievement of corporate organizational goal.

The extent to which the corporate goal of an organization is achieved depends on the professional capability and activities of each member. It is believed that librarianship skills are best learnt on the job. Yet, competencies and service delivery of librarians/library staff are not as effective as they should be in some academic libraries. It has also been observed that library school education is considered inadequate to successfully prepare academic librarians for their professional development. Thus, the need for learning opportunities situated in practice. The question therefore, is: could effective mentoring programmes, job rotation, library tours, etc. for library staff, be the panacea to these challenges? Hence this study was undertaken to ascertain the relationship between staff training programmes and effective service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State.

Research Questions

In line with the purpose of the study, the following research questions were posed;

1. What is the coefficient of relationship between mentoring and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State?
2. What is the coefficient of relationship between job rotation and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State?
3. What is the coefficient of relationship between library tours and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: The coefficient of relationship between mentoring and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State is not significant.

H₀₂: The coefficient of relationship between job rotation and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State is not significant.

H₀₃: The coefficient of relationship between library tours and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State is not significant.

Literature Review

Organizations such as academic libraries cannot operate without well-trained workers who will control and direct other resources such as information resources, library facilities and other employees for effective service delivery. Every institution must make sure that the suitable or qualified personnel are the ones actually performing the different tasks in an organization in order to meet up with the attainment of the institutional goals. According to Chai and Sutner (2020), human resources are those employees seen as assets of a business. Regardless of the quality of recruitment and selection system in academic libraries, there is need for a supplementary training and retraining if library staff are to advance and develop in their jobs as well as offer improved services to users. Secondly, in this 21st Century, there is a good number of librarians and other library staff who are not digitally well- equipped at the library school to give satisfactory services to the modern users due to the nature of the curriculum in the library school. Training and retraining of staff therefore, becomes a means to complement and sustain the expected duties of the library staff towards users. Wilson (2016) defined training as a continuous process of developing professional knowledge as staff requires on-the-job training periodically to improve their performances. Adequate training and development programmes will enable

academic librarians to access, organize, evaluate and communicate information resources to the satisfaction of library users (Iwuchukwu & Echedom, 2020). Akanwa (2016) identified notable staff training techniques that are relevant and effective in academic libraries as: mentoring programmes, participative management, job rotation, continuing education/in-service training, conferences/ workshops and seminars, study visits/ library tours and electronic/e-training.

Mentorship

With the introduction of new technologies and ways of interacting with information, librarianship faces increasingly rapid change and new demands in order to satisfy the current information needs. It is in these unsteady circumstances that inexperienced librarians in tertiary institutions find themselves often facing the uncertainties of the new information environment with little or no guidance beyond their initial library school training. Additionally, the positions which new librarians occupy may also be more challenging and require more responsibilities than originally anticipated upon graduation from the library school. The totalities of these factors contribute to an increasing need for libraries to establish mentoring programmes for new librarians (Okurame, 2018). Mentoring, as defined by Amah (2016), refers to a system of using people with a lot of experience and knowledge to advise others at the workplace. It is used for management and supervisory training. It is glaringly clear that no given set of activities or structural components can create a perfect mentoring programme and that every library has a lot to do in determining the kind of mentoring programmes to be adopted, and the activities thereon. Udo-Anyanwu's (2022) study discovered the various ways of mentoring in library profession as individual mentoring, participation in professional associations, informal mentoring, career mentoring, practical training, group mentoring, sponsorship to conferences/seminars/workshops and e-mentoring.

On the importance of mentorship to service delivery, Goodsett and Walsh (2015) stated that career mentoring is necessary and needs to be encouraged in all organizations especially in tertiary institutions where the academic library is attached for improvement in the delivery of library services. Authors have carried out researches on the relationship between mentorship and library services. Cobblah (2017) in his study established that there is a positive relationship between staff training and development (mentorship) and work performance library staff in the selected university libraries in Ghana. The study of Otsonu, Asom, Zuwaira and Olije (2016) revealed that mentorship among other training

methods are accepted as methods used for staff development in special libraries which enhances staff service delivery.

Job Rotation

The rotation of employees from one department to the other or from one section to another is not for the sake of pleasure but a necessity due to professional climatic transitions of this contemporary era. Additionally, some librarians who are yet to be employed may not be very useful as soon as they are employed. Due to insufficient exposure to the profession therefore, in order to assist some libraries to overcome these challenges that will lead to ineffective library services and improve capabilities the young librarians already have as well as assist unemployed librarians compete in the labour market, the job rotation can be one of the ways out of these obstacles (Morgan, 2016). Job rotation is a temporal component of on-the job training technique that requires an employee to be newly re-assigned from one section of the work to another within a specified period of time. Occasionally, a worker may be re-assigned to perform a task in a given section due to some organizational challenges. According to Amah (2016), Job rotation refers to the planned and coordinated transfer of staff from one job to another to acquire experienced.

Job rotation gives room for more flexibility, skillfulness and can lighten and quicken the institutional operations and at time save the time and resources of the institution. Job rotation provides an opportunity for staff to work in different areas of the office, gaining valuable insight into the diverse works. A study by Malaolu and Ogbuabor (2013) on training and manpower development, employee productivity and organizational performance in Nigeria shows that majority (70%) of the respondents agreed that job rotation development has enhanced their efficiency, job productivity and organizational performance. Also, the study by Otsonu, Asom, Zuwaira and Olije (2016) on the challenges and strategies to enhance staff development for effective library services in special libraries in Benue State, Nigeria revealed that lecture method, job rotation, coaching method, mentorship among others were accepted as methods used for staff development in special libraries for enhanced service delivery. Job rotations in the library and other institutions serve as a tool that breaks down the boundaries of monotony of work, thus creating more viable opportunities for library staff to be more relevant and marketable in different areas of responsibility.

Library Tours

Library tour/study visit is one of the immediate training techniques that improve library staff skills, competencies and experiences in the library profession. Library tours/study visits can be done within the shortest time of about thirty minutes to one hour or more than that as the case may be depending on the size, location and nature of the library in addition to the aim of the visit. Library tours can be done by library staff to other libraries especially when they want to understudy quickly some operational activities or some services that are still unclear to them. In this situation, it becomes a short organized and study visit (Akanwa, 2016). Library tours are viewed as orientation tours and can be requested through the whole year. This means that there is no time limitation to the time of visitation to any academic library. The study by Gunu, Oni, Tsado and Ajayi (2013) on training and development as a tool for organizational performance showed that library tours as part of staff development programmes account for 39.1% of the variation in organizational performance. That is to say that training and development through library tours have significant impact on organizational performance and service delivery.

Academic libraries can never be left out in the campus tour because it's a time to communicate the value of libraries to others. Also, librarians change the perspective and traditional aspects of their operations and services after visiting other academic and public libraries to understudy how they operate. Academic librarians, after being trained through under studying other libraries, use this rare opportunity of library tours to improve and diversify their service delivery, educate the students, researchers and other librarians (Miller, 2014). Librarians therefore, need to pay short and study visits to other4 sister libraries to keep abreast of latest developments in their profession enhance effective library service. Librarians learn faster within the shortest period of time if they engage in virtual library study visits. The essence of these visits is to broaden the librarian's horizon in his area of operations and foster new developments in the library visited in order to enhance effective library service delivery (Tolppanen, 2021). Librarians therefore, need to pay short and study visits to other sister libraries to keep abreast of latest developments in their profession enhance effective library service.

Research Methodology

This study adopted correlation design which also involved simple linear method. The population of this study consisted of 316 library staff in the seven tertiary institutions. A sample of 168 library staff used for this study was derived using Taro Yemen's formula of sampling distribution. Cluster random, proportionate and incidental sampling

techniques were adopted. Two instruments (rating scales) were used in this study: Staff Training Scale (STS) and Service Delivery Scale (SDS). The research questions were answered with Pearson (r) statistics while the hypotheses were tested with t-test significance of simple linear correlation at 0.05 level of significance.

Decision Rule: The decision for the research questions was based on the fact that if the coefficient is: 0.00 = no relationship; 0.01-0.20= very low relationship; 0.21-0.40 = low relationship; 0.41-0.60 = moderate relationship; 0.61-0.80 = high relationship; 0.81-0.99 = very high relationship; and 1.00 = perfect positive relationship.

The acceptance or rejection of null hypotheses was based on the calculated value of the t-cal and t-tab analysis. When the t-cal value is less than the t-tab value, the hypothesis was accepted, but when the t-cal value is greater than the t-tab value, the hypothesis was rejected.

Data Analyses and Presentations

Research Question 1: What is the coefficient of relationship between mentorship and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State?

Table 1: Summaries of simple linear correlation (Pearson r) used to estimate the magnitude and direction of relationship between mentorship (X) and service delivery (Y) in academic libraries in Imo State

V	n	Σ	R	MR	DR	Remarks
X	168	6727	0.66	High	Positive	High
Y	168	15068				Relationship

Size (n), Summation (Σ), Pearson r (r), Magnitude of Relationship (MR), Direction of Relationship (DR) and Remarks

Table 1 shows the summaries for the coefficient of relationship between mentorship and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. The result shows that the obtained coefficient of 0.66 indicates that a high magnitude of relationship exists between mentorship and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. This coefficient also indicates that the direction of the relationship is positive. The positive nature indicates that an increase in one variable is highly likely to also yield the same measure of increase in the other variable. The answer to the above question is that there is a high positive relationship between mentorship and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State.

Ho₁: The coefficient of relationship between mentorship and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State is not significant.

Table 2: Summaries of t-test of simple linear correlation statistics for testing the coefficient of relationship between mentorship and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State

V	N	Σ	r	A	Df	t _{cal}	t _{tab}	Decision
X	168	6727						
			0.66	0.05	166	11.363	1.96	Reject Ho ₁
Y	168	15068						

Sample Size (n), Summation (Σ), Coefficient of Relationship (r), Alpha Level (α), Degree of Freedom (df) and t-test of Significance of Simple Linear Correlation between two Variables

Table 2 shows the test of the significance of the coefficient of relationship between mentorship and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. The result indicates the degree of freedom as 166, t-calculated value as 11.363 and t-tabulated value as 1.96. This shows that the t-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value. The researcher rejected the null hypothesis; therefore concluding that the coefficient of relationship between mentorship and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State is significant.

Research Question 2: What is the coefficient of relationship between job rotation and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State?

Table 3: Summaries of simple linear correlation (Pearson r) used to estimate the magnitude and direction of relationship between job rotation (X) and service delivery (Y) in academic libraries in Imo State

V	N	Σ	R	MR	DR	Remarks
X	168	5480				High
			0.64	High	Positive	Positive
Y	168	15068				Relationship

Table 3 shows the summaries for the coefficient of relationship between job rotation and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. The result shows that the obtained coefficient of 0.64 indicates that a high magnitude of relationship exists between

job rotation and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. This coefficient also indicates that the direction of the relationship is positive. The positive nature indicates that an increase in one variable is highly likely to also yield the same measure of increase in the other variable. The answer to the above question is that there is a high positive relationship between job rotation and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State.

Ho₂: The coefficient of relationship between job rotation and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State is not significant.

Table 4: Summaries of t-test of simple linear correlation statistics for testing the coefficient of relationship between job rotation and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State

V	N	Σ	r	α	Df	t _{cal}	t _{tab}	Decision
X	168	5480						
			0.64	0.05	166	10.732	1.96	Reject Ho ₂
Y	168	15068						

Table 4 shows the test of the significance of the coefficient of relationship between job rotation and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. The result indicates the degree of freedom as 166, t-calculated value as 10.732 and t-tabulated value as 1.96. This shows that the t-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value. The researcher rejected the null hypothesis; therefore concluding that the coefficient of relationship between job rotation and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State is significant.

Research Question 3: What is the coefficient of relationship between library tours and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State?

Table 5: Summaries of simple linear correlation (Pearson r) used to estimate the magnitude and direction of relationship between library tours (X) and service delivery (Y) in academic libraries in Imo State

V	N	Σ	R	MR	DR	Remarks
X	168	3382				Moderate
			0.58	Moderate	Positive	Positive
Y	168	15068				Relationship

Table 5 shows the summaries for the coefficient of relationship between library tours and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. The result shows that the obtained coefficient of 0.58 indicates that a moderate magnitude of relationship exists between library tours and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. This coefficient also indicates that the direction of the relationship is positive. The positive

nature indicates that an increase in one variable is moderately likely to also yield the same measure of increase in the other variable. The answer to the above question is that there is a moderate positive relationship between library tours and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State.

H₀₃: The coefficient of relationship between library tours and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State is not significant.

Table 6: Summaries of t-test of simple linear correlation statistics for testing the coefficient of relationship between library tours and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State

V	N	\sum	r	α	Df	t _{cal}	t _{tab}	Decision
X	168	3382	0.58	0.05	166	9.213	1.96	Reject H ₀₅
Y	168	15068						

Table 6 shows the test of the significance of the coefficient of relationship between library tours and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. The result indicates the degree of freedom as 166, t-calculated value as 9.213 and t-tabulated value as 1.96. This shows that the t-calculated value is greater than the t-tabulated value. The researcher rejected the null hypothesis; therefore concluding that the coefficient of relationship between library tours and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State is significant.

Discussion of Findings

Relationship between Mentorship and Service Delivery in Academic Libraries in Imo State

The study revealed that there is a high positive and significant relationship between mentorship and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. The positive sign shows that an increase in one variable could lead to the same measure of increase in the other variable, implying a corresponding relationship between the two variables (mentorship and service delivery). This finding is true because in an academic library where mentorship is practiced and given a priority as a means of training staff, there is high tendency that the library will be effective in its service delivery. This finding is in consonance with the findings of Cobblah (2017) who established that there is a positive relationship between staff training and development (mentorship) and work performance library staff in the selected university libraries in Ghana. Similarly, Otsonu, Asom, Zuwaira and Olije (2016) findings revealed that lecture method, job rotation, coaching

method, mentorship among others were accepted as methods used for staff development in special libraries which enhances staff service delivery. Also corroborating this finding, Goodsett and Walsh (2015) states that career mentoring is necessary and needs to be encouraged in all organizations especially in tertiary institutions where the academic library is attached for improvement in the delivery of library services. This finding has proved that mentorship is a potent factor that can be used to improve or enhance librarians' service delivery in the academic libraries in Imo State. The similarities that were recorded among the findings above could be linked to the use of similar variables.

Relationship between Job Rotation and Service Delivery in Academic Libraries in Imo State

It was also found that there is a high positive and significant relationship between job rotation and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. The positive sign shows that an increase in one variable could lead to the same measure of increase in the other variable, implying a corresponding relationship between the two variables (job rotation and service delivery). This finding is true because in an academic library where job rotation is practiced and given a priority as a means of training staff, there is high tendency that the library will be effective in its service delivery. That is to say when academic libraries engage in high practice of job rotation, it will result to effective service delivery in such academic library, but when the reverse is the case, the library will be negatively affected. This finding is in line with the study by Malaolu and Ogbuabor (2013) on training and manpower development, employee productivity and organizational performance in Nigeria. The finding indicated that majority (70%) of the respondents agreed that job rotation development has enhanced their efficiency, job productivity and organizational performance. Also, the study by Otsonu, Asom, Zuwaira and Olije (2016) on the challenges and strategies to enhance staff development for effective library services in special libraries in Benue State, Nigeria revealed that lecture method, job rotation, coaching method, mentorship among others were accepted as methods used for staff development in special libraries for enhanced service delivery.

Relationship between Library Tours and Service Delivery in Academic Libraries in Imo State

It was also found that there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between library tours and service delivery in academic libraries in Imo State. The positive sign shows that an increase in one variable could lead to an equivalent measure of increase

in the other variable, implying a corresponding relationship between the two variables (library tours and service delivery). This finding is true because when librarians in academic libraries are engaged in library tours, they will be up to date with more knowledge and new ways of practice, this will also reflect in the way which they deliver in their course of rendering services in the libraries. This will affect the academic libraries positively. This finding is in agreement with the study by Gunu, Oni, Tsado and Ajayi (2013) on training and development as a tool for organizational performance which shows that library tours as part of staff development programmes account for 39.1% of the variation in organizational performance. That is to say that training and development through library tours have significant impact on organizational performance and service delivery. This finding is also in tandem with the finding by Miller (2014) that academic librarians, after being trained through under studying other libraries, use the rare opportunity of library tours to improve and diversify their service delivery, educate the students, researchers and other librarians. The fact that there is a positive relationship in these studies, has proved that library tours is potent in positively affecting service delivery in the academic libraries.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommends that:

1. The academic libraries' management should not relent in the use of mentorship since it is positively related with service delivery of librarians.
2. Library staff should not be left in a particular section or department for a very long time.
3. In order to improve service delivery in academic libraries, library tours should be organized by managements and individual staff can undertake to visit other libraries to acquaint him/herself on what is obtainable there.

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