

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STAFF TRAINING AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF LIBRARIANS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF UYO LIBRARY

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SUMMARY

The study explores the relationship between staff training and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library. The study adopts the survey method and questionnaire used as instrument for data collection. 30 professional librarians were surveyed and chi-square (χ^2) statistical technique was used to analyse the data. Result of the study reveals a significant positive relationship between staff training and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library.

INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of any organisation regardless of size, structure and function is to optimally utilise its human and material resources to achieve the goal of productivity and improved service delivery.

Achieving an organisation's primary goal of productivity, however, hinges principally on the contributions made by its personnel. To underscore the importance of employees in library as a service-oriented organization. Tella, Ayeni and Popoola (2007) assert that no matter how a library may be, high productivity depends on the effectiveness and efficiency of the workforce. Adeniji (2012) reiterates that the success or failure of an organisation is largely a function of employee job performance. The concept of job performance is variously defined in the literature owing to the fact it is a function of many variables such as age, gender, job experience, cognitive ability, individual skills, among others.

Bamgboye and Aderibigbe (2004) define job performance as "that employee behaviour which a particular organisation condones, and probably rewards, and which contributes to its growth and well-being". Oduwole (2004) defines it as "a process of carrying out one's tasks, duties and responsibilities associated with a particular job". In an industrial environment, job performance or productivity, is a measure of how well an individual converts input resources (labour, material and machines) into output (goods and services). However, job performance in the context of a library is measured in terms of quality of services rendered to users.

Nwalo (2003) stressed that library operations are ipso facto routine in nature, requiring a level of performance to sustain and improve upon. Such operations range from selection of information-based materials (books, journals and non-

prints) to acquisition, accessioning, organizing, storing, retrieval and disseminating of information to users. These operations are routinely performed by library personnel, whether or not the library is automated. Library personnel consist of professional librarians, para-professionals and other support staff. This study, however, focuses on professional librarians working in the University of Uyo Library, who possess a minimum academic qualification of Bachelor's degree in library and information science (LIS), or in any other field, in addition to either a Master's degree, or a Post-graduate diploma in library and information science obtained from a reputable institution.

The second variable, staff training, is also variously defined in the literature, and there seems to exist no universally accepted definition for the term. Adeniji (2012) defines staff training as "a private or public education programme directly applicable to work situations, while Lim in Adeniji (2012) describes it as "the process of transmitting and receiving information for specific work situations. However, for the purpose of this study, staff training is defined as "the process concerned with the development of aptitudes, skills and abilities of employees to perform specific jobs in order to improve their levels of productivity ". With the advent of globalisation and influx of new technologies, one of the leading challenges of library administrators is execution of effective human capital strategies to enhance organisational performance through regular training and retraining of the workforce to improve employees' skills. The benefits which accrue to any organisation that invests in its human resource through a systematic and effective manpower development programmes are immeasurable. Well articulated human resource development efforts guarantee effective and optimal utilisation of employees' talents and potentials for maximum productivity.

Statement of the Problem

Preliminary investigation by the researcher supported by evidence from previous research revealed that library personnel in universities and other public institutions in Nigeria are experiencing low productivity and general inefficiency in service delivery, in spite of several motivational strategies adopted by government and organisations to improve their levels of job performance. Since the library is a service-oriented organisation, the inability of university libraries in Nigeria to cater adequately to the information needs of their teeming users may be attributed to inefficient performance of library personnel, particularly professional librarians, who constitute the personnel bedrock. It is against this background that this study investigates the factors that may contribute to, and are predictive of librarians' job performance in the University of Uyo Library.

Research Objectives

The broad aim of the study is to determine the relationship between staff training programmes and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Examine the relationship, (if any), between in-service training programme and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library.
2. Determine the relationship, (if any), between conference participation and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library.
3. Find out the relationship, (if any), between library staff seminars and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What is the relationship between in-service training programme and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library?
2. What is the relationship between conference participation and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library?
3. What is the relationship between library staff seminars and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses posited in the null form were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant positive relationship between in-service training programme and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library
2. There is no significant positive relationship between conference participation and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library.
3. There is no significant positive relationship between library staff seminars and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library.

Significance of the Study

The findings of the study would be of immense benefits to the following groups:

Library and information science professionals, library administrators, university management, human resource professionals and management researchers.

The study will provide library and information professionals a better understanding of factors, both intrinsic and extrinsic, that may influence or affect employee behaviour and performance at work. The study will equip university library administrators with improved management strategies to boost the morale of their workforce in order to enhance productivity and quality service delivery. The study will also assist university management tackle the problem of employee low performance, since librarians constitute the personnel bedrock of university

library, making them an important indicator of the working climate. The study will engender a purposeful and result-oriented human resource development programme and ensure optimal utilisation of employees' potentials.

Finally, the study will deepen understanding of management researchers and help fill the void in the literature on library personnel job performance, thus hopefully, stimulating further research in this critical area.

Scope of the Study

The study covers the following constructs of the independent variable of staff training programmes:

In-service training programme, conference participation and library staff seminars, and the dependent variable of job performance. The study also covers the entire population of professional librarians working in the University of Uyo Library, and excludes other cadres of library personnel.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Many researchers have linked the success or failure of any organisation to staff training and development.

Iboma (2008) asserts that effective training can change the entire fortune of workers in any organisation and make them more productive, while Ladipo-Ajayi (1994) found indispensability of staff training and development to an organisation, and concluded that it was a demanding and capital-intensive, but worthwhile venture. Eneku (2003) also found that management was keenly interested in training their workforce in order to impart requisite skills and know-how for improved productivity. There are various forms of training opportunities available to employees.

These are notably:

In-service training: Akinpelu (2002) defines in-service training as "an in-house training programme mounted for employees in government organisations and business enterprises aimed at enhancing their productivity and service delivery".

Conference participation: Gutek (2007) identified conferences and other related activities such as seminars, symposia and workshops as "a platform for addressing contemporary issues in specialised subject areas which are of interest to an organisation".

Library staff seminars: This form of training programme offers academic staff in the university library a unique opportunity to engage in research and publication where papers presented can be academically and professionally assessed as one of the criteria for staff promotion. Staff training is viewed by several management researchers as a potent "tool" and major determinant of employee job performance. Many organisations commit huge financial resources to train and retrain their personnel for higher productivity and enhanced service delivery. Staff training is also viewed as a key ingredient in boosting the morale of employees for greater job performance.

According to Adeniji (2012), an employee who experiences low productivity is frustrated by failure, and is most likely to abandon his or her job than someone who is highly productive. Ogunbameru (2004) maintains that employee job performance is subject to a number of factors that may be hereditary, environmental, demographic or circumstantial. Since library operations are carried out by personnel who have individual differences and inherent personal characteristics such as age, gender, job experience, rank and level of education, their job performance may also be influenced by these factors.

Research Methods

Survey method was adopted for the study. Questionnaire was used as instrument to generate data relating to the objectives of the study. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure, as far as practicable, that specific questions actually addressed the variable for which measures is required. The entire population of 30 professional librarians were surveyed as it was considered not too large to manage. All the 30 surveys were filled retrieved and found usable, thus yielding a response rate of 100 percent. Chi-square (X^2) statistical technique was used to analyse the data generated.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Research questions and hypotheses stated in null form were tested using chi-square X^2 statistical technique at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between in-service training programme and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library?

The research question is answered using the results generated from the data analysis and displayed in table 1 below.

Table 1: Chi-square analysis of relationship between in-service training programme and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library.

	Fo	Fe	$\frac{(Fo - Fe)^2}{Fe}$	X ²
	9	3	$\frac{(9 - 3)^2}{3}$	12
	9	3	$\frac{(9 - 3)^2}{3}$	12
	9	3	$\frac{(9 - 3)^2}{3}$	12
Total	27			36

Table 1 shows that the calculated value of 36 is greater than the critical value of 2 at 0.05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis is rejected, while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies

that there is a significant positive relationship between in-service training programme and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library.

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between conference participation and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library?

The research question is answered using the results generated from the data analysis and displayed in table 2 below.

Table 2: Chi-square analysis of relationship between conference participation and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library.

	Fo	Fe	$\frac{(Fo - Fe)^2}{Fe}$	X²
	8	2.8	$\frac{(8 - 2.8)^2}{2.8}$	9.6
	8	2.8	$\frac{(8 - 2.8)^2}{2.8}$	9.6
	8	2.8	$\frac{(8 - 2.8)^2}{2.8}$	9.6
Total	24			28.8

Table 2 shows that the calculated value of 28.8 is greater than the critical value of 2 at 0.05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis is rejected, while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is a significant

positive relationship between conference participation and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library.

Research Question 3

What is the relationship between library staff seminars and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library?

The research question is answered using the results generated from the data analysis and displayed in table 3 below.

Table 3: Chi-square analysis of relationship between library staff seminars and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library?

	Fo	Fe	$\frac{(Fo - Fe)^2}{Fe}$	X²
	6	2.6	$\frac{(6 - 2.6)^2}{2.6}$	11.56
	6	2.6	$\frac{(6 - 2.6)^2}{2.6}$	11.56
	6	2.6	$\frac{(6 - 2.6)^2}{2.6}$	11.56
Total	18			34.68

Table 3 shows that the calculated value of 34.68 is greater than the critical value of 2 at 0.05 level of significance, hence the null hypothesis is rejected, while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is a significant

positive relationship between library staff seminars and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study reveals a significant and positive relationship between staff training and job performance of librarians in the University of Uyo Library. The result in table one points to the imperative of regular in-service training programme for all cadres of university librarians as a means of enhancing their productivity and professional skills.

This findings is in agreement with Ajao (2001) that in-service training assists employees to acquire and update requisite skills, knowledge and proficiency in their jobs. According to Ajao, acquisition of skills by trainees determines the present and future relevance of employee in any organisation. Table 2 affirms a significant and positive relationship between conference participation and job performance of librarians.

This is in consonance with Karlin (1996), which found that participation at conferences greatly enhanced professionalism in library practice and also improved productivity of employees. Soyinka and Omagbemi (2005) also lend credence to this form of training, affirming that it leads to effective library services.

Tella Ayeni and Popoola (2007) relating training to library work stated that it is an essential strategy for motivating workers in the library as a service organisation. Library and information science (LIS) professionals should be given ample opportunities for self-improvement and development to meet the challenges and requirements of their jobs, and this can best be achieved through training and retaining of the workforce. The study also affirms the importance of adopting different forms of staff training.

There exists a strong positive correlation between staff training and productivity. An employee who is well-trained is not only productive, but has confidence in his ability to perform. He/she derives intrinsic satisfaction from his/her work which promotes his/her morale. Conversely, an employee who experiences low productivity is frustrated by failure and is most likely to quit his/her job than the one who is highly productive. Adeniji (2012) shares this views when he stated that “an organisation may have employees with the ability and determination, appropriate equipment and managerial support, yet productivity may fall below expectation”. The missing factor in most cases, he opines, is lack of demonstrable skills and requisite knowledge through training and development.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study:

1. In-service training was a strong determining factor in librarians' job performance.
2. Conference participation had a significant positive influence on librarians' job performance.

3. Library staff seminar had a significant positive influence on librarians' job performance.

Achieving an organisation's primary goal of productivity depends largely on the contributions made by its employees who must be constantly trained to achieve organisational objectives. This is a fundamental strategy in maximizing the human resource potential of any organisation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff training programs of the University of Uyo Library should be further strengthened and also extended to other categories of library personnel such as para-professionals and support staff to equip them with requisite job skills for higher performance.

Staff training programme should serve as a key component of personnel management in service-oriented organisation such as the university library. Different cadres of library personnel should be constantly trained and retrained to enrich their job performance.

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