

## **Staff training and development of librarians in academic libraries in Ondo State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

This study explored staff training and development among librarians in academic libraries in Ondo State. The population of this study consisted of sixty one (61) librarians. The entire population was used as sample for the study because it was manageable. The instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire. The professional staff are used for the study. Frequency and percentages were used to analyze the data collected. Findings revealed that all the librarians have participated in formal education as well as continuing education programmes followed by ICT training in the library since commencement of work in the libraries; that all of them have positive attitude to training and development programmes while financial constraint, denial of promotion after completion of staff development programme among others are the prevalent factors affecting training and development programmes among the staff. The study concluded that the librarians have participated in various training and programmes since they began working in the libraries and recommended that the management of the institutions and libraries should make funds available to staff for training and development and well as promote those that have acquired additional qualifications through professional development programmes.

**Keywords:** Staff training and development, library, academic and human resource

### **Introduction**

The word influence means the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something, or the effect itself. In the academic environment, influence can be either positive or negative. For instance, if a student is influenced negatively by peer, it affects his or her academic performance. Nevertheless, stronger student do have an impact on their peers and actually help improve their overall academic performance. In the library parlance, influence also has similar meaning, since the staff of the library depend on the resources to provide services to users, thus, staff training and development must have positive or negative effects on the kinds of services available to those that make use of the library. In academic libraries staff training and development helps to

meet the needs of digital natives. This is one of the aims of the researcher, to exploit the influence of staff training and development programme that makes them meet 21<sup>st</sup> century needs. Academic libraries generally, provide a lot of services which require the academic librarians and paraprofessionals needs to up-date in all aspects of training and development programmes that would enable them remain relevant in their profession. According to Obisi (2011), training is a process through which the skills, talent and knowledge of an employee is enhanced and increased.

In the business enterprise, staff training and development cannot be separated, because both are interconnected to an extent without one influence there will not be result in the system. Staff training or development,

otherwise referred to as human resources development (HRD), employee development or personnel development in business management, “is intended to strengthen the capability of an organization to perform its mission more effectively and more efficiently by encouraging and providing for the growth of its human resources” (Synder and Sanders, 1991). The selection process is designed to find people who have the skills and ability necessary to carry out required job duties. But to become an asset to an organization, new employees generally need some additional training. They need to learn about their work environment and about their specific job responsibilities. Also, they need to become familiar with the organization’s policies and procedures and learn how they themselves fit into the work group. Staff development is a veritable tool, which an organization employs to keep its staff abreast of new changes in job roles. According to Ohabunwa (1999) if organizations train their employees very well, managers and superiors would have the confidence to delegate authority to their subordinates but when subordinates are not properly trained, it would be difficult for authority to be delegated to them by their superiors. Corroborating the above view, Ifidon (1985) noted that “the whole purpose of staff recruitment and evaluation is defeated if recruitment and evaluation are not complemented by staff development”. He further summarizes the objectives of staff development programmes thus:

- i. To enable the staff make contributions that are more effective to the library’s total effort in service mission;
- ii. To make the individual look for satisfactions that go beyond economic i.e., for self-pride, self-respect and achievement;
- iii. To prepare the staff for the challenge of complex modern technology which requires an integration of activities and persons of diverse and specialized competence;
- iv. To enable the library worker to develop a life of his own outside the library;
- v. To make the staff receptive to change and innovation rather than resistant to them;
- vi. To create climate where the dignity of employees as human beings, not just as factors contributing to the library’s efficiency is respected; and
- vii. To qualify an individual for a new different and higher responsibility.

Training and development of an organization’s employees is becoming an increasingly important and necessary activity of personnel and human resource management. Staff development was identified as an instrument for improving of on- the-job and off-the-job programmes designed to harness the activities of an organization to the mutual benefit of both the organization and the staff. In the Nigerian scene, irrespective of the fact that she participated in the first world conference on continuing education in 1986, there has not been a serious commitment to its development (Ejiogu, 2000)

Nok (2006) observed that most staff in academic libraries in Nigeria were trained in traditional librarianship hence, find it difficult to cope with the requirements of the electronic age. According to her, staff training and retraining have not been given a pride of place. She recommended a proper, frequent and regular information technology training if maximum benefit is to be gained from the automation of library services.

Irrespective of the importance of staff development programmes in libraries with regards to service delivery and personal professional growth, it is yet doubtful if staff development programmes exist in Nigerian institutions of higher learning, especially in university, college and polytechnic libraries in Ondo State. For example, experience gathered as a librarian in library has shown some level of deterioration in the services offered by librarians in areas of reference services, binding services, charging and discharging services, current awareness services, and application of modern information seeking techniques. As a result, some library users seem to prefer alternative sources such as the Internet in search of information. This is worrisome in this 21<sup>st</sup> century, therefore the researcher want to investigate the training and development of librarians development in selected academic libraries in Ondo State, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objective of the study is to ascertain staff training and development among librarians in academic libraries in Ondo state. The specific objectives are to:

1. ascertain the training and development programmes the

librarians have participated in since they started working in the academic libraries;

2. examine the attitude of the librarians towards staff training and development programmes in academic libraries in Ondo State; and
3. examine the problems affecting staff training and development programmes in academic libraries in Ondo state

### **Literature review**

Training is a process of imparting new skill and knowledge on recipients. Training as the process of learning the skills that you need to do a job. Nwachukwu (as cited in Nkebem, 2009) defined training as an organizational effort that is aimed at helping an employee to acquire basic skills required for the efficient execution of the functions for which he was hired. Staff training is a component of any thriving corporate organization. No organization can survive or succeed without training and retraining its workforce. According to Nwokeocha (2024), organizations strive to train and develop their employees for optimal performance in executing their tasks and responsibilities aimed at achieving set organizational goals.

Aidah (2013) posited that training is a systematic and planned activity that result in enhanced level of skill, knowledge and competency that are necessary to perform work effectively. Also Gordon, as cited in Aidah (2013) stated that training is a planned and systematic modification of behavior through learning events, activities and programmes, and which results in the participants achieving the levels of

knowledge, skills, competencies and abilities to carry out their work very effectively. Adeyi, Apansile, Okere and Okafor (2018) viewed training as schemes for improving workers efficient physical and mental abilities towards efficient work process, as well as communicating corporate vision to workers. Fanibuyan as cited in Adeyi, Apansile, Okere and Okafor (2018) saw training as the orderly process of shifting the behavior as well as attitude of the workforce in line with pursuing organizational objectives. Appiah, Boamah, Baryeh, Browne, Ferkah and Marku-Ablerdu (2013) defined training as organized activity that is aimed at imparting information or instruction so as to improve the recipient's performance or to help him attain a required level of skill or knowledge. It can be seen that some authors see training as always emanating from an organization and aimed at organizational benefit, while some others see training as generally involving development of the individual through acquisition of skill or further knowledge.

Frost (2018) stated that training programmes is aimed to strengthen those skills which each employee needs to improve, and brings all employees to have similar skills and knowledge to enable them perform their duties. This is important because the frequency of a patron to the library largely depends on the way staff are able to help them to locate information.

The central idea is that training involves processes of acquisition of further knowledge or skills, but may be initiated or embarked upon by an individual through self-development effort or initiated and funded by an organization to equip the recipients with the necessary skills, knowledge or expertise to handle

assigned tasks very effectively. Training can therefore be seen as an organized activity or effort that is aimed at imparting skill or knowledge needed for the recipients to handle assigned tasks or functions very effectively in workplace and chosen field of endeavor.

Advancing reasons for training, Adeyi, Apansile, Okere and Okafor (2018) argued that the prescribed educational scheme does not satisfactorily train on particular job skills needed to function in organizations, thus there is a constant need for staff development and training to cover this lapse. According to the authors, training is also always initiated to sustain capable, experienced and qualified employees in an organization. Training is intended towards imparting information and directions to advance the recipients performance, as well as to aid attainment of desired stages or level. Engetou (2017) stated that the need for training always arise in the effort to attain greater productivity and safety in the operation of specific equipment or have effective sales force. Adeyi, Apansile, Okere and Okafor (2018) stressed that training is vital for worker's development and this encourages self-fulfilling skills of the workforce, reduced operational expenditure, confines liabilities and shifting goals along with objectives. The authors argued that trained workers function better than amateur and inexperienced ones. Cooper and Payneas cited in Nkebem (2009) posited that training is a more efficient way of motivating workers and getting their co-operation, support and high performance.

Also, emphasizing on the need for training, Aidah (2013) stated that training plays a vital role in improving performance, as well as enhancing

productivity and thus, place organizations in better positions to face competition and stay at the top. The author stated that training has been proved to generate performance improvement related to benefits for the employees and the organization by positively influencing employee performance through the development of employee knowledge, skills, abilities, competencies and behavior. Wright and Geroyas cited in Aidah (2013) agreed that employee competencies change through effective training programmes. According to the authors, training not only improves the overall performance of the employees and make them to effectively perform their current jobs, but also enhances the knowledge, skills and attitude of the workers necessary for future jobs and thus contribute to superior organizational performance. Hotala and Lutta (as cited in Nkebem, 2009) stated that growth and development in the organization rested on the collective knowledge of the employees, thus making it imperative for advancement of knowledge among workers in the organization. According to the authors, this can only be possible through effective training and retraining of employees.

Ifidon and Ifidon (2007) asserted that training programmes help both the professional and para-professional staff to be current with new knowledge and be abreast with development in field. With relevant and adequate training programmes, the mental capabilities of employees such as librarians will be developed and this would enable them to face new challenges in librarianship that was brought about with the application of new technology in processing and disseminating information to library users. Aidah (2013) stated that the main

purpose of training is to acquire and improve knowledge, skill and attitudes towards work related tasks. According to the author, training has the capacity to motivate, and can lead to both short-term and long-term benefits for individuals and organizations alike.

According to Rowley (1995), training should be an integral part of the work and development of any company or an organization, large or small, because a company's human resource is amongst its most important assets and the skills and motivation of its workers can be crucial to success. We all need to recognize that training is not a luxury, but a necessity. (Khan, Khan, & Khan (2011) contended that training and development is the most important factor in the business world because training and development increases the efficiency and effectiveness of both employees and organization. To them training and development has significant effect on organizational performance and enhances the capabilities of employees. Stredwick (2005) cited in Mpofu & Hlatywayo (2015) noted that the most important role in human resources is to help employees improve their performance through employee training and development, and by doing so improve the performance or growth of the organization. Also Nassazi (2013) opined that training is the only way of developing organizational intellectual property through building employee's competencies to succeed. The effectiveness and success of an organization therefore lies on the people who form and work within the organization. It follows therefore that the employees in academic libraries to be able to perform their duties and make meaningful contributions to the success of the institutions goals, need to acquire

the relevant skills and knowledge. Factors such as the impact of new technology, “information explosion; new policies and methods for the organization and provision of information, have made it absolutely essential for librarians to engage actively in staff training if they are to remain professionally up-to-date and, more importantly, if they are to provide services that meet the challenge imposed on them by these new developments. (Anyaegebu & Wali 2021).

From the above we can deduce that the success of academic libraries depends highly on its staff. Staff development is vital, and will go a long way to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the library services that are provided by librarians. Excellence in quality delivery in any library cannot be achieved if the librarians are not of high professional standard. Continuing professional education is critical to renewing the expertise and skills needed to teach and assist library users in the new information age. Today’s academic librarians are involved in a variety of challenging activities. Sahabi and Otobo (2021) posited that academic librarians are involved in the following activities:

- Consult with individuals in analyzing, identifying, and fulfilling their information needs;
- Create campus-wide information literacy programs and deliver classroom instruction to strengthen information literacy skills;
- Select, organize, and facilitate access to information in a variety of formats;
- Keep abreast of technological advancements and develop strategies to take advantage of them;

- Plan, implement, and administer computer-based systems, electronic databases design and manage Websites;
- Collaborate with classroom faculty, computer specialists, and instructional developers; and
- Contribute to effective teamwork among colleagues.

### **Human Resources Attribution Theory by Fritz Heider (1958)**

The Human Resources Attribution Theory was propounded by Fritz Heider in 1958. The theory emphasize that the attribution that employees develop or have about the intention of management in adopting particular human resources practices have consequences for their individual and ultimately, unit performance. The authors identified some human resources management practices as staffing, training, benefit, pay and performance appraisal and stated that employees attribute these human resources management practices as follows: to enhance service quality, keep costs down, promote employee wellbeing, get the most work out of them and comply with union requirement.

According to Oghojafor, Olayemi, & Oluwatula, (2012), the attribution theory by Heider (1958) divides the behavior attributes into two parts, external or internal factors. Internal attribution: When an internal attribution is made, the cause of the given behavior is within the person, i.e. the variables which make a person responsible like attitude, aptitude, character and personality. External attribution: When an external attribution is made, the cause of the given behavior is assigned to the situation in which the behavior was seen.

The person responsible for the behavior may assign the causality to the environment or weather. According to Heider (1958), men behave as amateur scientists in social situations. He also asserted that, we generally explain behavior in two ways; either we attribute the behavior to a person or a situation. A study by a group of scholars on the pattern of attributions of managers in business organizations as they relate to strategic decisions on critical success factors including personnel, market leadership and customers' loyalty. The results show that managers attribute strategic decisions on personnel, market leadership and customers' loyalty to effort, ability and nature of the task (Oghojafor, Olayemi, & Oluwatula, 2012).

To support the above findings, the results of an implementation of attribution theory in leadership review show that leaders' communication style influences the leadership attributions that emerge in virtual teams. In addition, leadership support for work-life balance can reduce employees' counterproductive behaviors by mitigating work-family conflict. Additionally, big data-driven marketing attributions can enhance customer value attribution accuracy. Furthermore, leaders' commitment to public ideals has a favorable relationship with charismatic leadership attributions and, as a result, lower turnover rates. The research results highlight how attributions significantly influence employees' reactions to policies, leaders' styles, and organizational outcomes. Identifying key drivers of employees' attribution tendencies can empower leaders to cultivate more positive leadership results (Safira, Sari, Muda, & Kesuma, 2023).

According to the theory, employee attribution of human resources management practices as management intention to promote employee service quality and wellbeing is positively related to employee attitudes and behaviour relationship. Conversely, employee attribution of human resources management practice as management policies to minimize costs and exploit employees is negatively related to employee attitudes and behaviour. More so, employee attribution of human resources management practices as management conformity to the influence of union is not significantly related to their attitude and behaviour.

The theory emphasizes that human resources management practices play active role in the attainment of organizational goals. The theory emphasizes that employees views concerning these human resources management practice obtainable in the organization, will determine the level to which these practices are able to achieve intended goal of making them to work hard and put in their best. It can thus be deduced from the theory that practices that are perceived as friendly by employees, will have significant effect on their organizational commitment, but those that are perceived as exploitative or came about as a result of union influence, will have insignificant effect on their organizational commitment. As the human resources management practices are designed to manage and retain the loyalty and commitment of employees for attainment of desired organizational goals, the theory hints on the importance of the way or method of implementation of these practices so as to achieve significant effect. The implication is that these human resources management

practices in place in the organizations should be implemented in such a way as to show that management cares and have the interest of employees at heart so as to make the employees to reciprocate by putting in their best for the organization.

In relation to the study, work conditions such as training, promotion, supervisory control, job security, appraisal and disciplinary measures are human resources management practices that are challenges in organizations such as academic libraries in Ondo State. They are meant to motivate employees, improve their wellbeing, and exert needed control so as to ensure organizational continued growth. Literature has shown that these work conditions may be termed as favorable or unfavorable due to the manner of implementation. Work conditions that are interpreted as favorable always yield significant influence on the organizational commitment of employees and vice versa. Therefore, although these human resources management practices are designed to ensure organizational growth, and were not designed for a particular employee, the way they are perceived by employees will go a long way in determining their influence. The tendency is that there may be varying interpretation due to the manner of implementations, and which may lead to some of them being termed as favorable or unfavorable. For example, although training and promotion are welcome incentives and are solely meant for the good of the employee, their manner of implementation may negate the positive influence they are envisaged to achieve. This always happen when marginalization or selective treatment is suspected or governs implementation. Also, supervising control, appraisal, and

disciplinary measures are good and always yield significant influence on employees' commitment, but their effect may be negated by the manner of implementation, especially when deemed as selective or carried out in an atmosphere of bias. The theory is therefore very relevant to the study which seeks to identify the staff training on library development of employees of academic libraries in Ondo State.

### **Methods**

The descriptive survey design was adopted in the study. The population consisted of sixty one (61) librarians from the academic libraries in Ondo State. Total enumeration sampling technique was adopted. The academic libraries used for the study are University of Medical Sciences, Ondo Town, Adeyemi College of Education (Now Federal University of Education, Ondo Town, Federal Polytechnic, Ile-Oluji, OLusegun Agagu, University Science and Technology, Adekunle Ajasin's University, Akungba, Akoko, Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin. Achiever's University, Owo, Wesley University, Ondo Town. Questionnaire was the instrument used for collection of data. Crombach's alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The instrument was administered to the staff and retrieved from them via WhatsApp and Telegram. All the respondents returned copies of the questionnaire. The data were analyzed using frequency and percentages.

### **Results**

This section presents the result of data collected. All sixty one librarians filled and returned copies of the questionnaire administered, to them.

Table 1 shows 100% questionnaire response rate.

**Table 1: Distribution and return of questionnaire**

<b>Higher institutions</b>	<b>Num.</b>	<b>%</b>
University of Medical Sciences, Library, Ondo Town	6	9.8
Adeyemi, College of Education( now Federal University of Education, Ondo,	9	14.8
Federal Polytechnic, Ile-Oluji	6	9.8
Olusegun Agagu, University Science and Technology, Okitipupa	8	13.1
Adekunle Ajasin's University, Akungba, Akoko	8	13.1
Rufus Giwa Polytechnic , Owo	7	11.5
Achiever's University, Owo	6	9.8
Wesley University, Ondo	6	9.8
Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin.	5	8.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2: Training and development programmes the librarians have participated in since they started working in the academic libraries**

<b>Training and development programmes</b>	<b>Freq.</b>	<b>%</b>
Formal education to acquire degrees ( BLIS, MLIS or Ph.D)	61	100
Workshops/Seminars with financial support from the system	6	9.8
Conferences with financial support from the system	10	16.4
Library ICT Training	55	90.2
Training organized internally for staff	25	40.9
In- house service Training	50	81.9
Continuing Education.	61	100

Table 2 reveals the various training and development programmes the staff have participated in since their commencement work in the libraries. Formal education development and continuing education programmes attracted the highest responses

of 61 (100%) while workshops/seminars ranked lowest with 6(9.8%) respondents.

Table 3 shows that the librarians have positive attitude towards training and development.

**Table 3: Attitude of the libarians towards training and development in academic libraries Ondo State**

<b>Attitude of staff</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Positive	61	100
Negative	Nil	-

**Table 4: Problems affecting the staff training and development programmes in the academic libraries in Ondo State.**

<b>Problems of staff training</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Issues of funds from the Organisations	61	100
Personal financial constraint	61	100
Issues of creating time due to office activities	61	100
Impact of training are not recognise by management	61	100
staff promotion are denied after additional degrees	61	100

Lack of training facilities	61	100
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Table 4 shows that issues of funds from the organisations, personal financial constraint, and time management among others are problems affecting staff training in academic libraries in Ondo State.

### Conclusion

This study has explored training and development of staff in academic libraries. The results have revealed that the librarians have participated in various training and programmes since they began working in the libraries. All the respondents have taken advantage of formal education programmes as they also have positive attitude to staff training and development. The major problems that affect training and development of the respondents is fund. It is hoped that the results of this study will be of immense benefit to the improvement of library service and improvement of the library profession through training and development programs, and serve as a contribution to the body of knowledge in the area of staff motivation in libraries.

The following are recommended in the light of the findings:

1. The management of the institutions and libraries should make funds available to librarians for training and development.
2. Authorities of the academic institutions should endeavour promote librarians that have acquired additional qualifications through professional development programmes.

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