

## TRAINING AND RE-TRAINING OF LIBRARY STAFF FOR STAFF PRODUCTIVITY IN TWO ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN IMO STATE.

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### Abstract

This paper investigated the training and re-training of library staff for staff productivity in Imo State University and Federal Polytechnic Nekede, with the view to ascertaining how training and re-training influence staff efficiency, effectiveness and productivity using descriptive survey method. Data were collected from 74 respondents with the aid of structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics with mean score. The finding shows that workshops, seminars, local and international conferences, in-house training, periodic ICT training, regular orientation and formal education to acquire more degrees in library profession are all needed as methods of staff training. The finding also reveals that training and re-training play a vital role in staff productivity as it helps to improve customer service delivery, provide the vision of improving the skills needed to market the library effectively, and enhance maximum productivity of library staff. The finding also indicates that among the problems militating against training and re-training of library staff are inadequate funding, lack of management interest as well as poor library administration. Based on the findings, the researcher recommends among others; that there should be regular training and re-training program for all categories of staff.

**Keywords:** Training, Re-training, Library Staff, Staff Productivity, Academic Library

### Introduction

Training is a process of bringing a person to a desired state of efficiency through instructions and practice whereas re-training is going through the process of training over and over again to achieve efficiency for increased productivity. Staff training is so important in every organization, which library is one of such and need not to be ignored. Staff training is one of the most powerful tools any organization should hold in order to succeed, that is why Godwin, Adeniran and Jamogha (2020) stated that training of library staff is thus regarded as one of the most important primary functions for effective resource management and service delivery. It is therefore very important for the maintenance of the human resource base of any organization.

Academic libraries should aim at having efficient staff that will provide excellent library services to the university community. Library buildings with full collections without skilled library professionals can be better described as glorified warehouse (Adeniji, Babalola & Ademiji 2012). Training and re-training of library staff should be designed to provide maximum efficiency to the library system and the patrons. To achieve the desired professional skills, knowledge and capacity building of library staff and re-position them to perform maximally, the management of any higher institution must allow their staff to undergo different training programs. Continuous training will help to encourage library staff to improve their capability and responsibility at their workplaces. Lakra (2016) stated that training is a program that assists library staff to acquire specific skills and knowledge for improved job performance.

Academic libraries as service institutions provide current information for information seekers and the library environment is changing very fast with time, technology and e-information exploration which have major influence on the society. All these positive changes call for training and re-training of library staff to meet up with the current wave of information system for maximum productivity. Gatti, Angel-Urdinola, Silver & Boder(2011) stated that meeting today's current and constant changes and innovations are a big challenging task among academic library staff and for them to cope up, they must undergo training and re-raining from time to time.

### **Statement of the Problem**

As at today, library staff is faced with new introduction of information technologies, with a vast increase in growth of knowledge leading to information

overload resulting to various challenging trends in library services. Therefore every library staff, be it professional or non-professional need training and re- training to meet up with current standards. Training and re-training programmes are very vital to help library staff understand, and improve on their skills and perform maximally. Despite the benefits of training and retraining of library staff, there is still lack of training and re-training of library staff in many academic libraries in Nigeria, and where such exist, it appears not to be enough or regular; hence may not address the specific needs of the library staff thus, the need for an empirical study on training and re-training of library staff for improved staff productivity in Imo State University and Federal Polytechnic Nekede, which is the focus of this research.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The main purpose of this research is to investigate training and re-training of library staff for staff productivity with the specific objectives:

1. To find out the types of staff training available in Imo State University and Federal Polytechnic Nekede.
2. To determine the benefits of training and re-training of library staff for productivity.
3. To ascertain the category of staff that need training and re-training
4. To examine the factors militating against regular training and re-training of library staff.

### **Literature Review**

Training empowers the individual to apply the knowledge and skills required for the task and staff is an essential component of any library management system and as such, their training and re-training needs must be examined from time to time( Aliu & Eneh, 2011). Devi and Shaik (2012) opined that effective training program is one that addresses training needs and delivers training according to training objectives. Training efficiency is one of the advantages which both the university management and the library staff receive from training outcomes. It gives new skills to the trainee and encourages productivity and user satisfaction. Training and re-training of staff lead to improved performance in results and output. Many authors have emphasized that effective staff training and re-training programs have contributed greatly to improved job performance and higher productivity at their different workplaces (Baldwin ,Gibbs & Slough, 2016; Fritts & Casey, 2010; Mackenzie & Smith, 2012).

So many types of staff training are available in different higher institutions. There are various ways library staff receive exposure to enlightenment in their respective work related areas. This can come in form of orientation, seminar programmes, ICT related programs ,on the job training, conferences , workshops, position rotation, coaching and special project committee(Jones & George, 2008; Robbins & coulter ,2013; Cannice & Kootz,2011). All academic libraries need all kinds of training in other to give a satisfactory service to the users. Training acts as a motivational process used in developing the best talents and abilities in any worker to enable the worker be efficient and effective in the performance of their expected duties.

The benefits of training and re-retraining of library staff cannot be overemphasized. Abban (2018) pointed out that it helps to improve on customer service delivery by the worker; provides the library with vision of improved skills for efficient and effective library management; it enables the university community to acknowledge the importance of the library; it equally enhances daily routine library services and helps to ensure good relationship between library management workers and users of the library . Onyia and Aniogbolu (2011) also opined that training and re-training of library workers on their job performances showed that staff training and re-training had contributed to a large extent to staff performance on the job. Alala (2021) and Oduwole (2004) also agreed and stated that staff training helps to equip library staff with new technological skills needed to enhance job performance and prevent skill obsolescence. It is important to note that the job performance of library staff plays a pivotal role in the university library growth and development as it influences the overall university performance and also functions as a critical variable in work organizational psychology of the staff. Job performance is an output of staff on the job, measurable in terms of quality and quantity of job performed over time. Again, staff performance improves due to training and re-training and productivity increases as a result of understanding a particular task (Sonntag, Volner & Spychals ,2011).

On the categories of staff that need training and re-training, Amoah and Akussah (2017) opined that training and development of human capital is a key to addressing the information needs of clients, especially in this era of information and technological advancement. Borteye and Ahenkorah-Marfo (2013) listed three categories of library

staff that must be trained in the library, namely: 1-Professional staff; these are professional librarians who acquired professional qualification in Library and information science; Para- professional, these are library staff but officers that hold qualifications like NCE, ND, HND certificates and those with diploma certificates; and Non-Professional/ supportive staff e.g library attendants and administrative staff like secretaries, who provide support services in the library.

All the library staff need training and re-retraining especially those in the circulation and reference sections. Aliu and Eneh (2011) stated that circulation desk and reference department of any library should train all categories of staff posted to them very well because staff communicate with users every moment. Seminars, workshops and short course can improve their communication skills, verbal and non –verbal to ensure smooth information provision. There is need for short courses to be run to train staff in various techniques to augment the traditional skills so as to develop competency and confidence in ICT. New staff of all categories is not left out, they will need some kind of induction training, its length and content should depend on the level of new staff recruited, staff involved in on –the –job training of new recruits will also need training on how to explain routine tasks to their staff (Abban, 2018).

Despite the fact that training and re-training of library staff is very important yet some factors work against its regularity. Abban (2018) pointed out that there is poor funding of libraries by either the government or university management. Most of them in leadership positions do not understand the need for currency of holdings in both collection and human resources hence they lack good policies, guidelines and procedures

for provision of adequate fund for training and re-training of library staff. According to Ishola (2014) other factors are lack of planning, lack of interest among library staff, and poor library administration.

### Research Methodology

Descriptive survey technique was adopted for the study. The study covered all the library staff in Imo State University and Federal Polytechnic Nekede. The population of the study comprised of 79 library staff drawn from the two named institutions, 27 and 52 respectively. Questionnaire was used as instrument for data collection and was based on a four point rating scale of: Strongly Agree (4); Agree (3); Disagree (2); and Strongly Disagree (1) which was used in measuring the responses to the items. A total of seventy nine (79) copies of questionnaire were distributed to the library staff of the institutions, 74 were filled and returned. Data elicited from the instrument were analyzed using descriptive statistics i.e. frequency, percentage and mean scores. Items with mean scores of 2.50 and above are regarded as accepted while mean scores less than 2.50 is rejected.

### Results

**Table 1: Types of Staff Training Available**

S/N	Item Statements	SA F(%)	A F(%)	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1	Workshops	48 (64.86)	26 (35.14)	-	-	3.65	Accepted
2	Seminars	50 (67.57)	22 (29.73)	2 (2.70)	-	3.65	Accepted
3	Local and international conferences	47 (63.51)	27 (36.49)	-	-	3.64	Accepted
4	In-house training.	36 (48.65)	21 (28.38)	10 (13.51)	7 (9.46)	3.16	Accepted
5	Periodic ICT training	31 (41.89)	23 (31.08)	17 (22.97)	3 (4.05)	3.11	Accepted
6	Regular orientation for	34	24	12	4	3.19	Accepted

	staff	(45.95)	(32.43)	(16.22)	(5.41)		
7	Formal education to acquire more degrees in library profession.	21 (28.38)	16 (21.62)	31 (41.89)	6 (8.11)	2.70	Accepted

From the table above, all the 74 respondents (100%) agreed that workshop is among the training method available for the library staff with accepted mean of 3.65 .It also shows that 72 respondents (97.3%) agreed that seminars is included on the type of training organized for the library staff with mean of 3.65 while 57 respondents (77.03%) agreed on in-house training as one of the trainings with 3.16 mean score. The analysis also showed that 54 respondents (72.97%) agreed on periodic ICT training and 20 respondents (27.02%) disagreed that periodic ICT training is not inclusive. A total of 58 respondents’ indicated regular orientation as one of the training type against 14 respondents (21.63%) that disagreed which resulted to 3.19 accepted mean scores. Formal education to acquire higher degrees in library profession got 37 respondents (50%) that agreed with a mean score of 2.70.

This finding was similar to the findings of Certo and Certo (2006) that all types of training are process of developing qualities in human resources to enable be more productive.

**Table 2: Benefits of Training and Re-training of Library Staff Productivity.**

S/N	Item Statements	SA F(%)	A F(%)	D F(%)	SD F(%)	Mean	Decision
1	Improve on customer service delivery by library staff	60 (81.08)	14 (18.92)	-	-	3.81	Accepted
2	Provide the library with the vision of improving the skills needed to market the	56 (75.68)	16 (21.62)	2 (2.70)		3.73	Accepted



	library effectively.						
3	Enhance daily routine library services	46 (62.16)	22 (29.73)	4 (5.4)	2 (2.70)	3.51	Accepted
4	Help to attain the goals of the library	43 (58.11)	30 (40.54)	1 (1.35)	-	3.57	Accepted
5	Help to improve the performance of library staff.	61 (82.43)	13 (17.57)	-	-	3.82	Accepted
6	Enhance maximum productivity of library staff.	64 (86.49)	10 (13.51)	-	-	3.86	Accepted

From table 2 above, the result revealed that training and re-retraining of library staff have positive effects on staff productivity, for example, 64 respondents (86.49%) strongly agreed and 10 respondents (13.51%) with an accepted mean of 3.86 that training and re-training not only impacted on their productivity but also sharpen their skills and therefore they are now able to perform their duties better for increased productivity and optimum output compared to staff without training. 60 respondents (81.08%) and 14 respondents (18.92%) with an accepted means of 3.81 strongly agreed and agreed respectively that training and re-training of library staff of all categories help to improve on customer service delivery by library staff who undergo various training programmes. Again 56 respondents (75.68%) and 16 respondents (21.62%) with an accepted mean score of 3.73 strongly agreed and agreed respectively that training and re-training provide the library with the vision of improving the skills needed to market the library effectively although 2 respondents (2.70%) disagreed.

The analysis also revealed that as a result of training and re-retraining of library staff, the performance of library staff have positively improved and this is observed from the 61 respondents (82.43%) who strongly agreed and 13 respondents (17.57%) who

agree with an accepted mean of 3.82 hence staff have become more knowledgeable , resourceful and efficient in performing their library duties.

The results obtained from the research actually pre-dispose the importance of training and re-training of library staff. This supports Godwin, Adeniran, and Jamogha (2020); Cabblah and Vander Walt (2016); Mackenzie and Smith (2012 ) Adenji, Babalola and Adeniji( 2012) whose research findings indicated that effective and efficient staff training and re-training have contributed to improved job performance of staff and thus leads to higher job productivity among the staff concerned. It was on this note that Latra (2016) opined that continuous training programs help to encourage library staff to improved their capability and responsibility at their work places. Training and re-training of library staff for maximum productivity which included among others, improve on customers service delivery, improvement on the skills needed to handle the library effectively, enhancement of daily routine library services, attainment of library goals, improvement on staff performance and enhancement of staff productivity. All these training and re-training of library staff corroborate with those of Robbins and Coulter (2013), Baldwin, Gibbs, & Slough (2016), Fritts and Casey (2010) that effective and periodic staff training and retraining placed library staff at a maximum advantage especially in areas of new discovery in the 21st century when technology is the order of the day.

**Table 3: Categories of Staff that Need Training and Re-training**

S/N	Staff Categories	SA F(%)	A F(%)	D F(%)	SD F(%)	Mean F(%)	Decision
1.	Professional Staff	25	16	13	20	2.62	Accepted

		(33.78)	(21.62)	(17.57)	(27.03)		
2.	Para-professional Staff	15	21	20	18	2.45	Rejected
		(20.27)	(28.38)	(27.03)	(24.32)		
3.	Non-professional staff/ supportive staff	23	18	19	14	2.68	Accepted
		(31.08)	(24.32)	(25.68)	(18.92)		
4.	All categories of staff	60	14	-	-	3.18	Accepted
		(81.08)	((18.92)				

From the above table, the research revealed the different categories of library staff that need training and re-retraining from time to time. From the result, 25 respondents (33.78%) strongly agreed that professional staff need training from time to time while 20 respondents (27.03%) strongly disagreed with accepted mean of 2.62. Again with a rejected mean of 2.45, 21 respondents (28.38 %) agreed while 20 respondents (27.03%) disagree that Para professional staff need training and re-training from time to time. More so, the non-professional staff also need training as 23 respondents (31.08%) strongly agreed and 19 respondents (25.68%) disagreed with an accepted mean of 2.68. All categories of staff was not left behind as 60 respondents (81.08%) and 14 respondents (18.92%) with accepted mean of 3.81 strongly agreed and agreed respectively.

This is in agreement with Samuel (2018) who opined that libraries must remain in a continuous learning mode to keep up with all these new trends and as such all the library staff must undergo periodic training to meet up with the current needs of its users and acquit themselves with the new technologies that evolve from time to time. This however disagrees with Aliu and Eneh (2011) who supported that all categories of staff should be trained on communication skills, verbal and non-verbal, more especially those

posted to circulation desk and reference section because of their constant communications with the users.

**Table 4: Problems militating against training and re-training of library staff**

S/N	Problems	SA F(%)	A F(%)	D F(%)	SD F(%)	Mean F(%)	Decision
1	Inadequate funding	46(62.16)	20(27.03)	6(8.11)	2(2.70)	3.49	Accepted
2	Lack of mgt interest	48(64.86)	21(28.38)	4(5.41)	1(1.35)	3.57	Accepted
3	Poor staff attitude to training.	2 (2.70)	3 (4.05)	20 (27.03)	49 (66.22)	1.43	Rejected
4	Lack of human resources for the training.	-	1 (1.35)	30 (40.54)	43 (58.11)	1.43	Rejected
5	Poor library administration.	43 (58.11)	28 (37.84)	1 (1.35)	2 (2.70)	3.51	Accepted

From the above table, among all the factors are inadequate funding of libraries as 46 respondents (62.16%) strongly agreed and 20 respondents (27.03%) agreed with an accepted mean of 3.49. Again lack of management interest in training and re-training also affects the library staff as 48 respondents (64.86%) strongly agreed and 21 respondents (28.38%) agreed with an accepted mean of 3.57. Another interesting issue is that poor library administration constitutes limiting factor to training and re-training of library staff as 43 respondents (58.11%) strongly agree and 28 respondents (37.84%) agreed with an accepted mean of 3.51 as shown in the table.

These problems are in line with Samuel (2018), Jones and George (2018), Cannice and Koontz (2011) who opined that poor administrative management of libraries is among the factors that hinder training and re-training of library staff for maximum productivity in their respective places of work. They therefore, suggested that for good and proper training and re-training of library staff, Government bureaucracy especially

in the management of higher institution libraries must be removed, so that staff who obtain good training and re-training will put in their best especially in satisfying their library users to obtain customer satisfaction which is the primary goal of any library staff.

### **Conclusion**

Library staff training and re- training have been identified as an important aspect in every library and for every library to function effectively to satisfy the users, all categories of staff must undergo periodic training and retraining to embrace the current technologies that can expose them to effective performance for maximum productivity.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the researchers recommend that:

- To keep up with global trends and foster good innovations that can lead to improvement in service delivery, library staff should be exposed to different types of training and re-training.
- In-order to enhance daily routine library services, improve performance of library as well as enhance maximum productivity of staff, training and re-training should be a continuous process among the library staff.
- There should be regular training and re-training program for all categories of library staff to enhance complementary quality services to library users.
- There is the need for adequate funding as well as good human resource management in academic libraries.

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