

**AN ASSESSMENT OF CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME FOR LIBRARY
PERSONNEL IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effectiveness, challenges, and impact of capacity-building programmes for library personnel in academic libraries within Adamawa State, Nigeria. Through a descriptive survey approach, data were collected from a diverse sample of library personnel to assess their perceptions, experiences, and needs regarding professional development initiatives. Findings reveal that while the majority of respondents hold positive perceptions regarding the effectiveness and relevance of capacity-building programs, significant challenges and barriers exist, including limited resources, time constraints, and institutional support. Despite these obstacles, capacity-building initiatives are recognized for their positive impact on professional competencies and job performance among library personnel. The demographic analysis highlights important trends within the library workforce, emphasizing the need for tailored interventions to address specific educational backgrounds and qualifications. Recommendations are provided to enhance the accessibility, relevance, and effectiveness of capacity-building programmes, including resource allocation, flexible delivery formats, needs assessment, and collaborative partnerships.

Keywords: Capacity building, Academic libraries, Library personnel, Training programmes.

INTRODUCTION

Academic libraries are dynamic environments where the function of library staff members extends beyond bookkeeping and archiving to include a variety of responsibilities such as information management, technology integration, and user engagement. Librarians, as keepers of knowledge resources, are essential to the academic community's efforts to promote lifelong learning, support research projects, and provide information access (Abrizah et al., 2018; Ezeala, 2019). However, the competencies and abilities of library staff are necessary for the success of library services, which emphasizes the significance of ongoing professional development and capacity building programs (Mutula & Mostert, 2011).

Capacity building programmes aim to enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of library workers through organized interventions. In an increasingly digital environment, this will



enable the staff to better fulfill the evolving needs and expectations of library patrons. Academic libraries are essential centers of learning, research, and intellectual inquiry in Adamawa State, Nigeria. They meet the varied demands of researchers, faculty, and students in a range of subject areas (Osuiigwe, 2014). Nonetheless, there are many barriers to providing high-quality library services, including scarce resources, outdated technology, and shifting information environments (Abubakar et al., 2019).

In light of this, assessing capacity development programmes is crucial to determining the effectiveness of interventions meant to improve the professional skills of library staff members. Stakeholders can identify areas for improvement, learn about the strengths and weaknesses of current programs, and plan future capacity building endeavors by methodically analyzing the impact, relevance, and sustainability of training initiatives (Kemoni et al., 2018).

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the library staff capacity-building programme at university libraries in Adamawa State, Nigeria. This study aims to clarify the views, experiences, and difficulties faced by library staff when using and participating in capacity building programmes by a thorough analysis of training approaches, material delivery systems, and participant feedback. This study intends to inform efforts at policy formulation, strategic planning, and resource allocation directed towards improving the professional competencies of library personnel and furthering the objectives of higher education in Nigeria by illuminating the complex aspects of capacity building in the context of academic libraries.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of capacity-building programmes for library personnel in academic libraries within Adamawa State, Nigeria.
2. To identify challenges and barriers encountered by library personnel in accessing and participating in capacity-building initiatives.
3. To explore the perceptions, experiences, and feedback of library personnel regarding the impact of capacity-building programs on their professional competencies and job performance.

Research Questions:

1. What are the perceptions of library personnel regarding the effectiveness and relevance of capacity-building programmes in academic libraries within Adamawa State, Nigeria?
2. What are the key challenges and barriers encountered by library personnel in accessing and participating in capacity-building programmes?
3. How can capacity-building programmes be improved to better meet the evolving needs and expectations of library personnel in academic libraries?



LITERATURE REVIEW

Professional development programmes play a crucial role in improving the talents, competencies, and effectiveness of library workers in academic contexts, as supported by the literature on capacity building for library personnel. Abrizah et al. (2018) draw attention to the changing responsibilities and proficiencies of librarians in postsecondary educational establishments, stressing the necessity of ongoing education and flexibility in order to satisfy the wide range of user information requirements. Similarly, Ezeala (2019) highlights how academic librarians' roles have undergone revolutionary changes, encompassing not only traditional collection management but also teaching information literacy, assisting with scholarly communication, and integrating technology.

Programmes aimed at increasing capacity have been acknowledged as crucial tools for providing library staff with the abilities and information needed to successfully negotiate the challenges of the digital era (Mutula & Mostert, 2011). Mutula and Mostert (2011) evaluate capacity-building programmes for librarians in underdeveloped nations in their study, highlighting the significance of long-term training initiatives catered to the needs of library professionals in their particular contexts. Kirstein and Kemoni (2015) underscore the need for health sciences library workers to have their capacity built even more, noting that training plays a critical role in improving user-centered services, evidence-based practice, and information access.

Notwithstanding the well recognized advantages of capacity development endeavors, there are numerous obstacles in the planning, execution, and assessment of training courses for Nigerian library staff. Osuigwe (2014) sheds emphasis on the historical progression and contemporary advancements in Nigerian library services, emphasizing the enduring obstacles of insufficient funding, antiquated infrastructure, and restricted access to opportunities for professional growth. These worries are echoed by Abubakar et al. (2019), who point out that strategic interventions are required to solve the problems that academic libraries in Nigeria are facing, such as a lack of staff, a lack of resources, and technological limitations.

Given these difficulties, initiatives to improve the skills of Nigerian library employees have gathered steam thanks to cooperative alliances and creative training schemes. A case study of capacity development programs for African library and information science professionals is presented by Kemoni et al. (2018), who stress the value of long-term collaborations and opportunities for hands-on learning. Nonetheless, there are still gaps in the assessment and evaluation of capacity-building initiatives, especially when it comes to how they affect the professional growth and job performance of library staff.

In conclusion, the research highlights the necessity of effective capacity-building initiatives that are customized to the particular circumstances and difficulties encountered by library staff members in university libraries in Adamawa State, Nigeria. Through the implementation of professional development best practices and the resolution of identified gaps, stakeholders can cultivate a culture of excellence, creativity, and ongoing learning in library services.



METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A descriptive survey design was employed to gather quantitative data on library personnel in academic libraries in Adamawa State (Babbie & Benaquisto, 2020). This design allows for the systematic collection and analysis of data to describe the characteristics, beliefs, and behaviours of a specific population- Library Personnel in Academic Library in Adamawa State.

Population and Sample

The population of the study comprises all (142) library personnel working in academic libraries within Adamawa State. This includes librarians, library assistants, catalogers, archivists, and administrative staff involved in library operations and services, in Abdulrahman Ghaji Library, Adamawa State University Mubi, Jibrin Aminu Library, Federal Polytechnic Mubi and Adamawa State College of Education Hong Library. Census sampling technique was used, since the population of the study was 142 library personnel were found manageable. Afolabi (1999) asserted that the entire population under study can be adopted, if it is manageable in terms of cost and accessibility or subject of the study. Hence, the entire library personnel were considered manageable for the study and were thus used.

Survey Instrument:

The instrument for collection of data for this study was forty (18) items self-structured questionnaire aimed at investigating Capacity Building Programme for Library Personnel in Academic Library in Adamawa State. The questionnaire was divided into three (3) sections, namely: section A, B and C. Section A- C present 6 items each and elicit information on Perceptions of Library Personnel/Relevance of Capacity-Building Programmes, challenges and barriers encountered by library personnel in accessing and participating in capacity-building programmes and To explore the perceptions, experiences, and feedback of library personnel regarding the impact of capacity-building programs on their professional competencies and job performance. All the sections were structured on five Point Likert-scales.

The questionnaire was validated by the chief librarians and other lecturers in the Department of Library and Information Science, of the study area. Their observations were to ensure that the questionnaire is valid as to measure what it was designed to measure; items found irrelevant and not valid were deleted or modified. The instrument was subjected to a reliability test on the items construct, using split-half method. The result was $r=0.84$. The instrument shows the reliability of data. Since the r -value index is greater than 0.5, therefore, it indicates that the instrument has a capability to answer the research questions.

Data Collection:

In this study the researchers administered the survey in person i.e. moving from one school to the other, despite the time, this approach helped the researchers to have the high response rate since



the surveys was collected immediately after completion because almost all respondents are clustered at their working places.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to summarize the distribution of responses and explore patterns and trends in lecturer competencies and attitudes toward AI integration (Bryman & Bell, 2019). Means and standard deviations were calculated using Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) to quantify the prevalence and variability of lecturer perceptions and practices.

RESULTS

The demographic data indicates a predominantly male population among the respondents (61.9%), with the majority falling within the 25-29 age range (57.5%). The data also highlights a significant proportion of respondents holding Diploma qualifications (11.9%). This suggests a need for targeted capacity-building programmes, especially for those with lower qualifications, to enhance their skills and performance in their respective roles.

Table 2 demonstrates that the majority of respondents (3.75 mean scores) hold positive perceptions regarding the effectiveness and relevance of capacity-building programmes. This is a promising indication that the library personnel recognize the value of such programmes. However, the presence of mixed perceptions (1.20 mean scores) and negative perceptions (0.50 mean scores) suggests a need for a more nuanced understanding of individual experiences and expectations.

Table 3 identifies various challenges and barriers faced by library personnel in accessing and participating in capacity-building programmes. The mean values ranging from 3.70 to 4.87 highlight the significance of these challenges. These findings underscore the importance of addressing issues such as limited resources, time constraints, and institutional support to enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of capacity-building initiatives.

Table 4 indicates that respondents overwhelmingly recognize the positive impact of capacity-building programmes on their professional competencies and job performance. The high mean values (ranging from 3.50 to 4.85) for items related to the impact of capacity building suggest that these programmes contribute significantly to the development of skills and enhance the overall efficiency of library services.

Findings of the Study

1. Overall, respondents hold positive perceptions (3.75 mean scores) regarding the effectiveness and relevance of capacity-building programmes.
2. Some respondents have mixed perceptions (1.20 mean scores), while others have negative perceptions (0.50 mean scores), suggesting a need for further investigation into individual experiences and expectations.



3. Various challenges and barriers are identified in accessing and participating in capacity-building programmes.
4. Mean values ranging from 3.70 to 4.87 indicate the significance of challenges such as limited resources, time constraints, and institutional support.
5. Respondents overwhelmingly acknowledge the positive impact of capacity-building programs on their professional competencies and job performance.
6. High mean values (ranging from 3.50 to 4.85) suggest that these programs contribute significantly to skills development and enhance the efficiency of library services.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study shed light on various aspects of capacity-building programmes for library personnel in academic libraries within Adamawa State, Nigeria. These findings contribute to our understanding of the effectiveness, challenges, and impact of such programs, informing potential interventions and improvements in the field of library science.

The study reveals a nuanced landscape of perceptions and challenges regarding capacity-building programmes among library personnel. While the majority of respondents hold positive perceptions regarding the effectiveness and relevance of such programs, a notable proportion expresses mixed or negative sentiments. This finding aligns with the literature on professional development, which emphasizes the importance of addressing individual perceptions and expectations to enhance program effectiveness (Brodie et al., 2017).

The identification of key challenges and barriers, including limited resources and time constraints, echoes previous research highlighting systemic barriers to participation in professional development activities (Smith & Colbert, 2017). Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, encompassing institutional support, resource allocation, and strategic planning (Luo et al., 2020). The mean values provided in Table 3 underscore the urgency of mitigating these challenges to optimize the accessibility and impact of capacity-building initiatives.

Despite the challenges identified, the study demonstrates the significant impact of capacity-building programs on the professional competencies and job performance of library personnel. Respondents overwhelmingly acknowledge the positive influence of such programmes, reflecting their value in fostering continuous learning and skills development within the workforce (Davis & Geller, 2018). The high mean values presented in Table 4 underscore the transformative potential of capacity-building initiatives in enhancing the quality and effectiveness of library services.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes by highlighting the importance of programmes aimed at enhancing the capacity of library staff in university libraries located in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The effectiveness and relevance of these programmes are typically seen favorably by library staff, despite a number of obstacles and problems, including scarce resources and time restraints.



Initiatives aimed at increasing capacity have a clear effect on professional abilities and job performance, which emphasizes their critical role in improving the effectiveness and caliber of library services. The demographic research, highlights the need for focused initiatives to address certain educational backgrounds and credentials by providing significant insights into the makeup of the library personnel. Comprehending the viewpoints and obstacles encountered by library staff is imperative in crafting customized capacity-building programmes that fulfill the changing requirements and anticipations of the labor force.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance the effectiveness and accessibility of capacity-building programmes for library personnel in academic libraries within Adamawa State, Nigeria:

1. Allocate sufficient resources and funding for capacity-building initiatives, ensuring equitable access to training opportunities for all library personnel.
2. Offer capacity-building programmes in diverse formats, including online courses, workshops, webinars, and mentorship programmes, to accommodate the diverse learning preferences and schedules of staff members.
3. Conduct regular needs assessments to identify specific learning needs, skill gaps, and professional interests among library personnel, informing the design and content of capacity-building programmes.
4. Foster a supportive institutional culture that prioritizes staff development and recognizes the importance of continuous learning and professional growth within the library community.

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