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Assessment of Capacity Building Efforts of Library and Information Professionals in University Libraries in Nigeria

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Abstract

This study assessed the capacity building efforts of library and information professionals in university libraries in Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and a structured questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The exact population of the study is 238 librarians in the university libraries in South- South, Nigeria. The total enumeration sampling technique which involves studying the entire respondents was employed for the study. Two hundred and thirty eight copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents; the researchers were able to retrieve only 211 questionnaires. Hence there was 89% response rate. The data collected for this study were analyzed using simple percentage and frequency counts using tables. The findings of the study revealed that the capacity building needs of library and information professionals in university libraries were majorly troubleshooting new technologies, academic research, internet search skills, e-library management, and library automation, among others. Additionally, findings show clearly that on the job training, in-house training, participation in professional association, lecture/ discussion and exercises, and job rotation were the major methods of building the capacity of library and information professionals. It was recommended that sufficient funding should be allocated to university libraries for the organization of capacity building programmes for library and information professionals, among others.

Keywords Assessment, Capacity Building, Library and Information Professionals, University Libraries

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Introduction

Capacity building is the process organizations maintain to develop their workforce to realize their full potential in view of meeting the organization's current and future goals. [United Nations Building Programme \(2009\)](#) defined capacity building as the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own building objectives over time. From the aforementioned definition it is glaring that capacity building help to set and achieve developmental objectives for organizations to succeed. In the same vein, university libraries across the globe are exploring viable means of developing their capacity to enhance their competitiveness and efficiency. Building capacity of employees enhances efficiency, competitiveness and customers satisfaction. [Bhattacharjee and Bhattacharjee \(2014\)](#) posited that in the broad sense, capacity building in libraries is concerned with basically library and information science professional development, library development, and institutional and legal framework development. It is glaring that capacity building in university libraries has three dimensions, the LIS professional development, the university library development and institutional and legal framework development ([Bhattacharjee and Bhattacharjee, 2014](#)). This paper will be focused on the capacity building of library and information professionals in university libraries in Nigeria. Capacity building of library and information professionals is currently a topical issue in the literature as no university library can strive without a competent workforce ([Ajeemsha & Madhusudhan, 2012](#)). [Ajeemsha and Madhusudhan \(2012\)](#) further posited that staff development is a significant issue in a changing library environment as well-equipped professional librarians are key resources to developing and maintaining a high quality library. The medical profession, law, banking, engineering among others fields are swiftly embracing technological changes associated with this 21st century that could help boost their service delivery. The library and information science profession should as a matter of urgency move along with the trend to be able to meet the current and future needs of their users. To achieve this aim the need to build the capacity of library and information professional becomes inevitable.

However, in this digital age, university libraries in Nigeria are increasingly embracing technologies for the enhancement and marketing of their services and resources. This technological advancement in university libraries has prompted the need for capacity building of library and information professionals to keep them abreast of how to explore and use the emerging cutting edge technologies for the advancement of their services and resources. The scenario is same in India as [Ajeemsha and Madhusudhan \(2012\)](#) posited that library professionals, especially academic librarians in India are facing challenges in the profession due to the rapid technological changes with the development of cutting-edge technologies in library work/services. Capacity building efforts in university libraries is faced with enormous challenges which are not limited to inadequate funding, lack of willingness by library management to build capacity of professionals, lack of interest to attend capacity building programmes by professionals in university libraries to mention but a few. This study takes a critical look at the capacity building scenario of library and information professionals in university libraries in Nigeria. Currently, only few studies have been undertaken on the capacity building of library and information professionals in university libraries in Nigeria. This lacuna in the literature prompted the need for the study.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are:

- ✓ To find out the capacity building needs of Library and information professionals in university libraries in Nigeria.

- ✓ To ascertain the method of capacity building for Library and information professionals in university libraries.
- ✓ To examine the frequency of developing the capacity of Library and information professionals in university libraries.
- ✓ To investigate the benefits of capacity building programmes on the professional development of Library and information professionals in university libraries.
- ✓ To identify the barriers to capacity building for Library and information professionals in university libraries.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

- ✓ What is the capacity building needs of Library and information professionals in university libraries in Nigeria?
- ✓ What is the method of capacity building for Library and information professionals in university libraries?
- ✓ What is the frequency of developing the capacity of Library and information professionals in university libraries?
- ✓ What is the benefits of capacity building programmes on the professional development of Library and information professionals in university libraries?
- ✓ What is the barriers to capacity building for Library and information professionals in university libraries?

Literature Review

In a study by [Bhattacharjee and Bhattacharjee \(2014\)](#) on boosting capacity of library and information professionals via training in Barak Valley (Assam), It was revealed that 56 (84.8%) of the respondents indicated library automation training, followed by 52 (78.8%) ICT skill development training . Furthermore, 47 (71.2%), 43 (65.1%), 40 (60.6%) professionals felt human resource management skills, management of e-resource/ Internet training, digital library training respectively. Moreover, 36 (56.4%), 31 (46.9%), 29 (43.9%), 25 (37.8%), 21 (31.8%) and 20 (30.3%) professional respectively opined user education training, research, development training, communication skills training, reference sources and services training, project management training, Statistics management skills are also essential areas of training program and place. [Ogunmodede and Mafelu \(2012\)](#) studied capacity building programmes for library staff in university of Ibadan and University of Lagos Libraries. The findings revealed that 124(95.4%) respondents felt that capacity is needed to improve staff efficiency, enhances staff productivity and help to cope with changes in library as a result of modern technologies. Also, 123 (94.6%) agreed that it brings out the best in library staff while 120 (92.3%) saw it as a motivation for library staff. [Bhatti and Nadeem \(2014\)](#) assessed training needs of LIS professionals: A prerequisite for developing training programs in university libraries of Pakistan. The results obtained show that LIS professionals need training related to troubleshooting new technologies, endnote, data compression, Internet, social media such as Facebook, Blog, Flickr, Twitter, and online databases.

University libraries explore various methods for building the capacity of their library and information professionals. [Njeze and James \(2013\)](#) studied capacity building initiatives in preservation techniques: a case study of Nigerian universities. The study revealed that libraries surveyed conduct more seminars (33.93%) and in-house training (30.36%) for its employees. Capacity building initiatives related to conferences (17.86%) appear in the background. Finally, it appears that personal development (10.71%) and e-learning (7.14%) demonstrating initiatives are

little used. More so, [Agadi, Shokeen and Choukimath \(2008\)](#) posited that efficient manpower training programmes must be organized from time to time for librarians via the following methods; Practical hands-on training to library personnel, Continuing Education Programmes [CEPs], Educational Tour (Library cooperation), Workshops, Conferences, Seminars and Co-curriculum activities. [Khan and Rafiq \(2013\)](#) studied effective In-service training for librarians in Pakistan. The findings of the study revealed that practical work, lecture/discussion and exercises were methods of providing in-service training for librarians in Pakistan. Similarly, [Nwabueze and Anike \(2016\)](#) studied mentoring strategies in use for professional development of librarians in South-East federal university libraries. The study revealed that sponsorship to conferences, seminars and workshops, and participation in professional associations and orientation programmes for newly employed librarians are among the programmes through which the librarians are mentored in federal universities south-east Nigeria.

However, [Idiegbeyan-Ose, Ohaegbulam and Osayande \(2015\)](#) studied conference/workshop attendance by librarians: Benefits, challenges, and prospects. The study revealed that 42 (79.2%) of the respondents attend a conference or workshop once a year, 9 (17.0%) attend twice a year, 2 (3.8%) attend three times a year, and no respondents attend four times or more. [Eke \(2011\)](#) did an empirical study of the impact of NLA conference attendance on librarians' professional development. The study revealed that majority of the librarians (128) have attended NLA conference 2-5 times (69.1%) and only few (8) have attended more than 10 times (4.3%). Those with more experience in the profession have attended more than ten times, especially academic librarians. Newer librarians are most of those who have attended once (15.6%). [Adekanye and Ogunleye \(2016\)](#) studied training for librarianship development in Nigeria: How do librarians want it? The findings on frequency of training revealed that 39(33.9%) of the respondents indicated twice a year, 19(16.5%) indicated yearly, 5(4.3%) indicated quarterly, 4(3.5%) indicated every two years, others 19(16.5), while 29(25.2) indicated they have attended none of the training programmes.

[Hosein and Bowen-Chang \(2011\)](#) examined the effectiveness of cataloguing training of professionals at the St Augustine Campus Libraries of the University of the West Indies, during the period 2005-2010, with emphasis on the cataloguing of special formats and the overall importance of continuing education. The findings clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of cataloguing training in supporting the cataloguers in their thrust to improve and upgrade their professional skills, and thereby facilitate the transfer of knowledge and practices to entry-level cataloguers. [Malik \(2016\)](#) reported that after participating in a professional development program about adult learning theory, librarians gain a greater awareness of student development, enabling them to more successfully in tailoring their interactions. [Ojowhoh \(2016\)](#) studied staff development and library services in academic libraries in Bayelsa and Delta States. The result shows that training and development brings about job efficiency, motivation and satisfaction. The study concluded that training and development have positive influence on library services and as such, should be given priority. [Oke and Oguntuase \(2010\)](#) affirmed that training and development of library staff in any academic library contributes significantly to productivity because trained staff are motivated and better equipped to utilize their knowledge, skills, and abilities. [Word Quotient \(2009\)](#) outlined the benefits of training for an employee to include increased job satisfaction, increased motivation, and improved performance. [Bamidele, Omeluzor, Imam and Amadi \(2013\)](#) studied training of library assistants in academic library: A study of Babcock University library, Nigeria. The findings revealed that 18 (60%) and 9 (30%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that training enhances their job performance. The result further showed that training of library assistants will help them cope with the 21st-century library challenges, foster their interest to become librarians in the future, understand the policies guiding the library, and help in the overall services of the library to her users

However, [Owusu-Acheaw \(2017\)](#) studied professional development programmes for Polytechnic Library Staff in Ghana: Challenges and Prospects. The study revealed that among the challenges listed, 25 of the respondents representing 34% indicated lack of financial assistance from the institution for professional development as the main challenge. [Bhattacharjee and Bhattacharjee \(2014\)](#) studied capacity building through training program for LIS professionals: A survey on various libraries in Barak Valley (Assam). The findings revealed that 40(60.6%) professionals indicated lack of training programs at a convenient time is the major problem they face which is followed by 37 (56.0%) professionals, who feel the problem was due to lack of permission from higher authority. Moreover, 36 (54.6%), 32 (48.8%), 30 (45.5%), 28 (42.3%), 19 (28.7%), 15 (22.7%) and 10 (15.2%) LIS professionals respectively felt less number of training programs organized in the locality, lack of funding from the employers, lack of time for attending training, communication backwardness, lack of willingness to attend training program, training is expensive for them and training is not compulsory for promotion respectively. Furthermore, 8 (12.1%) professionals also felt that there were some other barriers to participate in the training program. [Okiy \(2004\)](#) carried out an In-house staff training programme at Delta State University Library, Abraka, Nigeria. The problems encountered in the course of the training include limited ICT skills of most of the staff being trained. This slowed down the pace of the training on the computers. In a study by [Abba and Dawha \(2009\)](#) on assessment of personnel training needs in the Ibrahim Babangida Library, Federal University of Technology, Yola, Nigeria. It was revealed from the study that all respondents strongly agreed that funding is a factor that militates against training, while half strongly agree that lack of qualifications is a factor. More than one third agrees that shortage of personnel is a militating factor. Therefore, funding can be considered as a key requirement to the successful and consistent training of library professionals in academic libraries.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study and the instrument adopted to elicit data from the respondents was a structured questionnaire with the aid of three research assistants that assisted in distributing and explaining aspects of the questionnaire not clear to the respondents. The population of the study comprises library and information professionals in university libraries in South- South, Nigeria. The exact population of the study is 238 librarians in the university libraries in South- South, Nigeria. The researchers employed the total enumeration sampling technique which involves studying the entire respondents. Two Hundred and Thirty Eight (238) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the respondents; the researchers were able to retrieve only Two hundred and Eleven (211) copies of the questionnaire. Hence there was 89% response rate. The data collected for this study were analysed using simple percentage and frequency counts presented in tables.

Findings and Discussion

Analysis of Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Table 1: Gender Distribution of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	139	66%
Female	72	34%
Total	211	100%

From **Table 1** above, 139(66%) of the respondents were male, while 72(34%) of the respondents were females.

Table 2: Questionnaire Response Rate

No of Questionnaires Distributed	No of Questionnaires Retrieved	Percentage
238	211	89%

From **Table 2** on the questionnaire response rate above, out of the 238 copies of the questionnaires distributed to the respondents, the researchers were able to retrieve 211 copies. Hence there was 89% response rate.

Research question one: What are the capacity building needs of Library and information professionals in university libraries in Nigeria?

Table 3: Capacity building needs of Library and information professionals in university libraries

Capacity building needs	Frequency	Percentage
Cataloguing and Classification	147	70%
Library Automation	189	90%
E-library Management	204	97%
Troubleshooting New Technologies	211	100%
Human Resource Management skills	128	61%
Serial Management skills	87	41%
Communication/ Interpersonal relationship skills	165	78%
Promotion of Services and Resources	57	27%
Academic Research	211	100%
Project Management skills	37	18%
Internet Search Skills	211	100%

From Table 3 on the capacity building needs of library and information professionals, 211(100%) of the respondents indicated Troubleshooting New Technologies, Academic Research, and Internet Search Skills, 204(97%) of the respondents indicated E-Library Management, 189(90%) of the respondents indicated library automation, 165(78%) of the respondents indicated communication/ Interpersonal relationship skills, 147(70%) of the respondents indicated cataloguing and classification skills, 128(61%) of the respondents indicated human resources management skills, 87(41%) of the respondents indicated serial management skills, 57(27%) of the respondents indicated promotion of services and resources and lastly 37(18%) of the respondents indicated project management skills. Therefore, capacity building needs of LIS professionals are troubleshooting new technologies, academic research, internet search skills, e-library management, library automation, cataloguing and classification, communication/interpersonal relationship skills and human resource management skills

Research question two: What are the methods of capacity building for Library and information professionals?

Table 4: Method of capacity building for Library and information professionals

Method of Capacity Building	Frequency	Percentage
On the Job Training	211	100%

Job Rotation	146	69%
In-House Training	207	98%
Seminar	67	32%
Conferences	78	37%
Workshop	39	18%
Lecture/discussion and exercises	157	74%
Participation in professional associations	201	95%
Orientation programmes	78	37%
E-learning	34	16%
Library Tour	27	13%
Mentoring	89	42%
Academic Education	44	21%

From **Table 4** above on the method of capacity building for library and information professionals, 211(100) of the respondents indicated on the job training, 207(98%) indicated in-house training, 201(95%) indicated participation in professional associations, 157(74%) indicated lecture/ discussion and exercises, 146(69%) indicated job rotation, 89(42%) indicated mentoring, 78(37%) indicated conferences and orientation programmes, 67(32%) indicated seminar, 44(21%) indicated academic education, among others. Therefore, the methods of capacity building in university libraries are job training, in-house training, lecture/discussion and exercises, participation in professional association and job rotation

Research question three: How frequently do library and information professionals attend capacity building programmes?

Table 5: Frequency of developing the capacity of Library and information professionals in University Libraries

Frequency of developing Capacity	Frequency	Percentage
Quarterly	12	6%
Twice a Year	23	11%
Yearly	51	24%
Every Two Years	125	59%
None	-	-
Total	211	100%

From **Table 5** above on the frequency of developing the capacity of library and information professionals, 125 (59%) indicated they attend capacity building programmes every two years, 51(24%) indicated yearly, 23(11%) indicated twice a year, 12(6%) indicated quarterly.

Research question four: What are the benefits of capacity building programmes on the professional development of library and information professional?

Table 6: Benefits of capacity building programmes on the professional development of Library and information professionals

Benefits of Capacity Building	Frequency	Percentage
Upgrade of professional skills	211	100%
Effective Service Delivery	211	100%
Timely Service Delivery	176	83%
Error Free Cataloguing and Classification of library materials	102	48%
Better E-Library Management	187	89%
Better Communication/ Interpersonal Relationship with users	201	95%
Enhance Promotion of library services and resources	114	54%
Increase knowledge on the use of ICT in university libraries	211	100%
Better academic research written by Information Professionals	122	58%
Improved understanding about the Librarianship Profession	114	54%

From **Table 6** above on the benefits of capacity building programmes, 211 (100%) of the respondents indicated upgrade of professional skills, Effective service delivery, and Increased knowledge on the use of ICT in university libraries, 201(95%) indicated better communication/ interpersonal relationship with users, 187(89%) indicated better E-Library Management, 176(83%) indicated timely service delivery, 122(58%) indicated better academic research writing by information professionals, 114(54%) indicated enhance promotion of library services and resources, improved understanding about the librarianship profession, and 102(48%) indicated error free cataloguing and classification of library materials. Therefore, the benefits of capacity building programmes on the development of LIS professionals include upgrade of professional skills, effective service delivery, increased knowledge on the use of ICTs in university libraries, better communication/interpersonal relationship with users better e-library management, timely service delivery, better academic research written by information professionals, enhanced promotion of library services and resources and improved understanding about the librarianship profession.

Research question five:What are the barriers of capacity building for Library and information professionals in university libraries?

Table 7: Barriers of capacity building for Library and information professionals in university libraries

Barriers of Capacity Building Programmes	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate funds to organize capacity building programmes	211	100%

Inadequate time to attend capacity building programmes	142	67%
No proper needs assessment before organizing capacity building programmes	203	96%
Lack of willingness to attend training program by library and information professionals	31	15%
Limited skills of most of the staff being trained has slowed down capacity building programmes	112	53%
Inadequate training facilities and equipment	194	92%
No written capacity building policy	211	100%
Most of the Capacity building programmes are poorly introduced and uncoordinated	96	45%
No proper evaluation of capacity building programmes for future improvements	182	86%
Inadequate support from university management	211	100%

From **Table 7** above on the barriers of capacity building programmes 211(100%) of the respondents indicated inadequate funds to organize capacity building programmes, No written capacity building policy and Inadequate support from university management, 203(96%) indicated no proper needs assessment before organizing capacity building programmes, 194(92%) indicated inadequate training facilities/ equipment, 182(86%) indicated no proper evaluation of capacity building programmes for future improvements, 142(67%) indicated inadequate time to attend capacity building programmes, among others. The barriers to capacity building programmes therefore are Inadequate funds to organize capacity building programmes, Inadequate time to attend capacity building programmes, No proper needs assessment before organizing capacity building programmes, No written capacity building policy, Inadequate support from university management, Inadequate training facilities and equipment, No proper evaluation of capacity building programmes for future improvements and Limited skills of most of the staff being trained has slowed down capacity building programmes

Discussion of Findings

The findings have revealed facts about the capacity building efforts of library and information professionals in university libraries in in South- South, Nigeria. The study revealed the following:

It was revealed from the study that there were more males than female respondents.

The findings of the study revealed that the capacity building needs of library and information professionals in university libraries were majorly troubleshooting new technologies, academic research, internet search skills, e-library management, and library automation, among others. This findings agrees with the study of [Bhatti and Nadeem \(2014\)](#) which revealed that LIS professionals in university libraries in Pakistan need to develop their capacity in troubleshooting new technologies, endnote, data compression, Internet, social media such as Facebook, Blogger, Flickr, Twitter, and online databases.

Findings show clearly that on the job training, in-house training, participation in professional association, lecture/ discussion and exercises, and job rotation were the major methods of building the capacity of library and information professionals while mentoring, orientation programmes, conferences, workshop, seminars, e-learning, library tours, academic education were used to a low extent. This finding could be as a result of shortage of funds in university libraries to sponsor librarians to conferences, workshop and seminars to build their capacity. This findings agrees with the study of [Agadi, Shokeen and Choukimath \(2008\)](#) that efficient manpower training programmes must be organized from time to time for librarians via Practical hands-on training to library personnel. The

findings also agrees with the study of [Khan and Rafiq \(2013\)](#) which revealed that practical work is methods of providing in-service training for librarians in Pakistan.

The findings of the study revealed that 59% of the library and information professionals attend capacity building programmes every two years, 24% indicated they attend yearly, 11% indicated twice a year and only 6% indicated quarterly. It is glaring from these findings that library and information professionals in South- South, Nigeria do not attend capacity building programmes frequently. The study revealed that capacity building programmes has help in the professional development of library and information professionals in the area of upgrading of their professional skills, effective service delivery, increase knowledge of the use of ICT, better communication /interpersonal relationship with users, better e-library management, timely service delivery, and improved understanding about the librarianship profession. The study agrees with the study of [Hosein and Bowen-Chang \(2011\)](#) which clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of cataloguing training in supporting the cataloguers in their thrust to improve and upgrade their professional skills, and thereby facilitate the transfer of knowledge and practices to entry-level cataloguers. The study show clearly that inadequate funds to organize capacity building programmes, no written capacity building policy and Inadequate support from university management, no proper needs assessment before organizing capacity building programmes, inadequate training facilities/ equipment, no proper evaluation of capacity building programmes for future improvements, and inadequate time to attend capacity building programmes are some of the barriers of capacity building programmes in university libraries in South- South, Nigeria. This findings agrees with the study of [Owusu-Acheaw \(2017\)](#); [Abba and Dawha \(2009\)](#) which revealed that insufficient funds is the major barrier affecting capacity building efforts in university libraries.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The need for building the capacity of library and information professionals in a developing nation like Nigeria cannot be overemphasized especially with the increasing use of information communication technologies in university libraries and other emerging areas in the librarianship profession. Library and information professionals in Nigeria will need to build their capacity in troubleshooting new technologies, academic research, Internet search skills, e-library management, and library automation to be relevant in this 21 century. It is a known fact that Library and information professionals hardly get sponsorship from their university/ library management to attend conferences, workshops and seminars to build their capacity because of shortage of funds. Instead university/ library management leverage on cost effective method of capacity building such as on-the job training, in house training as well as lectures/ discussion and exercises. Capacity building efforts in university libraries has benefited library and information professionals in upgrading of their professional skills, boosted their service delivery and increase knowledge of their use of ICT for enhancement of their services and resources. In-spite of the aforementioned benefits, some factors like inadequate funding, no written capacity building policy, inadequate support from university management, and no proper needs assessment before organizing capacity building programmes are causing barriers to capacity building efforts for library and information professionals in university libraries. In view of the foregoing the following recommendations were made:

1. Capacity building needs should be tailored towards promotion of services and resources and project management skills.
2. Methods of capacity building should include seminar, conferences, workshops, orientation programmes

3. The frequency of developing capacity should be increased.
4. Regular training should be organised for librarians to boost their competency on cataloguing and classification of library materials
5. Proper needs assessment should be carried out for library and information professionals in order to know areas to channel capacity building efforts in university libraries.
6. Library and information professionals should allocate enough time and be willing to attend capacity building programmes for their self-development.
7. Library and information professionals should attend a minimum of one capacity building programme yearly to equip them with the relevant skills to be relevant in this digital age.

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