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INFLUENCE OF MENTORSHIP ON JOB PERFORMANCE OF LIBRARY STAFF IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN DELTA STATE

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Abstract

Purpose: *The study was carried out to find out the influence of mentoring on job performance of library staff in university libraries in Delta State, with the following objectives: to find out the impact of mentorship of library staff in university libraries in delta state and to investigate influence of mentoring and job performance of library staff in university libraries in Delta State respectively.*

Design/Methodology/Approach: *The research design for this study was the descriptive survey, questionnaire was used for data collection. The sample size was 78 library staff. Descriptive statistics, (mean and percentage) were used for analysis. A mean score of 2.5 and above and a percentage score of 50% were considered for decision making.*

Findings: *The study revealed the impact of mentorship of librarians in university libraries in Delta State as accelerating skill acquisition, fostering leadership, boosting research and publication output, technical competency and confidence building. The study further affirmed the influence of mentoring and job performance of librarians in university libraries in Delta State in the following order: Task clarity, greater initiative, ICT adaptation, role modeling and psychosocial support.*

Implication: *The study recommends that the management of universities in Nigeria should ensure that mentoring is given more attention in order to have higher job performance of librarians.*

Originality/Value: *This study is relevant to library staff because it will help them to adapt to new trend in librarianship having been mentored by their superiors, hence the need for this research work.*

Keywords: *Mentorship, job performance, library staff, university libraries, Delta State*

Introduction

A university librarian creates both physical and digital collections, oversees staff, and maintains academic resources. They collaborate with educators and students to support research, impart information skills, and manage campus library systems in accordance with academic objectives. Apart from the official duties, it is the duty of a university librarian to mentor upcoming staff under him/her.

Mentorship is a professional and personal relationship where a more experienced person guides a less experienced person. A mentor is a person who instructs, assists, and counsels a younger or less experienced individual. In a university library, mentoring is a formal or informal professional relationship in which university librarians assist

employees in developing their job abilities, increasing the productivity of their research, and advancing their careers in academic settings. Mentoring is a common component of staff development programmes at many universities library worldwide. Nunan, Ebrahim, and Stander (2023) assert that mentoring is useful and beneficial for organizations looking to grow and maintain long-term viability. A good mentoring enhances job performance.

Job performance is the degree to which workers fulfill their obligations, achieves their objectives, and contributes to the success of their organizations. The term "job performance" refers to an employee's expected work-related behaviuors, which include how tasks are carried out. Effective mentoring may improve employee performance in a number of ways, according to research. A study by Chaudhry et al. (2020), revealed that mentoring has been found to enhance employee job performance and organizational commitment, resulting in enhanced performance. According to the study, mentoring improves employees' understanding of their duties and responsibilities and provides them with a clear path for professional advancement, all of which lead to increased job performance. Additionally, mentoring provides a library staff with the necessary support, assessment, and guidance to overcome challenges and develop new skills, which eventually leads to improved job performance. It is in the light of the above that prompted the researcher to embark on this study on the influence of mentoring on job performance of library staff in university libraries in Delta State.

Statement of the Problem

The relationship between library staff job performance and mentoring is complex and multifaceted, and research has shown that effective mentoring can improve librarians' performance in a number of ways. By providing opportunities for talent development and knowledge acquisition, mentoring may improve employee performance. In addition to providing guidance on gaining new skills and knowledge relevant to their line of work, mentors are essential in helping mentees identify their areas of strength and growth. A formal or informal interaction between seasoned librarians and novice librarians or those looking to grow in their careers is what mentoring for professional development in librarianship entails. Because mentoring can help librarians find greater fulfillment in their work, it can have a significant impact on their development and transformation over the course of their careers. It has been

observed that research topics on mentoring of librarianship exist, but no study has been done on the influence of mentoring on job performance of library staff in university libraries in Delta State, hence the need for this study.

Research objectives

The following research objectives were stated to guide this study

1. To find out the impact of mentorship on library staff in university libraries in Delta State
2. To investigate influence of mentoring on job performance of library staff in university libraries in Delta State

Review of Related Literature

For university librarians to advance their careers and skill sets, mentoring is essential. It creates thematic and technical connections between professionals, researchers, and libraries across the globe. Because competent people serve as counselors, providing career guidance and psychosocial support to mentees' personal and professional development, mentoring is an essential notion in forecasting institutional performance. According to Ekechukwu and Horsfall (2015), mentoring is the dissemination of information, social capital, and psychosocial support that are pertinent to professional, career, or work development. Oladimeji and Sowemimo (2020) looked on how mentorship affected workers' job performance in Nigeria's service industry. Four hundred and sixty employes of Park Inn by Radisson and Green Legacy Resort made up the population, which was surveyed descriptively. The evidence indicates that role modeling is the most effective mentorship function that affects employee performance, followed by exposure and counseling.

The potential programmes need for mentoring programs for newly hired tenure-track librarians in the United States of America was investigated by Goodsett and Walsh (2015). According to the study's findings, participation in mentoring programs helps mentees with professional, usually tenure-related tasks including publishing peer-reviewed articles and joining national organizations. Nonetheless, the great majority of librarians surveyed stated that their institutions lacked mentoring programmes. The effect of motivation and mentoring on job satisfaction among librarians in Southern Nigerian federal and state university libraries was examined by Unegbu and Ajala (2022). According to the results, Southern Nigerian federal and state university libraries provide librarians

with intensive mentoring. This research also showed that librarians received a lot of mentoring throughout their careers. According to the poll, role modeling was the most given to librarians in Southern Nigerian federal and state university libraries, followed by career assistance and psychosocial support. Ossai Ugbah and Akporhonor (2023) assessed how mentorship affected the productivity of librarians at Southwest Nigerian universities. The results validated the existence of high-level mentoring for career advancement, role modeling, and emotional support among librarians at Southwest universities. Research on librarian performance in Southeast and South-South Nigeria was done by Nwokike and Unegbu (2019). According to Njoku's (2017) research, mentorship programs can increase librarian productivity by promoting the completion of professional tasks. In order to handle the expectations and challenges of the workplace, both studies recommend that librarians receive frequent training. Although Nwokike and Unegbu's study revealed that librarians performed well on the job, it also indicated that skill training was necessary to enhance coordination.

The performance of cataloguers is influenced by job history and mentorship practices, according to Adewuyi and Makinde's (2018), study on Nigerian libraries. To guaranty professional development, they recommended formalizing and bolstering mentorship practices. According to Kaufmann (2009), mentoring has a long history in a number of professions, including law, medicine, business organizations, and the medical and health fields, where practitioners also hold academic positions akin to librarians. According to Adewuyi and Makinde, (2018), learning itself can be attained thruogh a variety of channels, including mentoring, on-the-job training, reading books, attending conferences and workshops, and sharing knowledge and information. Learning is the primary means of acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills for performance in the workplace. According to a study by Bello and Mansor (2013), all professions must participate in ongoing training to stay up to date with the advancements and difficulties in their respective sectors. According to Sodipe and Madukoma (2013), mentoring helps librarians succeed in their careers. They suggested that library managers set up a mentoring program to help staff members advance their careers by acquiring new skills.

University education is highly valued by society, and research has the power to influence any culture. According

to Ekpoh and Ukot (2018), mentoring has been shown to be a successful strategy for improving and enhancing learning results. According to John (2017), policy and guidelines, training, selection, and corresponding excellent knowledge legacies seem to have a significant influence on mentors' contributions to knowledge creation across a variety of fields. Eyitayo, Bamidele, and Aremu (2015) study report mentorship as a developmental assistance. A significant number of survey participants stated that mentoring opportunities are advantageous and that mentoring is necessary to support faculty members' development. According to the report, mentee advancement within the company and career success is greatly aided by mentoring.

Methodology

The study used a questionnaire-based descriptive survey to gather data. The population for this study was seventy eight library staff (78) that was chosen at random from a few Delta State university libraries makes up the study's population. Only 69 out of the 78 copies that were distributed were recovered. For analysis, descriptive statistics (mean and percentages) were employed. When making decisions, a mean score of 2.5 or higher and a percentage score of 50% were taken into account.

Population of the study

Table 1

S/N	Selected University libraries in Nigeria	Population of library staff
1	Dennis Osadebe University, Asaba	19
2	Delta State University Library Abraka	23
3	Southern Delta University Ozoro	16
4	University of Delta Agbor	11
	Total	**69**

Table 1 above depict the population of the study which was randomly picked in the following order: Dennis Osadebe University Asaba (19), Delta State University Library Abraka (23), Southern Delta University (16) and University of Delta Agbor (11).

Table 2

The impact of mentorship of librarians in university libraries in Delta State

S/N	Items Statements	SA	A	D	SD	-X	Remarks
1	Accelerating skill acquisition	25	23	11	10	2.9	Positive
2	Fostering leadership	34	23	2	10	3.1	Positive
3	Boosting research and publication output	41	16	10	2	3.3	Positive
4	Technical Competency	27	25	6	11	2.9	Positive
5	Confidence Building	26	25	7	11	2.9	Positive

Table 2 shows the impact of mentorship of librarians in university libraries in Delta State as follows: accelerating skill acquisition (2.9), fostering leadership (3.1), boosting research and publication output (3.3), technical competency (2.9) and confidence building (2.9) respectively.

Table 3

Influence of mentoring and job performance of librarians in university libraries in Delta State

S/N	Items Statements	SA	A	D	SD	-X	Remarks
1	Task Clarity	25	33	11	0	3.2	
2	Greater Initiative	29	37	1	2	3.3	Positive
3	ICT Adaptation	33	23	5	8	3.1	Positive
4	Role Modeling	34	21	7	7	3.1	Positive
5	Psychosocial Support	21	22	12	14	2.7	Positive

The study shows the influence of mentoring and job performance of librarians in university libraries in Delta State in the following order: Task Clarity (3.2), Greater Initiative (3.3), ICT Adaptation (3.1), Role Modeling (3.1) and Psychosocial Support (2.7) respectively. This is supported by OssaiUgbah and Akporhonor (2023) who evaluated the impact of mentoring on librarian productivity at universities in South-West Nigeria. The findings confirmed the presence of high-level mentoring among librarians in South-West universities in terms of career growth, role modeling, and psychosocial support.

Discussion of the Findings

The study focuses on how mentorship affects librarians' work performance at Delta State university

libraries. To direct the investigation, two research questions were developed. According to the report, mentoring librarians at Delta State university libraries accelerates skill development, develops leadership, increases research and publishing production, and builds technical proficiency and confidence. This result is in line with Njoku's (2017) who opined that mentoring programs can boost librarian productivity by encouraging job task production. The study also confirmed the following order of the relationship between mentorship and librarians' work performance in Delta State university libraries: Clarity of tasks, increased initiative, ICT adaptability, role modeling, and psychosocial support. This study suggests that the job performance of librarians in the university libraries under consideration is strongly correlated with mentorship.

Conclusion

According to the study's findings, mentoring plays a major role in how well librarians in Southern Nigeria's state Delta university libraries do their jobs. This element would help lessen the effects of librarian turnover and redundancy. The element will greatly improve the work performance of librarians and continuously improve library operations, especially the first-rate services provided by Southern Nigerian federal and state university libraries. Essentially, mentoring has a significant impact on librarians' job performance and needs to be taken seriously.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following;

1. The administration of Nigerian institutions should make sure that mentorship receives more attention in order to improve librarians' job effectiveness.

2. In order to maintain mentorship among librarians, university administrators should implement more mentoring policies requiring senior librarians to mentor their junior colleagues. Additionally, Nigerian university libraries should focus more on career support, psychosocial support, and role modeling.

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