

STAFF MOTIVATION AND PRODUCTIVITY IN JOHN HARRIS
LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated the extent to which staff of John Harris Library, University of Benin are motivated for increased productivity. The survey research method was used, with a 10-item questionnaire used as instrument for data collection. The study revealed that good work environment, opportunity for educational/career advancement, study fellowship, leave of absence, good wages and mentoring of junior staff by their senior colleagues were relevant motivating factors for enhanced staff productivity. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were posited for improved staff motivation.

Introduction

The management of staff in any work environment can be regarded as a part of the management process of such an organization. For organizations to be able to achieve their goals, the human resources remain the most veritable factor. The total workforce in a University Library consists of all the staff of that library - from the University Librarian to the messenger. Unless conducive working conditions are developed that will motivate library employees to attain their maximum potentials, the attainment of the goals for

which the University was established will be a mirage. The University Librarian must have a good grasp in the management of human resources and a proper understanding of the psychological functioning of the individual. This will in turn lead to the achievement of the goals of the library and self actualization of the employees. An enabling and conducive working environment must be created that will encourage library employees to give their maximum potentials. Motivation according to Luthans (1998) is a "process that raises, energizes, directs and sustains behaviour

and performance. It is a process that stimulates people to action to achieve the desired task" Onwubiko (2004) observed that "unless conditions are created that will permit the release of the potentials of library employees, the goals of the library will not be realizable". It is therefore, very necessary for managers of libraries to design a system of rewards and an effective communication system that will enable the library experience a systematic growth and achieve its set goals.

Literature review

Motivation has been defined in many ways by several researchers. Whereas, Abifarin (1977) defined motivation as the "provision of inducement", Ustun (2002) defined it "as a process whereby an individual engages behaviour that will either give him satisfaction or will achieve a specific goal". Job satisfaction to him is a good measure of motivation in a workplace. Motivation may also be defined as a need drive aspiration and desire towards achievement of mutual objectives. Motivation is a leadership function and if the leader is production-centred, there will be little motivation. Luthans (1998) defined motivation "as a process that starts with a psychological deficiency or need that activates a behaviour or a drive that is aimed at a goal incentive".

Motivation can also be seen as whatever it takes to encourage workers to perform by fulfilling or appealing to their needs. To Olajide, (2000) "motivation is goal-directed, and therefore cannot be outside the goals of any organization whether public, private, or non-profit".

Several definitions of motivation abound and what they all have in common is the inclusion of words such as "desire" "want" "wishes" "aims" "goals" "needs" and "incentives." Motivation is a human psychological characteristic that contributes to a person's degree of commitment. (Stoke 1999). Yalokwu (1999) grouped the theories of motivation into two, namely: content and process theories. Whereas content theories are concerned with identifying people's needs and the goals they pursue in order to satisfy such needs, process theories are concerned with the relationship among the dynamic variables which embody motivation and how behaviour is initiated and sustained. Motivation is therefore an intervening variable between human needs and behaviour. It is imperative that without motivation, purposeful organized behaviour will be a mirage either at work or elsewhere.

As asserted by Odunewu (2005) if motivation is not sufficiently attractive or is non-existent, staff morale will be weak with

the attendant job dissatisfaction and low employee output.

Objectives of the Study

This research on staff motivation and productivity in John Harris Library, University of Benin has been approached with the following objectives which have been formulated to serve as guide to the study:

- To assess the nature of the working environment in John Harris library, University of Benin, Nigeria;
- To determine opportunities for career advancement by way of promotion in University of Benin Library;
- To ascertain if incentives like salaries and wages have motivated library staff in the performance of their duties;
- To determine the level of working relationship existing between junior staff and their senior colleagues in the area of mentoring and guidance by the latter;
- To determine whether or not staff are satisfied with the reward system adopted by the authorities of the library;

- To suggest and recommend ways of improving staff motivation and productivity in university libraries in Nigeria.

Methodology

To elicit relevant data, descriptive research survey technique was adopted using a questionnaire as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire consisted of two parts, While part I was on general information on staff profile embodying their rank, gender, length of service and educational/professional qualifications, part II encompasses factors that enhance staff productivity such as good working environment, opportunities for educational advancement (study leave, leave of absence) and good salaries and wages, promotion and job security.

The study population totals 128, (the total members of library staff) Out of the 128 questionnaires administered only 120 (88.2%) were duly completed and returned by the respondents. The completed questionnaires were analyzed using simple percentages as presented in the tables.

Findings and Discussion

Profile of John Harris Library, University of Benin

Table I. is the profile of John Harris Library as background to this study highlighting year established, size of stock, staffing pattern and population of registered users.

Table I: Profile of John Harris Library, University of Benin.

Year Established	23 rd November, 1970 as Institute of Technology; 1 st July, 1971 as University of Benin.		
Specialization	Conventional University		
Library holdings	Books/Monographs 214,062 volumes Journals: Foreign - 222 titles Local - 225 titles Bound vols (Journal backset)-3120 Special collections - 7500 volumes		
Staffing	Academic - 17 Library Officers 7 Admin./Technical Staff - 16 Auxiliary (Lib. Asst., Attd., Porters and Office Asst-88 Total Staff: 128		
Registered user population	Students:	Full Time	- 26,509
		Part Time	- 14,000
	Staff:	Academic	- 997
		Non-Academic	- 2,675

Table 2: Status of Respondents

Status	No. of questionnaire administered		No. returned and useable	
	No./ relative frequency (%)	No./ relative frequency (%)	No./ relative frequency (%)	No./ relative frequency (%)
Academic librarians	17	13.3	17	14
Senior Non-academic	23	17.9	23	19.2
Junior staff	88	68.8	80	66.7
Total	128	100.0	120	100.0

As shown in Table 2, the study population comprised of 17 (14.1%) Academic/Professional Librarians, 23(19.1%), Senior Non-academic staff who are

majority Para-professionals (Library Officers) and Administrative/Technical; and 88(73.3%) Junior Staff comprising of Library

Assistants/Attendants, Security staff and Office Assistants. Of a total of 128 questionnaires

administered only 120 (88.2%) of the duly completed ones were useable.

Table 3: Factors that Motive Productive

Motivators	Very important %	Important %	Not important %	Not sure	Total %
Good working environment	114 (95)	6 (5)	-	-	120 (100)
Opportunity for educational advancement	80 (66.6)	40 (33.3)	-	-	120 (100)
Study leave/ leave of absence	82 (68.3)	34 (28.3)	4 (3.4)	-	120 (100)
Good salaries and wages	100 (83.3)	20 (16.7)	-	-	120 (100)
Mentoring/ guidance by senior colleagues	38 (31.7)	80 (66.6)	2 (1.6)	-	120 (100)

From Table 3 above, it was found that the entire workforce attached great importance to motivators such as good work environment, opportunities for advancement through promotion and on the job training, good salaries and wages as well as job security. Good work environment (95%) ranked highest to the staff of the library closely followed by good salaries and wages (83.3%). It is only when staff enjoy good working environment and good salaries before they will think of other incentives like promotion, on the job training and study leaves.

On mentoring/guidance by senior colleagues 80(966.7%) of the respondents ranked it as an important factor that can motivate productivity while 38 or 31.7% regarded it as the most important motivator in the enhancement of productivity. Library supervisors should not see their subordinates as rivals but rather as trainees whom they must nurture to succeed them after their retirement from service. Senior colleagues should therefore endeavour to give adequate encouragement to their junior ones which they need to succeed on the job.

Table 4: Respondents' Assessment of Work Environment

Response	No of Response	Relative Frequency
Good	39	32.50
Fair	69	57.50
Poor	12	10.00
Total	120	100

From the analysis on Table 4 above, one-half of the respondents 69(57.50%) rated their work environment as fair

while 39(32.50%) reported it as good. A negligible number 12(10.00%) reported that their work environment was poor.

Table 5: Respondents' Assessment of Career Advancement by promotion.

Response	No of Respondents	Frequency (%)
Good	60	50
Fair	42	30.8
Poor	15	12.5
Total	120	100

Table 5 shows that the respondents' assessment of their career advancement by promotion was quite positive. 60 and 42 respondents representing 50 and 35 percent respectively reported their career advancement through on the job training and their subsequent promotion as good and fair in John Harris Library in recent times. All staff who are due for promotion and

advancement without any adverse reports in their records were made to enjoy such promotions. A smaller percentage comprising of different categories of staff rated their career advancement as quite poor. These groups were either not recommended for promotion because they require additional qualification or their records were quite poor to earn them any promotion.

Table 6: Respondents' Rating of Sponsored Training Opportunities in the Library.

Response	No of Respondents	Frequency (%)
Good	68	56.7
Fair	37	30.8
Poor	15	12.5
Total	120	100

From the Table 6, it can be seen that 105(87%) of the staff of the library have benefited from sponsored training programmes while 15(12.5%) rated the opportunity to benefit from such courses as poor. Respondents who rated opportunities for sponsored training programmes as poor 15(12.5%) are majority junior staff with very low educational qualifications and

consequently carry our janitorial functions.

It is on record that the University of Benin offers all categories of staff running part-time academic courses internally 50% rebate on course fees. In addition, academic staff are granted full sponsorship for Masters Degrees in Library and Information Science.

Table 7: Respondents Rating of their Salaries and Wages

Response	No of Respondents	Frequency (%)
Good	58	48.8
Fair	50	41.7
Poor	12	10.0
Total	120	100

Of the one hundred and twenty respondents 58 or 48.3% rated the salaries paid to them as good while 50 (41.7%) rated their wages as fair. However, one-tenth (12 or 10%) of the respondents affirmed that the salaries paid to them was poor.

Table 8: Respondents Assessment of Prospect of Job Security

Response	No of Respondents	Frequency (%)
Good	66	55
Fair	51	42.50
Poor	03	2.50
Total	120	100

Table 8 revealed that 66 or 55% of the respondents reported the

prospects of their job security in University of Benin to be quite

good while 51 or 42.5% reported their job security to be fair. A preponderance of the respondents (117 or 97.5%) agreed that their job security was either fair or good while a negligible sample (03 or 2.5%) reported their job security to be poor.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study revealed that John Harris Library staff attached great importance to a conducive work environment that would bring about job satisfaction. This accounted for why a preponderance of the respondents (108 or 90%) rated their work environment as quite good and conducive. The respondents are satisfied with the salaries and other remunerations that are paid to them from the findings. To this end, management of the university should endeavour to adequately staff the University Library and improve the remunerations in terms of salaries and other sundry allowances as this will bring about job satisfaction, self actualization and realization among the different categories of library staff.

Although the findings show that the library staff are pleased with

the available opportunities to advance through education and promotion, management should adopt other strategies like reward or merit award for hard work for all deserving staff. When the staff is properly developed they will be able to take the organization to enviable heights through their acquisition of new knowledge and ideas.

Management should adopt a pluralist (democratic) management style that would enable it carry along all the rank and file of the University Library so that the goals the library has set to achieve will be fully realized. An effective communication and a free flow of information from the top echelon of the library down to the messenger will enable staff to be properly and adequately motivated for increased productivity.

Library management should attempt to meet the demands of her personnel in order to strengthen their motivation, satisfaction and commitment to work. Governments and library management should

Concentrate on improving the conditions of service for library personnel for optimum results.

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REDEFINING ROLES: LIBRARIANS AS PARTNERS IN INFORMATION LITERACY IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Information is a commodity to be sourced for and utilized. The ability to understand and recognize that information is a commodity that is available and strategy to source and locate the information is the skill needed. This paper looks at various skills in sourcing for information from databases, and exposes the librarian role in information literacy.

Introduction

At the beginning of the 21st century we are in ensconced in an information and technology explosion. There is more data available than ever before and people throughout the world are being overwhelmed by data and information. Of the many challenges facing the planet and human kind in the 21st century none is more important than growing the global community of the informed as rapidly as possible. Whether these challenges are environmental, health, political, democratic, economic or cultural, the one thing they have in common is that their solution can only be advanced by people of good-will and broad vision. People who recognize their own need for good information, and who have the skills to identify, access, evaluate, synthesize and apply the needed information are thus information literate. People need

training to use the available data and information meaningfully and productively. Not only do individuals have to be literate, e.g. know how to read with understanding, but also they have to be information literate, e.g. possess cultural, visual, computer, technology, research and information management literacy.

During the last part of the 20th century information production and availability have exploded due to the internet and World Wide Web. The way of doing business is continuing to change. Values of organizations are changing reflecting the reliance on people, knowledge and information. Organizations and business are creating, sharing and utilizing knowledge and information faster and with more technology than ever before. The world economy is gravitating toward e-commerce and the workplace needs

employees who are capable of working effectively in an electronic information environment. To accomplish that workers must possess necessary information skills. Such information skills can be defined as having the ability to locate information efficiently, evaluating information for a specific purpose or need, organizing information to address problems or issues, applying information skillfully to solve problems, using information to communicate skillfully and finally using information responsibly to ensure productivity in the workplace.

In a (2005) report the American Library Association states that in United States and Australia some professional organizations related to education, law, nursing and medicine are already beginning to address life-long education for their professionals and include information literacy as an important factor. In fact in Australia Bruce (2004) has expertly defined information literacy as seven distinct areas: information technology, information sources, information process, information control, information construction, information extension and wisdom experience. As research and dissemination of knowledge, the need to educate information-literate citizens has

become more widely recognized.

Literature Review

The critical definition of information literacy which is sometimes over-looked is the recognition of information needed. As the 19th century Prime Minister put it and cited by Disreali (2000) "to be conscious that you are ignorant is a great step to knowledge". Part of this century's information challenges are already well understood by that minority of the world's population, the advanced countries, are educated and privileged.

Information literacy is a dynamic concept. The term itself comprised of two common words, which most educated people would understand. To most people, information means interpreted data, news or facts. Literacy is the ability to read, but has increasingly become associated with the ability to understand or interpret specific phenomena. According to Curran, (1999) information and literacy are appropriate concepts to describe the understandings and capabilities which are essential global "thrival" abilities in the 21st century where information is the pervasive commodity. According to Breivik, and Senn (1998), information literacy is a set of ability requiring individuals to "recognize when information is

needed and has the ability to locate evaluate and use effectively the needed information". It could also be defined as a set of skills needed to find, retrieve and analyze and use information; highlighting the depth as Shapiro and Hughes (2006) Making the following major points in their definition:

- *"In its narrowest sense, information literacy includes the practical skills involved in effective use of information technology and or electronic information sources,*
- *Information literacy is a new liberal art which extends beyond technical skills and is conceived as one's critical reflection on the nature of information itself, its technical infrastructure and its social, cultural, and even philosophical context and impact".*

The concept has evolved parallel to the development of information technology and has been adopted as a main concern in education and librarianship. According to IFLA (2004) information literacy is increasingly important in the contemporary environment of rapid technological change and proliferating information resources. Because of the escalating complexity of environment, individuals are

faced with diverse, abundant information choices-in their academic studies, in workplace, and in their personal lives. Information is available through libraries, community resources especially interest organizations, media, and the internet.

Interestingly information comes to individuals in unfiltered formats, raising questions about its authenticity, validity, and reliability. In addition information is available through multiple media including graphical aural, and textual and these pose new challenges for individuals in evaluating and understanding it. The uncertain quality and expanding quantity of information pose large challenges for society. The sheer abundance of information will not in itself create a more informed citizenry without a complementary cluster of abilities necessary to use (the) information effectively. We are all aware of the growth of data, in analogue and digital information facilitated by information technology. The perception that there is a vast growth in data every year is now starting to be described as an information hallucination. Yet the 'infoglut', 'datasmog', or even information fatigue experienced by the global minority is another reason for librarians to lead the society, governments and the other professions particularly the teaching and academic

professions by evidence based advocacy in information literacy, not the tool of information technology, which is the key issue of the so-called information age. Librarians in raising the issue of information literacy face the reality that it may be perceived and sidelined as a library issue' whereas it is a profound and global educational issue. Librarians do, however, have to be on their guard about slipping into equating information literacy with library literacy, or defining it as library user education in another guise. Information literacy forms the basis for life long learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments and to all levels of education. It is emphasized as a particular goal of education on a national level in many countries as well as in local schools. The Swedish National Curriculum (2002) emphasizes that students should learn on how to cope in a complex world characterized by information overload and rapid change. Similarly, a one year Information Literacy Training Project started in Nigeria with the support of UNESCO'S Information Programme (IFAP), (2005) as part of an advocacy campaign to encourage the Nigeria Government to get involve in information literacy. The project was implemented by the Juvenile Development Organization (NGO) based in Plateau State, in collaboration

with the Nigerian National Commission for UNESCO. The ultimate goal of the project is to fast-track an advocacy campaign to the Government involvement in information literacy and ICT education within and outside the education sector, and to narrow the gap between the information rich and the poor. These intentions are expected to have an impact on teachers and librarians work. For instance, these teachers and the librarian need to be information literate themselves to be able to support students to develop their abilities to seek and critically use information. According to Bruce (2004) in Europe, the concept of information literacy is mainly used by librarians and other information specialists, while in North America and Australia information literacy is also used in public policy documents on a national level. Other studies confirm that information literacy is a matter of international interest, where national goals of education are involved and where citizen's abilities as independent and crucial information users are seen as crucial for democratic societies in the information age. Information literacy forms the basis for life long learning. It is common to all disciplines, to all learning environments and to all levels of education. In spite of the importance of information literacy in educational

development empirical research in the field is limited (Virkus, 2003).

Role of the Library in Information Literacy

Libraries have centrally position themselves in the redefining, translating and implementing information literacy programmes. There are very good reasons for this, for one thing, libraries are intimately concerned with information they acquire, describe and make available in a variety of formats, including print, video, audio and electronic. Libraries have also traditionally provided a place for quiet contemplation and scholarly pursuits as well as organizing orientation for new students. (Gee, 2005). The contemporary library should not simply be a repository for information and a place for quiet contemplation, it should also be a dynamic gateway to information and as such provide an active laboratory for students, faculties and other library users to explore, investigate and retrieve information wherever it may be found: locally or globally. The Library's changing role from repository to gateway came with the advent of computers late 1970s and early 1980s. Repetitive tasks are assigned to computers enabling libraries to pursue other improvements, such as the automated library catalog and the creation of

information databases. By the 1980s it was apparent that information technology would become an integral part of all libraries, providing greater efficiencies for both librarians and users. (Bruce, 2000).

By the late 1980s, however, it was obvious that the concept of computer literacy was not enough. As computer began to assume a more central role in academic life it was natural that the library would play an integral role in shaping this new model, since libraries had been grappling with these far-reaching changes for some time. In an era when today's 'truth' becomes tomorrow's outdated concepts, individuals who are unable to gather pertinent information are almost as helpless as those who are unable to read and write.

Generally, the library is a university's primary access point to information. To take an effective role they:

- * Need to understand their customers, or their client.
- * Need to know how people learn and how the provision information and information resources contribute to learning. They should not only function as repository of information and place for quiet contemplation but should be a dynamic gateway to information.

Expected Roles of Librarians

Williams, (1997), has argued that research and teaching are increasingly relying on global networks for the creation, storage and dissemination of knowledge. Students often lack the skills to succeed in this rapidly changing environment, and faculty need training and support to make use of new technologies for effective teaching and learning. The current environment provides an opportunity for librarians to play a key role in the evaluation of an integrated information literacy curriculum, in contrast to past efforts which were sporadic and rarely programmatically based.

The American Library Association Report, (2006) states that 'information literacy is a survival skill in the information age' and calls for a restructuring of the learning process itself, rather than curriculum.

UNESCO Training Trainers in Information Literacy Workshop, (2008), librarians especially school, and university librarians, and media librarians, can be fairly credited with being the key driving forces in the development of information literacy. Librarian and information literacy are closely allied, and belong to the same overarching discipline. However there are important distinctions between them in terms of their role(s) vis-a-vis the continued

development of the information literacy paradigm. Forest, (2008) at the UNESCO Workshop, maintains that the main focus is to concentrate in a positive way on some of the strategic roles which he foresees librarians playing in the development of information literacy policies, programmes, and practices in the "real world". Among the roles he discussed are:

Librarians-custodian of the book, diffuser of the data, information and knowledge contained within the book.

- The internet and the explosion of multi-media technologies, product and services, and how this has impacted on the traditional role of librarians.
- Librarians as information counselors, an expanded "new role".
- Librarians as information policy planners in organizations.
- Librarians as pilot testers, designers and developers of information literacy "best practices".

Serving as leaders and facilitators in introducing information technologies and ensuring their effective use, librarians should have knowledge on effective delivery mechanisms and means of disseminating information and the legal economic and

political aspects of information. They should also have skills in strategic planning, financial and change management. Equipped with the knowledge, skills and competencies, librarians are not mere librarians any more. The expectancies of our role in ICT provide a framework for technological role we play in library services.

As computer literacy mentors; they should possess and practice a medium of technical expertise, trouble shooting skills and assist users in interpreting incorrect messages or how to get out of a problematic solution.

Thus, libraries and librarians are true and significant contributors to the success of their organizations or institutions, as well as active partners in information literacy education for lifelong learning.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The challenges of this century will be met by obtaining economic value from knowledge and by ensuring that present and future workforce can contribute and perform, as foreseen many years ago. According to Drucker, (2008), "the most important thing, people will have to learn, is how

to learn. The most important thing in other words, is not specific skills, but universal skills-that of using knowledge and its systematic acquisition as the foundation for performance, skills and achievement". In a world so dominated by information needs, issues and considerations, acceptance that information literacy is required for a person to function effectively as an individual in an increasing global society seems axiomatic.

Information literacy has been described as the umbrella literacy, and thus it seems logical that all the three (3) tiers of government in Nigeria should have formalized information policies and strategies with information literacy as their core. It also seems axiomatic that academics, librarians and educational administrators should by now accord information literacy the highest pedagogical and resource investment priority. Our ability to be information literate depends on our willingness to be lifelong learners as we are challenged to master new technologies that will forever alter the landscape of information. The reality of course is still far removed from the potentials.

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