

MENTORING AS A BASIS FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN LIBRARIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This paper looks into mentoring as a basis for capacity development and service delivery in libraries of higher education in rivers state. The paper highlights the relationship between mentoring and service delivery of library staff in higher institutions in Rivers State. Correlational design was adopted for the work. The population of three hundred and sixty two (362) was used comprising of library staff in higher institutions in Rivers States. The entire three hundred and sixty two (362) population was as sample because the number is manageable. A rating scale designed by the researcher was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by five (5) experts and its reliability was established through a test re-test method using Crombach Alpha Coefficient which yielded an index of 0.816. Descriptive Statistics and Pearson Product Moment Coefficient were used to answer research questions while Pearson Product Moment Coefficient also used for the testing of the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Findings from the study showed that there is a significant relationship between mentoring and service delivery in the libraries of higher institutions in Rivers Based on the findings, the study recommends that mentoring should be made available to the library staff in order to ensure high performance and service delivery.

Key Notes: Mentoring, Capacity Development, Service delivery performance

INTRODUCTION

Capacity development is a programme designed to educate, train and increase the knowledge and skills of the staff of an organization so that they can go to their present position, (Oduagwu 2006). According to Morin (2018) capacity development is the ability to achieve organizational mission in effective manner. This goes to show that, capacity development is goal-oriented and cannot be outside the goals of the organization whether public or private. Capacity development can take different forms and methods like: Skill acquisition, mentoring, field trips, professional skill training, technology guidance, specialized training, incentives, lunch-N-

learn, specialized lecture, Invite Company, on-the-job training, off-the-job training opportunities, resource mobilization and human resources initiatives, staff development portal, and policy formulation. The end result is to increase the workers' skills and productivity which in turn has a tremendous impact on the efficiency and of services delivery of the library. No organization can exist and perform to its optimal level in service delivery, image making and productivity without staff capacity development. For this study emphasis will be laid on mentoring, as staff capacity development variables.

The academic library is an important agent in the pursuit of academic excellence in higher institution. Its main goal is to support the objectives of the host which have to do with teaching, learning and research using the services available. The extent, to which the institution is able to carry out its laudable objectives, portrays how well the institution's library has been supportive to it in the provision of all the essential information resources and services. This puts the academic library at the centre of academic excellence in the academic system, its centrality can never be achieved without the library staff competence. Capacity development of institutions' of higher libraries is more often than not channeled to, among other library variables, the staff hence the term staff capacity development. Capacity development is the strategy or an action taken by an organization (in this case the academic library) to ensure success with its available resources. Staff capacity development can be referred to as staff, man-power, human resources, human capital development programmes that aim at developing the staff efficiency to work. This is based on the premise that they deliver the services needed to promote the teaching, learning and research activities of the parent institution which the library is established to serve.

Mentoring is a one-to-one relationship that involves a less experienced employee (the mentee) and a more experienced employee (the mentor). Mentoring is based on mutual trust and respect, openness and willingness on the part of the less experienced employee to learn from the experienced employee. Mentoring is a relationship between a protégé (Mentoree or mentee) and the mentor for the purpose of developing the protégé for progressive carrier development, (Morin, 2018), Mentoring is unique in that it centres primarily on career growth and development Mentoring prepares a protégé for growing hierarchical advancement in an organization. These include coaching the protégés and increasing their exposure by giving them challenging tasks. A mentor can also prepare a protégé for organizational advancement by providing psychosocial functions. These functions build intimacy and trust as a strong relations bond that can enhance the behaviour of the protégé personally and professionally. According to Allen, (2007) career functions like mentoring have a stronger effect on protégé advancement and compensation while psychosocial function predicts protégé satisfaction. This means that career function and psychosocial function predict younger mentor job and career satisfaction.

It has been clearly stated in the foregoing that mentoring makes for effective service delivery and service delivery is a major need for any business. It is a process of getting services done as effectively and quickly as possible to intended recipients. According to reference.com, (2018); Service delivery is a component of business that defines the interaction between providers and clients where the provider offers in service, whether that be information or a task, and the client either finds value or loses value as a result. Good service delivery provides clients with an

increase in value. Talking about libraries and service delivery; the fundamental objective of a library is to make available reliable information to their clientele in a timely, accurate, pertinent manner.

The researcher is of the view that academic libraries in Rivers State should as a matter of urgency key into effective staff capacity development and ensure that all logistics to its sustainability and growth are put in place. As a matter of fact, adequately equipped, trained, knowledgeable and vibrant staff with technical know-how surely makes for more productive and service delivery in institutions in Rivers State and these could be achieved through mentoring.

Purpose of the Study

Guided by the foregoing, the main purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between mentoring means staff capacity development and service delivery in academic libraries. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. Ascertain the relationship between mentoring and service delivery in higher institutions in Rivers State.
- ii. Identify the factors militating against mentoring as a means of staff capacity development in higher institutions in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

- i. What is the relationship between mentoring and service delivery in higher institutions in Rivers State?
- ii. What are the problems militating against mentoring in higher institutions in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The researcher formulated the following null hypothesis which was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between mentoring and service delivery in higher institutions in Rivers State,

METHODOLOGY

This research work was carried out in Rivers State, Nigeria, Rivers State, also known simply as Rivers, is one of the 36 states of Nigeria. According to estimated census data released in 2016, the state has a population of 7,303,900, making it the sixth-most populous state in the country. The correlational research design was applied in the study since this method enables the researcher to establish the relationship between two variables which are mentoring and capacity development. This research design according to Nwankwo (2013) is used in a situation where the researcher seeks to establish relationship between two or more variables and data from such variables are in ratio or interval scale.

There are a total of three hundred and sixty-two (362) library staff in listed higher institutions in Rivers State. This number as population for the study. This population comprises of 134 staff from University of Port Harcourt, 54 from Rivers State University, 36 from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, 30 from Elechi Amadi Polytechnic Port Harcourt, 29 from Kef Saro Wiwa Polytechnic, Bori, 19 Oil and Gas Polytechnic, Bonny, 29 from College of Education (Technical), Omoku, 15 from College of Health Technology. Rumueme and 16 from School of Nursing. Rumueme. Since the population was not too outrageous the entire three hundred and sixty-two staff (362) were used for the study. The census sampling technique was applied to choose the entire population as sample for the study. The instrument used for data collection in this study is the questionnaire. The reliability of the instrument was established through a test re-test method.

The relevant data collected through the administration of the instruments were properly coded and subjected to statistical analysis. The research questions were answered using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Descriptive Statistics while the hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance also using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics.

RESULTS

The results obtained are presented below:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between mentoring and service delivery in higher institutions in Rivers State?

Table 1: Relationship between mentoring and service delivery in higher institutions in Rivers State.

Variables	Mean	SD	n	R
Mentoring	19.401	3.152	362	0.252
Service delivery	6.251	1.717		

Table 3 above shows the results of data obtained from respondents on the degree of mentoring in higher institutions in Rivers State as well as its relationship to service delivery of staff. To answer research question three, the result shows that there is a positive and weak ($r=0.252$) relationship between mentoring and service delivery in higher institutions. The mean of 19.401 and standard deviation of 3.152 for mentoring while the service delivery is 6.251 and 1.717 mean and standard deviation respectively.

Research Question 2: What are the problems militating against mentoring in higher institutions in Rivers State?

Table 2 Mean score and standard deviation scores obtained for staff responses on the factors militating against capacity development.

S/N	Items	VO	O	S	R	n	Mean	SD	Decision
3 1	Inadequate provision of fund for training	141 (39.0%)	79 (21.8%)	42 (11.6%)	100 (27.6%)	362	2.721	1.240	Accepted
3 2	Poor Management Attitude	148 (40.9%)	81 (22.4%)	65 (18.0%)	68 (18.8%)	362	2.854	1.150	Accepted
3 3	Weak policies	191 (52.8%)	128 (34.3%)	27 (7.5%)	20 (5.5%)	362	3.343	0.841	Accepted
3 4	Inadequate staff training	180 (49.7%)	121 (33.4%)	37 (10.2%)	24 (6.6%)	362	3.262	0.893	Accepted
3 5	Inadequate staff motivation	121 (33.4%)	36 (9.9%)	120 (33.1%)	85 (23.5%)	362	2.533	1.179	Accepted
3 6	Corrupt Practices	236 (65.2%)	93 (25.7%)	18 (5.0%)	15 (4.1%)	362	3.519	0.774	Accepted
Grand Mean		3.039							

Table 2 shows the results of data obtained from respondents on the problems militating against staff capacity development in higher institutions in Rivers State. However, the majority of the respondents agreed to items 1-6, with their mean scores greater than or equal to the criterion mean (2.5), while just a few of the respondents disagreed with the items. The grand mean of 3.039 implies that inadequate provisions of funds for training, poor management attitude, weak policies, inadequate staff training, inadequate staff motivation, and corrupt practices to a high extent militate against stall capacity development in higher institutions in Rivers State.

Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between mentoring and service delivery in higher institutions in Rivers State

Table 3: Relationship between mentoring and service delivery in higher institutions in Rivers State

Variables	Mean	SD	n	R	P-value	Decision
Mentoring	19.401	3.152	362	0.252	0.000	00.05 Sig
Service delivery	6.251	1.717				

Sig.-Significant

Table 3 above shows the results of data obtained from respondents on the degree of mentoring in higher institutions in Rivers State as well as its relationship service delivery of staff. To test the hypothesis three; result shows that there is significant relationship between mentoring and service delivery in higher institutions in Rivers State ($p=0.000$, $P< 0.05$). Therefore, mill hypothesis three is rejected at 0.05 level of significance. Since $p=.000$ which is less than the chosen alpha (0.05) level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study are summarized as follows:

1. There is a weak, although positive relationship between mentoring and service delivery in higher institutions in Rivers State and the relationship is significant.
2. Inadequate provisions of fund for training, poor management attitude, inadequate staff training, inadequate staff motivation, corrupt practices to a high extent militate against mentoring in higher institutions in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results presented in the previous session are discussed below.

Relationship between Mentoring and Staff Service Delivery in Rivers State Higher Institutions

There is significant relationship between mentoring and service delivery in higher institutions in Rivers State. Mentoring exhibits a low positive relationship with the job performance staff in higher institutions in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient value of 0.253 obtained is an indication of this weak positive relationship. This implies that although mentoring would aid service delivery amongst library stalls in Rivers State higher institutions, the effect would be very minimal. Mentoring is therefore not a capacity-building strategy to spend too many resources on. The reason for this weak positive relationship outcome could of course be due to the fact that staff do not have a very cordial relationship with their superiors. As a result of this, many mentoring attempts would not be effective. It would therefore be relevant to first put measures in place to strengthen or enhance stall-superior relationships in order for mentoring to be effective. It is observed that mentoring would be a major driver of building as well as a major influencer of staff service delivery if there was a cordially strong relationship between staff and their superiors. Morin, (2018) agrees with the findings that mentoring is a relation between a protégé (Mentoree or mentee) and the mentor for the purpose of developing the protégé for progressive career development. Mentoring would therefore be a major tool of capacity building. The result showed inadequate mentoring of staff in these institutions.

Educational implications of the study

The findings of this study obvious implications on host institutions heads of libraries, staff of libraries, students, researchers and other library alike. The implication of the finding that there is a significant relationship between mentoring and service delivery in higher institutions in Rivers State on library staff is that their effectiveness in service delivery is dependent on availability of mentoring. It also implies that every staff should subscribe to the mentoring authority of their senior staff. It implies also that to be effective in their service delivery as library staff, every staff ought to have a mentor and also that staff who undergo mentoring would perform better than those who don't. For library management, heads of host institutions and senior staff, the implication of this finding is simply that mentoring should be made available for junior library staff and junior staff should be encouraged to come closer to the senior staff. Another implication is that, senior staff/junior staff relationships would become an essential part of the library system and the senior staff of libraries of higher institutions would have to learn to measure up to that. For researchers, students and other library users, this finding implies that for satisfaction in service and for a better experience in library usage, an institution library in which mentoring is encouraged among senior and junior staff would be the best bet.

The final finding in this study states that inadequate provisions of fund for training, poor management attitude, weak policies, inadequate staff training, inadequate staff motivation, and corrupt practices to a high extent militate against staff capacity development in higher institutions in Rivers State, this implies that library management, senior staff, heads of libraries etc. haven lot of work to do in curbing these challenges. It implies also that to achieve, effectiveness in library service delivery, a lot of effort must be put into understanding each of the militating factors specifically and appropriate actions taken to eradicate them.

For library staff, the implication is simply an understanding of the possible reason for undeveloped capacity, one would therefore expect that library staff would act in contrast to these militating factors in order to achieve capacity development.

For students, researchers and library users this finding implies that in order to enjoy satisfaction in library usage, there is a need to look into the above- mentioned problems and avoid them as much as possible. It also implies that if in any library institution, staff capacity development is not obtainable, one or more of these reasons may be responsible for it.

Conclusion

The study findings presented show that capacity development has the capacity to generally influence positive effects on both stall and organizational performance or service delivery. From the research findings, it can be concluded that the success of an organization depends mildly on mentoring as a means of capacity development. The study found that as organizations develop their core competencies and include them in the organizational business objectives, the operational processes that include development strategies are important in the delivery of the organization's core functions and objectives.

The importance of capacity development strategies in the performance of employees cannot be overemphasized especially when it comes to being mentored to improve their work efficiency and the organization's productivity. Service delivery can be improved by mentoring. This finding is in line with Okoro (2007) that efficiency and adequacy in library services delivery will not only enhance teaching and study, but equally a conducive ground for research and continual extension of knowledge through the human race.

The study also found that inadequate fund for training, poor management attitude, weak policies and inadequate staff training militate against mentoring in these institutions.

Recommendations.

The researcher made some recommendations as listed below

1. Practical mentoring approach should be adopted in these institutions.
2. Similar study can be carried out using public libraries
3. This study can be replicated using libraries in other states.

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Development on the Population of the Study

Name of Institution	Number of Staff
University of Port Harcourt, Choba	134
Rivers State University, Port Harcourt	54
Ignatius Ajuru University, Rumuolumeni	36
Elechi Amadi Polytechnic, Rumuola	30
Ken Saro - Wiwa Polytechnic, Bori	29
Oil & Gas Polytechnic, Bonny	19
College of Education (Tech), Omoku	29
College of Health Technology, Rumueme	15
School of Nursing, Rumueme	16
TOTAL	362