ICT Training, Skills and Use by Librarians in Special Libraries in Abuja, FCT, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated ICT training, skills acquisition and use by librarians in special libraries in Abuja, FCT, Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study. Population for the study comprised of seventy-four (74) librarians in twenty-four (24) special libraries within Abuja. A sample size of fourteen (14) special libraries and fifty-one (51) librarians were selected. Structured questionnaires were used in data collection. A total of 51 copies of the questionnaire were administered by the researchers. Frequency tables and percentages were used to analyze data. Response rate showed that out of 51 copies of the questionnaire administered, 40 copies were filled and returned, giving 78% success. Research findings showed that on-the-job training was the ICT training programme acquired by all the respondents. All the respondents indicated to have acquired skills in computer, database, internet/communication, library software and applications packages as well as networking. Database skill was most popular ICT skill used by librarians in information service delivery. The serious problem hindering the acquisition of ICT training and skills was lack of modern training facilities. Recommendations were put forward and they include: attitudinal change of librarians through making personal effort to train themselves, heads of special libraries should persuade the management of their institutions to provide adequate funds to equip the libraries with ICT facilities for staff development and information service delivery. Bodies organizing conferences, seminars and workshop should use the modern ICT facilities for practical training so as to acquire skills.

Key words: ICT; training; skills; librarians; special libraries; Abuja, FCT.

INTRODUCTION

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the convergence between computing, broadcasting, audio-visual and telecommunication technologies to

produce information. The use of ICT has affected all facets of human life such as education, health information, business and banking sectors, etc. in banks, different types of ICT facilities are been used to provide online, internet services. These facilities include... IT systems fax and phones, computer terminals, etc (Pawar, Sharma, Thatte and Gupta, 2011). The use of information Technology in information handing had no doubt revolutionized the operations in modern libraries and information centres. Information Communication Technology manifests itself in library and information services by accessibility it provides using online data banks and on-line bibliographical databases. Bowden (1984) posits that Information technology manifests itself in terms of service provision by the immediate access. It ultimately permit user to remote collection of data. Also Madu (2008) stressed that the latest in this technological drive for provision of library services to users is the introduction of virtual library.

The availability of ICTs in libraries has created the need for changes in the tools and roles of libraries, new information technology skills in addition to traditional library skills. In digital environments, librarians can only be effective in information service delivery by having the appropriate ICT skills is the ability to use digital technology, communication tools and/ or networks appropriately to solve information problems. To solve information problems is the ability to use technology as tool to research, organize, evaluate and communicate information and possession of a fundamental understanding of the ethical legal issues surrounding the access and use of information. ICT knowledge is information gained or acquired from training on ICT. In order to be fully equipped with skills, librarians need to undergo various forms of training programme. Training is the acquisition skills that enable the employee discharge his/her statutory duties on daily basis in an organization. According to Mbagwu and Nwanchukwuu (2010), the kind of training programmes available in Federal University of Technology Owerri library include: induction and orientation, on the–job- training, workshop, seminars and conferences, simulation on extension training

Despite the high penetration rate of ICT and exponential growth of internet, many librarians in Nigerian libraries have low level of ICT skills to work with computers, browse and surf the net in order to access and retrieve information (Amkpa & Abba, 2009)

Statement of the problem
It is well known fact that many special libraries have acquired and used Information Communication Technology. In fact they are all aspiring to embrace as much ICT as possible within the limit of resources available to them. This is because, they do not

want to be completely left behind their libraries to acquire the requisite training and skills to put ICT to good use. These training and skills will enable the librarians to function more efficiently and effectively in information provision, and thus serve their clientele better (Solanje; Chinsega, 1995).

However, it is observed that several studies on ICT skills of librarians have been focused on academic librarians in university libraries, notably was the research carried out by Olukemi and Hussaini (2010) on the educational need of academic librarians in the 21st century of digital environment. Not much on librarians in special libraries have been examined. In fact the librarians working in libraries require ICT skills most; because of the nature of the services they are expected to render can only be effective with the use of ICT. The situation of ICT skills of librarians in special libraries in Abuja are not known. This therefore serves as impetus for this study, to investigate the state of ICT training, acquisition of skills and use by librarians in special libraries in Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, Nigeria.

Objectives of the study

The study was guided by the following objectives.
i.   To determine the level of programme by which librarians acquire ICT training and skills.
ii. To determine the type of ICT skills acquired and used by the librarians in special libraries under study.
iii. To determine the problems hindering librarians from acquiring ICT training and skills.

Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:-.
1.   What are the levels of ICT training programme received by the librarians?
2.   What are the types of ICT skills acquired and used by librarians?
3.   What are the problems hindering the librarians from acquiring ICT training and skills?

Thescopeofthestudy

The study is confined to the following content areas:-
   -   Levels of ICT training programme
   -   Acquisition and use of ICT skills

- Problems in the ICT training/skills

In the geographical area, the study is confined/ limited to special libraries within Abuja, FCT in Nigeria.

Significance of the study

The study will be of great benefit to stakeholders in librarianship particularly the ICT - inclined libraries. They will be aware of the need to acquire ICT training and skills and to adopt them in the provision of information services. It will keep the management of the organisation abreast on the challenges involved in the ICT training and usage. This will guide them in proffering possible suggestions to enhance higher productivity among librarians.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mbagwu and Nwachukwu (2010) investigated training and development programmes of professional and para-professional staff in Federal University of Technology, Owerri Library. The kinds of training available were: induction and orientation, on – the-job training, workshop, seminars and conferences, simulation and extension training.

Nwogo (2011) also examined network literacy skills on academic librarians. The study revealed high literacy skills of academic librarians in the use of internet. Vast majority of the librarians studied surf the internet daily and weekly. A survey of ICT knowledge and skills of librarian at Chandigarh city Delhi by Nath, Bahl and Kumar (2007) has revealed a low level of ICT knowledge amongst librarians. Adomi and Anie (2006) conducted a survey to assess the computer literacy skills of professionals in Nigerian university libraries. The study revealed that most of the respondents did not possess a high level of computer skills but their use of computers and technology was maturing. The majority of them acquired their computer skills from computer/IT training programmes, and use library automation software more frequently than other software packages.

Safahief and Asemi (2010) assessed the levels of computer literacy skills of librarians in university of Isfahan, Iran. The investigation revealed that majority of the librarians did not possesse good level of computer skills and even their long

experience of computer use has not necessarily improved their level of literacy. Ugwu (2009) studied the ICT knowledge and skills of librarians at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. It was reported that Librarians acquired ICT skills through colleagues, while the ICT competency levels of librarians were found to be very low. Constraints to the acquisition of ICT knowledge and skills include lack of funds, overload of working hours and limited opportunities offered by information technology.

Adeyoyin (2006) also assessed the ICT literacy level among the staff of Anglophone (English speaking) university libraries and their counterparts in franco-phone (French speaking) university libraries in West Africa. The results showed that out of 370 librarians 170 were ICT literate while the remaining 191 librarians were ICT non- literates. Choudhurhad and Sethi (2009) analyzed the computer literacy of library professionals in the libraries of Orissa. The study found that majority of them opined that they should be provided with orientation for the use of electronic resources. Olukemi and Hussani (2010) reported inadequate or total lack of skills/education in digital information provision by librarians

Ojedokun and Okafor (2011) investigated relevance and adequacy of IT skills of librarians in digital and electronic environment with particular emphasis on southern Nigeria. The study revealed that majority of respondents had knowledge and skills in e-mail use, word processing and use of search engines. Many of them have no skills to evaluate and catalogue resources of database management, management web design and application. Omoniyi and Akinboro (2009) reported that librarians were of the view that ICT training was unnecessary to them on condition that they offered information science courses in library school. It was further discovered that IT knowledge acquired in university subsumes ICT skill requirement for their job. They were of the view that ICT skills and competency are needed by the junior staff.

Adomi and Famola (2012) examined training and development of 50 cataloguers in National Library of Nigeria, Abuja. The study revealed that library staff have participated in the in-house training and departmental meetings while major problem was inability of National Library to send staff for training programme.
Abdullahi and Haruna (2009) reported that the level of information service delivery in three surveyed university libraries in Adamawa state, Nigeria was high while the major problem with the ICT utilization in the surveyed university libraries was constant power failure without alternative power supply.

METHODOLOGY

The population for this study comprised of seventy-four (74) librarians in twenty-four (24) special libraries within Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory. The special libraries that constitute the population are as follows:

Central Bank of Nigeria; Federal Court of Appeal; Federal Ministry of Agriculture; Federal; Ministry of Health; Federal Ministry of Justice; Sheda Science and Technology Complex; Agriculture Project Coordinating Unit; Gwagwalada Specialist Hospital; High Court of Justice; National Judiciary Institute; National House of Assembly; National Centre for women Development. Others are National Human Right Commission; National Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development Council; National Mathematical Centre; Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council; National Petroleum Corporation; Raw Material Research and Development Council; Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution; Supreme Court; Tertiary Education Trust Fund; Presidency Library; High Court of Nigeria Library; and Federal Ministry of Trade and Tourism.

Source: Nigerian Library Association record of all libraries in Abuja. Abuja chapter,

The sample consists of fourteen (14) special libraries and fifty-one (51) librarians. Purposive sampling technique was used to select fourteen (14) special libraries and 51 librarians for the study because the sampled special libraries have evidence of ICT application to library services. This was known based on preliminary investigation undertaken by the researchers. The sample are categorized as follows: Central Bank of Nigeria six (6); Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development Council, four (4); Gwagwalada Specialist Hospital Library, four (4); National House of Assembly Library, five (5); National Human Right Commission Library, three (3); Raw Material Research and Development Council four (4); Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution Library, three (3); Supreme Court of Nigeria Library, three (3); National Mathematical Centre Library four (4); Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation Library, five (5); Tertiary Education Trust fund Library, one (I); High Court Library, three (3); Presidency Library, three (3); and National Centre for Women Development Library; three (3).

One set of structured questionnaire was used as the instrument for collection of data from librarians. The questionnaire is made up of four sections: Section A: contains questions on the Educational qualification of librarians. Section B: contains questions on the nature of ICT-related training received by the librarians. Section C:

contains questions on ICT skills acquired by librarians and how the skills have been put to use. Section D: contains questions on problems hindering librarians from acquiring ICT training and skills.

The researchers personally visited all the sample special libraries to administer copies of the questionnaire on librarians. Assistance was given by some library staff. The researchers had to pay a second visit to some libraries to collect the completed copies of questionnaire.

The data collected through questionnaire from the special libraries were analyzed. The data collected were represented in frequency tables and percentages. Each item is presented on a table for clarity purpose. It should be noted however that in table 3 there was 105 frequency; 123 frequency in table 5 while there are 51 frequency in table 6 as against 40 respondents. The reason was that respondents tick more than two or more alternative responses.

DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Administration and retrieval of questionnaire

S/NO	Special Libraries Under Survey	Copies of Questionnaire Administered	Copies of Questionnaires Retrieved
1	Central Bank of Nigeria Abuja	6	4
2	Institute for Pharmaceutical Research and Development Council	4	3
3	Gwagwalada Specialist Hospital	4	4
4	National Assembly	5	3
5	Raw Materials Research and Development Council	4	3
6	Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution	3	3
7	Supreme Court of Nigeria	3	2
8	National Mathematical Centre	4	3
9	Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation	5	4
10	Tertiary Education Trust Fund	1	1
11	High Court	3	3
12	Presidency Library	3	2
13	National Center for Women Development	3	3
14	National Human Right commission	3	2
	Total	**51**	**40**

A total of 51 copies of the questionnaire were administered, 40 copies were completed and returned. This makes the return rate·78%. Some of the copies of questionnaires were not filled due to the fact that some librarians had gone on annual leave.

Qualifications	No. of Respondents.	Percentage (%)
Ph. D	3	8
MA/M.SC.MLIS	17	42
BA/B.SC/BLIS/BLS	20	50
Total	40	100

On the educational qualifications of librarians, the highest number of librarians were those with bachelor degree thus representing 20 (50%).This might not be unconnected with the fact that in order to attain a professional status in librarianship, first degree in librarianship is required.

Research question 1. What are the levels of ICT training programme for librarians?

Table 3: Level of ICT training programme

Level of ICT Training	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Ph.D	-	-
MA/M.Sc/MLIS	14	35
Postgraduate Diploma	-	-
BA/B.SC/BLIS	15	37
HND	11	28
OND	25	63
On the job training	40	100

The table reveals the level of ICT training programme benefited by the librarians. All the respondents indicated to have on-the-job training. This could be in the form of workshop, conferences and seminars which may last for one week. It was discovered that 25(63%) respondents acquired ICT training during OND programme either in librarianship or any other courses. Lowest respondents with 11 (28%) received ICT training as part of HND and degree programmes.

Research question 2. What type of ICT skills are being acquired and used by librarians?

Table 5: Acquisition and Use of ICT skills by Librarians

ICT Skills	Acquisition		Use	
	Frequency	Percentage %	Frequency	Percentage %
Computer Skills	40	100	23	58
Database Skills	40	100	30	75
Internet/Communication Skills	40	100	28	70
Libraries Application Package Skills	40	100	25	63
Networking Skills	40	100	17	43

All the 40 respondents indicated to have acquired computer, database, internet/ communication, library software application and package as well as networking skills. However, there was discrepancy in the use of ICT skills as 30(75%) of respondents use database skills more than the other four ICT skills. Database skills attracted higher response rate of 30(75%), this is because librarians struggle to retrieve information through online database for user. This is followed by 28(70%) response rate on internet/communication No wander information professionals now communicate via internet   viz −a −viz   e-mail, teleconferencing, answering reference queries from users. It was discovered from 17 (43%) respondents lack networking skills to use Wide Area/Long Area Network. (WAN/LAN).

Research question 3. What are the problems hindering the ICT training, acquisition and use of IT skills?

Table 6: Problems hindering librarians from acquiring ICT Training and Skills.

Problems	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Lack of fund for training	10	25
Lack of training opportunities	8	20
Parent organization not willing to send library staff on ICT training	8	20
Lack of interest by the librarians	5	12.4
Lack of modern training facilities	20	50

Data reveal that 20(50%) of respondents have identified lack of modern training facilities as most serious problem hindering the acquisition of ICT training and skills by librarians in special libraries in Abuja FCT. There is digital device among academic libraries and other types of libraries in developing nations. Next to this is 10(25%)

respondent that indicated lack of fund for training, while 8(20%) of the respondents have respectively indicated lack of training opportunities and parent organization not willing to send library staff for ICT training. The lowest respondents were 5(12.4%) respondents that indicated lack of interest by the librarians

Findings and Discussion

The result of the study has revealed that all the librarians in special libraries had acquired various forms of ICT training. The ICT training was acquired as part of National Diploma, Higher National Diploma and, degree programs. They also had the ICT training through personal efforts made to train themselves in private computer schools and through various opportunities given to them by their employer to attend seminars, conferences and ordinary Diploma in computer science, certificate in computer science. It is from the above training, that the librarians in special libraries acquired their ICT knowledge and skills. The result confirms the findings by Nath, Bahl and Kumar (2007) and Chouhurhard and Sethi (2009) but contradict the finding by Omoniyi and Akinboro (2009).

This result agrees with Chouhurhard and Sethi (2009) who analyzed the computer literacy of library professionals in the libraries of Orissa and reported that majority of the professionals were computer literate. However, these results disagree with a survey of ICT knowledge and skills of librarians at Chandigarh city Delhi and reported that there was a low level of ICT knowledge and skills amongst librarians. The present finding disagree with the finding of Omoniyi and Akinboro (2009) who reported that librarians claimed that ICT training is unnecessary to them as they have offered it at library school and that junior staff needed it.

On the use of ICT skills acquired by the librarians, the findings revealed that majority of respondents use database skill. The findings contradicts the findings by Ugwu (2009), Olukemi and Hussain (2010), Ojedokun and Okafor (2011). Ugwu (2009), Olukemi and Hussain (2010) discovered low level of ICT skills as well as total lack of skills in digital information provision respectively. Ojedokun and Okafor (2011) discovered that majority of the respondents had knowledge and skills in e-mail use, word processing task and use of search engine.

The result of the study has revealed some problems hindering the acquisition of ICT training and skills by the librarians studied. The major problem was: lack of modern training facilities. Other minor problems include: lack of fund for training, lack of training opportunities and refusal of parent organization to send library staff on ICT

training. This result contradicts the findings by Adomi and Famola (2012), Ugwu (2009) and Abdullahi and Haruna (2009). Adomi and Famola discovered inability of National Library of Nigeria to sponsor staff for training programme. It corroborated the finding by Ugwu (2009) who discovered lack of fund as the major problem to the acquisition of ICT Knowledge and skills by librarians as lack of fund can result to inadequate modern training facilities. Abdullahi and Haruna (2009) discovered constant power failure without alternative power supply in the three surveyed university libraries and in Adamawa state.

Summary of Findings

1. On-the-job training was the level of ICT training programme received by librarians in special libraries in FCT Abuja.
2. Librarians acquire computer, database, internet/communications and application packages skills but use database and internet/communication skills most.
3. Lack of modern training facilities hindered the acquisition of ICT training and skills.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that:

1. The fact that the nature of ICT-related training is based on conference, seminar and workshop attendance and the organization of these training programmes are on monthly, by annual or annual affairs or on continuous basis, most of these training programmes are usually accompanied by attendance certificates

2. Effective ICT service delivery entails the possession of skills. There are a lot of information online (database) and in order to meet users' information need, there is the need for information collection, accessibility and retrieval

3. The bodies organizing conferences and workshops were unable to provide modern training facilities. This could be attributed to funding and awareness problem that make librarians to still use conventional method of information service delivery in special libraries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from study, the following recommendations are given:
The management of the pa ent organizations which is the umbrella under which special libraries are placed, should be persuaded by the heads of the libraries in such organization to see the importance of ICT training of the librarians so that the management would be encouraged to release adequate fund and send the librarians for ICT and other relevant training. Heads of special libraries should look out for where there are training opportunities, encourage and recommend their staff for such training.

Librarians must change their attitude towards ICT. They should become proactive. This can be done through their personal effort to continue to train themselves and also make themselves available for any ICT training their library and parent organization may offer them from time to time. Librarians as a matter of fact and urgency, must desire to acquire the necessary ICT skills to be able to play their expected roles in digital environment. Bodies organizing conferences, seminars, workshop and any ICT- related training for librarians should ensure that they use modern ICT facilities for the training so that current knowledge and skills can be acquired. The ICT training for librarians should constitute more of practicals than theories.

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