

Staff Development for Enhanced Delivery of Open and Distance Education Programmes in Tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria

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Abstract: *The study examined staff development for enhanced delivery of open and distance education programmes in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria. The study was guided by six objectives, six research questions and six hypotheses. The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population of the study was 1,005 staff in all the National Open University study centres in South-South Region, Nigeria. The sample size of the study was 394 respondents which was selected using the proportionate stratified sampling technique. The instrument used for the study was a self-structured questionnaire. The instrument was validated by three experts. The Cronbach Alpha Reliability statistics was used for the reliability of the study. The reliability values of 0.86, 0.80 and 0.76 were obtained for each of the clusters in the instrument, respectively. Out of the 394 copies of the questionnaire administered, 380 copies were retrieved and used for analysis. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while the null hypotheses were tested using z-test statistical tool at a 0.05 level of significance. Based on the data analyzed, the findings of the study revealed that: technical training in-service training and mentorship enhance delivery of open and distance education programmes in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria. Based on the findings, the researchers recommended that the responsible authorities ensure that all staff of open and distance education undergo these trainings.*

Keywords: *Staff Development, Delivery, Open and Distance Education Programme, Tertiary Institutions.*

Introduction

The staff development programmes enable the development of the university teaching staff capacity and capability, skills acquisition and knowledge acquisition. This brings about effectiveness in the university teaching staff, doing the needful and enhance the foundation of success in teaching (Ahmed, 2013). Therefore, the basic ingredient of effective sustainable delivery of open and distance education programmes by university teaching staff can be observed in effective teaching techniques which are learnt through implementation of staff development programmes. Staff development programmes can be formal and informal. The formal implementation of staff development programmes according to Olaniyan and Ojo (2018), involves

the provisions made by school administrations to improve and enhance the multiplier effect of the training on the university teaching staff's performance, such formal development programmes include seminars, inter-school visitation, symposia, and many others. Thus, implementation of staff development programmes of education includes all training activities engaged in by university teaching staff, administrators and principals following their initial professional certification to educate the students more efficiently, effectively and interestingly (Olaniyan & Ojo, 2018).

On the other hand, informal development programmes are conceptually not something that the school administration does for the university teaching staff or organize for the university teaching staff; rather it is what the university teaching staff themselves engaged in personally or privately (Olaniyan & Ojo, 2018). Such informal development programmes include independent studies, participation in professional associations, demonstration teaching, and staff meetings. Thus, the informal training programmes have the capacity to make the university teaching staff to enhance their teaching proficiency through reading professional materials, journals, listening to and watching educative programmes on television or engaging in independent studies will equally enhance the knowledge of the university teaching staff. The aim of the implementation of staff development programmes is to constantly make the university teaching staff to be abreast of the current trends in the profession, the modern teaching aids and the modern techniques in teaching. This will help to enhance the teaching effectiveness of the university teaching staff and improve their teaching performance.

In all, implementation of staff development programmes such as university teaching staff research programme, university teaching staff coaching and mentoring, computer-based programmes and seminars whether formal or informal has the potential to develop and improve the university teaching staff teaching competencies, enhance their teaching performance and make them effective and proficient. The university teaching staff development programmes are directly applicable to work situation, implying that an educational institution or organization may have university teaching staff with the zeal, ability, determination, consciousness but the opportunity may not be there. Thus, the appropriate equipment, enablement, managerial support and courage may be absent. This may sometimes make the sustainable delivery of open and distance education programme to fall below expected standard. This way, the university teaching staff will perform optimally as they will develop new skills and attitudes that will help them achieve set goals. Essentially therefore, an educational conference always grow along the demanding trend in the educational sector (Wey-Amaewhule, Osuji & Amadi, 2021). The importance of people to the creation, existence, success and progress of organizations including educational institutions such as distance education providers cannot be overemphasized. Despite technological advancement, faculty plays a very critical role in distance education. Faculty has responsibility to ensure institutional quality and improvement of learning (Dicoh & Wright, cited in Panda, 2014). The role performed by other key staff is governed by the institutional mission, goals, policies and organizational structure. In the light of the above, staff development programmes or trainings that can be implemented for the delivery of open and distance education can be categorized into compliance training, technical training, in-service training and mentorship (Aidah, 2013). Technical skills training is a basic component of employee education because it is a primary way to develop the skills. Learning and development (L&D) teams enable **technical training** for employees to build core technical skills, master the technical aspects of their jobs, and keep up with the latest industry trends and technologies (Audu & Gunjun, 2014). According to Ngirwa

(2019) In-service Training is a learning process facilitated by experts for a short period of time to help employees to improve and acquire knowledge, skills, experience, competence and attitudes that they need to perform their job better for the achievements of their organizational goals and objectives. In-service education can simply be defined as the relevant courses and activities in which a serving teacher may participate to upgrade his professional knowledge, skills, and competence in the teaching profession. Mentoring is a cost-effective way for existing, well-trained employees to provide guidance and knowledge to less-experienced employees. The mentor is typically not the direct manager or supervisor of the mentee, and the outcomes differ, depending on the goals of the program. Mentoring is the Employee training system under which a senior or more experienced person (the mentor) is assigned to act as an advisor, counselor, or guide a junior or trainee. The mentor is responsible for providing support to, and feedback on, the person in his or her charge (Ezeani, 2013). The explanation above illustrates the fact that open and distance learning or education programme enjoy an array of interpretations. Dokubo(2011) observed that there are two characteristics of the definition, the Philosophical Perspective and technological perspective which has to do with attempts to widen the range of learners, separated in terms of distance, a desire to give access to education to new groups of learners, attempts to remove perceived barriers to learning and encouraging learners to take charge of their own learning while the second characteristics is the technological perspective which answers the fundamental question of how the teacher and student will communicate since they are physically separated in distance. It includes self-study learning materials such as workbooks, audio cassettes, video cassettes, synchronous communication such as the use of the telephone to maintain student tutor and asynchronous communication between students and tutors, emails and computer. It is against this background that the student examines staff development for enhanced delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in the South-South region, Nigeria.

According to Swanson and Torracco in Torracco and Pepple (2021), Osuji, Wey-Amaewhule and Dike (2021) for high performance of employees in organizations, education and training are widely utilized to broaden and develop the skills of members of the organized labour in the USA. This consequently increased the demand for trained workers to expand and improve war time economy in terms of innovations and technology. The adoption of the theory in the present study is appropriate as the integration of ICT into education which requires the training and development of academic staff of universities to teach students in line with modern trends, especially during emergency situations such as health crisis caused by COVID-19 pandemic, Ebola and other diseases in which universities and other institutions were forced to vacate for teaching and learning to be carried out online. In Nigeria, training and development of lecturers in the use of ICT equipment necessitated the theory as they were professionally featured in the recent e-learning and distance learning amid the health emergency. Therefore, there must be training needs for high performance of academic staff of universities nation-wide and Rivers State in particular. In consonance with training and high-performance theory, McConnell in Pepple (2021) identified various typologies of training needs for successful training and development of human capital in organizations like universities. Some of these are mentoring, e-learning and distance learning, coaching, simulations, self-paced learning, computer-assisted instruction, self-study and lectures among others.

Staff development has to do with the process or art of training new, present staff or employees of an establishment in the basic skills they need to perform their jobs effectively and efficiently. Fink's (2018) observed that training is the act of increasing the skills and knowledge of an

employee for doing his/her job. From this view, it can be said that implementation of staff development refers to the teaching and learning activities carried on for the primary purpose of acquiring and applying the acquired skills, knowledge and attitudes to perform the job effectively.

In the opinion of Angrist and Lavy (2011), implementation of staff development can be said to be any process by which the attitudes, abilities and skills of employees to perform specific works or jobs are enhanced, improved and made perfect. Thus, it can be concluded that implementation of staff development as is a process to improve skills, or add to the existing level of skills and knowledge so that the employee is better equipped to be fit for a higher job involving higher responsibilities. In other words, implementation of staff development programmes serves as a learning experience that seeks a relatively permanent change in an individual that will improve his/her ability to perform the job.

Staff development programmes, according to Fink's (2018) are programmes meant to educate the staff undergoing training to enhance their skills on the job, increase their knowledge and enhance their performance. Implementation of staff development programmes enables the university teaching staff to learn the skills in the use of task analytical approach which has now become a veritable tool in teaching (Ogbondah, 2018). Thus, the sustainable delivery of open and distance education programmes can be enhanced by training the university teaching staff to have effective skills. This way, it is possible to come up with a coherent set of action plans for the university teaching staff to bring up their skills and enhance their performance. The major component of teaching skill as identified by Ogbondah (2018) are preparation, execution and evaluation of teaching.

Technical skills training is a basic component of employee education because it is a primary way to develop the skills. Employees who are already competent in their jobs can undergo further training to gain new skills and stay current with the innovative technologies and processes. With new software applications and cutting-edge technologies emerging every day across industries, it is vital for organizations to continuously **upskill and reskill** their workforce. Learning and development (L&D) teams enable **technical training** for employees to build core technical skills, master the technical aspects of their jobs, and keep up with the innovative trends and technologies (Audu&Gunjun, 2014). Encouraging employees to attend **technical training programs** is a considerable challenge for L&D teams. Technical training sessions are more educational, and complex compared to their other corporate training counterparts. The overall structure and delivery of these technical training programs play a key role.

According to Aroge (2012) technical training enables employees to master the technical aspects of their job. L&D teams design technical training programs for different software applications and processes to **increase employee efficiency and productivity**, help team members learn **new ways of doing old tasks**, and **build core technical skills** relevant to their role. A key distinguishing factor between technical training and other forms of training is that most technical training aspects are job-specific and cannot be performed without the appropriate technical skills. On the other hand, non-technical training such as soft or administrative skill training is generic and easily transferable from one job to another.

In-service training or education programmes are necessary to intimate academic staff with these new developments, new teaching skills or techniques and organizational procedures such as the

conceptual approach, inquiring teaching, simulation, role playing, system approach, team teaching, the open plan, and the use of a wide range of audio-materials. In-service training helps lecturers to attain personal growth, become more sensitive, develop insight of full or open options and become less tightened to changes and innovation. Ferg (2015) acknowledged that promoting the qualities of academic staff through in-service training in education is a key element towards enhanced productivity among lecturers in all levels of education. Cloifolterin Okoroma and Emerole (2023) sees the objective of in-service training in education to continuously improve the performance of university teaching staff towards their outputs. It remains a reliable option for sustaining academic competency and professionalization. He further reported that academic staff have a role to play by improving on their performance thereby absorbing the pressure of accountability if constantly exposed to new ideas and techniques through in-service training.

In-service training enhances or raises the productivity of workers by Imparting useful knowledge and skills. As academic staff continues to acquire more skills, and training, it adds value to them and enhances student's academic performance. In-service training are necessary to intimate academic staff with new developments, new teaching skills or techniques and organizational procedures such as the conceptual approach, inquiring teaching simulation, role playing, system approach, team teaching, the open plan, and the use of a wide range of audio-materials (Azikiwe, 2008). According to Antai (2002), in-service training is a systematic development of employee's knowledge, skill and attitude acquired by the person training, for the development of knowledge necessary to perform adequately in each task. In-service training has much role to play as pre-service education in fulfilling this great responsibility due to rapid growth of knowledge as well as the technological, social, and cultural revolution of our time.

According to Passmore (2016) instructing is a type of advancement wherein an accomplished individual, called a mentor, bolsters a student or customer in accomplishing a particular individual or expert objective by giving preparation and direction. The student is in some cases called a coachee. Sometimes, instructing may mean a causal connection between two individuals, of whom one has more insight and mastery than the other and offers counsel and direction as the last learns; yet training varies from tutoring by zeroing in on explicit undertakings or destinations, instead of more broad objectives or turn of events (Passmore, 2016; Renton, 2019; & Chakravarthy, 2011). Instructing is applied in fields, for example, training, sports, performing expressions (artists get vocal mentors), acting (show mentors and lingo mentors), business, health care, and connections (for instance, dating mentors. Mentors utilize a scope of relational abilities, (for example, directed repetitions, tuning in, addressing, explaining, etc.) to assist customers with moving their viewpoints and subsequently find various ways to deal with accomplish their objectives (Cox, 2013). These abilities can be utilized in practically a wide range of instruction. In this sense, development is a type of "meta-calling" that can apply to supporting customers in any human undertaking, going from their interests in wellbeing, individual, proficiency, sport, social, family, political, profound measurements, etc. There might be some cover between specific sorts of instructing exercises (Cox, Bach Kirova & Clutterbuck, 2018). Training approaches are likewise impacted by social contrasts. It is a cycle that targets improving execution and spotlights on the 'present time and place' as opposed to the inaccessible past or future.

Statement of the Problem

Staff development for enhanced delivery of open and distance education programmes in tertiary institutions in the South-South Region of Nigeria is a contemporary issue. In Nigeria and globally,

21st century institutions have a great need to widen access to higher education because of increasing demand for it. In the South-South Region of Nigeria, tertiary institutions face significant challenges in the effective delivery of open and distance education (ODE) programmes. While ODE has emerged as a critical alternative to traditional face-to-face education, offering opportunities for increased access, flexibility, and cost-effectiveness, many educators and support staff in the South-South region lack the necessary knowledge, skills, and expertise in ODE delivery that can increase access to higher education. For example, in the South-South region there are available ODE technologies but the staff can not apply them because they lack skill, knowledge and competences required to expand and deliver the programmes effectively. The researcher intends to investigate this issue as there is a dearth of research and collaborative efforts among institutions in the South-South Region to identify and implement effective ODE strategies and innovations. There is an urgent research need to focus on the staff in order to satisfy the high demand for unmet access to higher education in the region.

Therefore, the problem of inadequacies in the personnel involved in delivery of open and distance education programmes must be comprehensively addressed in order to effectively break the barriers to access higher education in the South-South Region of Nigeria. There is also the dearth of similar studies on open and distance education programmes. This motivated the researchers to consider this study. As indicated earlier, there is limited research and collaborative efforts among institutions in South-South Region to identify and implement open and distance education programme strategies and innovation. Many scholars have written on aspects of staff development but this study looks at it comprehensively with the aim of understanding the strategies for developing staff in open and distance education for the purpose of enhancing programme delivery in South-South, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the staff development for enhanced delivery of open and distance education programme in Tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

1. determine the extent to which technical training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.
2. ascertain the extent to which in-service training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.
3. find out the extent to which mentorship enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent does technical training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria?
2. To what extent does in-service training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.
3. To what extent does mentorship enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which technical training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which in-service training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which mentorship enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

Methodology

The research design adopted for the study was the descriptive survey design. The population of this study consisted of 1,005 male and female staff in Open and Distance Education Unit in National Open University centres in South-South Region, Nigeria. The sample size of the study was 394 respondents comprising 243 male and 151 female staff in Open and Distance Education Unit or National Open University centers in South-South Region, Nigeria. The proportionate stratified sampling technique was adopted in selecting 30% of the population of male and female staff in each centre to arrive at the sample size. The instrument used for this study was a self-structured questionnaire titled “Staff Development Programme for Enhanced Delivery of Open and Distance Education Programme Questionnaire (SDPEDODEPQ)”. The modified four-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE= 4), High Extent (HE = 3) Low Extent (LE = 2), and Very Low Extent (VLE = 1) was adopted in the study.

The instrument was given to two experts from the Department of Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation, Faculty of Education, Rivers State University for validation. Cronbach Alpha was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument, where reliability index of 0.86, 0.80 and 0.76 were achieved. The data collected used weighted mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while z-test statistical tool at a 0.05 level of significance was used.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does technical training enhance delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean Ratings on the Extent Technical Training Enhance Delivery of Open and Distance Education Programme in tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

S/ No	Questionnaire Items	Male Staff = 233			Female Staff = 147		
		Mean \bar{x}	SD	Remarks	Mean \bar{x}	SD	Remarks
1.	Technical training is a primary way for the staff to develop the skills needed in their job.	2.86	0.84	High Extent	2.91	0.85	High Extent
2.	Technical training is further training that helps staff to gain new skills and stay current with the latest technologies and processes.	2.83	0.84	High Extent	2.95	0.86	High Extent
3.	Technical training programmes play a key role on how the staff deliver their job.	2.97	0.86	High Extent	2.98	0.86	High Extent
4.	Technical training enables employees to master the technical aspect of their job thereby enhancing their job performance.	2.94	0.86	High Extent	2.99	0.86	High Extent
5.	Technical training leverages on employee training software and creates simple and interactive training content thereby enhancing staff development	2.92	0.85	High Extent	3.00	0.87	High Extent
Grand Total		2.90	0.85		2.97	0.86	High Extent

Table 1 showed the Mean and standard deviation analysis on the extent technical training enhance delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria. The result on Table 1 above revealed that the respondents agreed that to a high extent, technical training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria with grand mean values of 2.90/0.85 for male staff and 2.97/0.86 for female staff respectively.

Research Question 2: To what extent does in-service training enhance delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean Ratings on the Extent In-Service Training Enhance Delivery of Open and Distance Education Programme in tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

S/ No	Questionnaire Items	Male Staff = 233			Female Staff = 147		
		Mean \bar{x}	SD	Remarks	Mean \bar{x}	SD	Remarks
6.	Equipping staff with the necessary knowledge and skills to improve overall goals and objectives enhance staff development.	2.89	0.85	High Extent	2.95	0.86	High Extent
7.	In-service training is a learning process facilitated by experts for a short period of time to help employees to improve and acquire skills.	2.78	0.83	High Extent	2.91	0.85	High Extent
8.	More knowledge, experience and competence are acquired through in-service training, thereby enhancing staff development.	2.67	0.84	High Extent	2.87	0.85	High Extent
9.	Relevant courses and activities in which an employee participates to upgrade his professional knowledge and skills enhance staff development.	2.83	0.84	High Extent	2.91	0.85	High Extent
10	In-service training are essential work activities that contribute significantly to the overall effectiveness and profitability of staff thereby improving their development	2.97	0.86	High Extent	2.98	0.86	High Extent
Grand Total		2.83	0.84		2.92	0.85	High Extent

Table 2 showed the Mean and standard deviation analysis on the extent in-service training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria. The result on Table 2 above revealed that the respondents agreed that to a high extent, in-service training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria with grand mean values of 2.83/0.83 for male staff and 2.90/0.85 for female staff respectively.

Research Question 3: To what extent does mentorship enhance delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean Ratings on the Extent Mentorship Enhance Delivery of Open and Distance Education Programme in Tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

S/No	Questionnaire Items	Male Staff = 233			Female Staff = 147		
		Mean \bar{x}	SD	Remarks	Mean \bar{x}	SD	Remarks
11.	Mentorship provides guidance and knowledge to less experienced employees thereby improving their job performance.	2.89	0.85	High Extent	2.95	0.86	High Extent
12.	An employee training under which a senior or more experienced person is assigned to act and guide to a junior staff enhances staff development.	2.86	0.83	High Extent	2.86	0.84	High Extent
13.	To tap into the existing knowledge, skills and experience of older staff help in staff development in open and distance education programme.	2.78	0.83	High Extent	2.91	0.85	High Extent
14.	Coaching of newly employed staff by an expert or senior staff enhances staff development and job performance in an institution.	2.83	0.84	High Extent	2.82	0.84	High Extent
15.	Mentorship /coaching has positive and significant effect on staff development of the employee.	2.86	0.84	High Extent	2.86	0.84	High Extent
Grand Total		2.84	0.84		2.88	0.85	High Extent

Table 3 showed the Mean and standard deviation analysis on the extent mentorship enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria. The result on Table 3 above revealed that the respondents agreed that to a high extent, mentorship enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria with grand mean values of 2.84/0.84 for male staff and 2.88/0.85 for female staff respectively.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which technical training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

Table 4: Z-test Analysis of Difference in the Mean Ratings of Male Staff and Female Staff on the Extent to which Technical Training Enhance Staff Delivery of Open and Distance Education Programme in Tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria

Status	N	\bar{X}	Standard Deviation	Df	z-cal	z-crit	P. Value	Decision
Male Staff	233	2.90	0.85	378	1.24	± 1.96	0.05	Ho, failed to reject
Female Staff	147	2.97	0.86					

The analysis on Table 4 indicated that the z-cal of 1.24 is less than the z-crit of ± 1.96 . Therefore, the calculated z-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is less than the given critical value of z-ratio. Therefore, the hypothesis 2 is thus accepted and the conclusion is that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which technical training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which in-service training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

Table 5: Z-test Analysis of Difference in the Mean Ratings of Male Staff and Female Staff on the Extent to which In-Service Training Enhance Staff Delivery of Open and Distance Education Programme in Tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria

Status	N	\bar{X}	Standard Dev.	df	z-cal	z-crit	P. Value	Decision
Male Staff	233	2.83	0.84	378	1.29	± 1.96	0.05	Ho, failed to reject
Female Staff	147	2.92	0.85					

The analysis on Table 5 above revealed that the z-cal of 1.29 is less than the z-crit of ± 1.96 , at a degree of 1003. Since the z-cal (1.29) was less than the z-crit (± 1.96), the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis upheld which states that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which in-service training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which mentorship enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

Table 6: Z-test Analysis of Difference in the Mean Ratings of Male Staff and Female Staff on the Extent to which Mentorship Enhance Staff Delivery of Open and Distance Education Programme in Tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

Status	N	\bar{X}	Standard Deviation	df	z-cal	z-crit	P. Value	Decision
Male Staff	233	2.84	0.84	378	1.19	± 1.96	0.05	Ho, failed to reject
Female Staff	147	2.88	0.85					

The analysis on Table 6 revealed that the z-cal of 1.19 is less than the z-crit of ± 1.96 , at a degree of 378. Since the z-cal (1.19) was less than the z-crit (± 1.96), the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis upheld which states that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which mentorship enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the findings for Research Question 1 revealed that technical training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria to high extent. The analysis also showed that the respondents agreed with the view that technical training is a further training that helps staff to gain new skills and stay current with the latest technologies and processes. It was still noticed in the table that the respondents agreed on the fact that technical training programmes play a key role in how the staff deliver their job. More so, the corresponding hypothesis 2 was concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which technical training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary Institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria. This study is of the same view as Anzene (2014), who noted that technical training is a primary way for the staff to develop the skills needed in their job. The analysis also showed that technical training is further training that helps staff to gain new skills and stay current

with the latest technologies and processes. It was still noticed in the study that technical training programmes play a key role in how the staff deliver their job. The analysis also revealed that technical training enables employees to master the technical aspect of their job thereby enhancing their job performance. The analysis indicated that technical training leverage employee training software and creates simple and interactive training content thereby enhancing staff development.

The findings of the study in research question 2 revealed that the respondents agreed that to high extent, team training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria. It was still observed in the table that the respondents accepted the fact that more knowledge, experience and competence are acquired through in-service training thereby enhancing staff development. The table also revealed that the respondents agreed on the point that relevant courses and activities in which an employee participates to upgrade his professional knowledge and skills enhance staff development. The corresponding hypothesis 5 was accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which in-service training enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria. The study is in the same view as Ademiyi (2012), who in his study admitted that equipping staff with the necessary knowledge and skills to improve overall goals and objectives enhances staff development. The analysis also showed that in-service training is a learning process facilitated by experts for a short period of time to help employees to improve and acquire skills.

The findings of the study in research question 3 revealed that the respondents agreed on the view that mentorship provides guidance and knowledge to less experienced employees thereby improving their job performance. The analysis still indicated that the respondents accepted on the point that an employee training under which a senior or more experienced person is assigned to act and guide to a junior staff enhance staff development. It was also observed in the table that the respondents accepted the fact that to tap into the existing knowledge skills and experience help in staff development in open and distance education programme. The corresponding hypothesis 3 was accepted and concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which mentorship enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria. The study is in the same view with Ademiyi (2012), who in his study admitted that mentorship provides guidance and knowledge to less experienced employees thereby improving their job performance. The analysis still indicated that employee training under which a senior or more experienced person is assigned to act and guide to a junior staff enhances staff development. It was also observed in the study that to tap into the existing knowledge skills and experience help in staff development in open and distance education programme. The analysis still showed that coaching of newly employed staff by an expert or senior staff enhances the staff development and job performance in an institution. The analysis also revealed that mentorship /coaching has positive and significant effect on staff development of the employee.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that, technical training, in-service training and mentorship enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria. The study also concluded that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female staff respondents on the extent to which technical

training, in-service training and mentorship enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions in South-South Region, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made to ensure that the study meet its objectives.

1. The university management should organize a seminar programme for the staff on technical training because it would enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions.
2. Government through the university management should regularly organize in-service training for all university staff because of it enhances open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions.
3. Universities management should always subject the newly employed staff to mentorship because it enhances delivery of open and distance education programme in tertiary institutions.

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