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Influence of Staff Management Strategies on Academic Staff Job Performance in Public Universities in North-Central, Nigeria

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Abstract:

The study investigated the influence of staff management strategies on academic staff job performance in Public Universities in North Central, Nigeria. The study focused on management strategies of motivation and provision of adequate infrastructural facilities. Two objectives and corresponding research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 5735 academic staff in public universities in North-Central Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted. A 30-item questionnaire titled "Influence of Staff Management Strategies on Academic Staff Job Performance in Public Universities Questionnaire" (ISMSASJPPUQ) was used as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by experts. The reliability of the questionnaire was established using Cronbach Alpha statistics which yielded 0.82 co-efficient. Data was collected and analyzed. Means and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions and Chi-Square statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that, staff management strategies of motivation and provisions of adequate infrastructural facilities significantly influence academic staff job performance in public universities in North Central, Nigeria positively. The study concluded that efficient adoption of staff management strategies exerts a positive influence on job performance of academic staff of public universities. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended among others that, for improved and better performance among academic staff, management of public universities in north central Nigeria should consider all the indices of motivation found in this study a priority as it has been found to be a factor positively influencing their performance of job. Also, the Government should aid management of universities in the provision of adequate infrastructural facilities for enhanced job performance amongst academic staff.

Keywords: Staff Management strategies, academic staff job performance, motivation, infrastructural facilities, public universities

1. Introduction

Staff Management is a commonly used concept in both industrial and organizational settings as it is concerned primarily with how staff are being guided, overseeing and provided with avenues to perform their jobs while at work. The term 'Staff Management' is used interchangeably with Personnel Management, Manpower Management or Human Resource Management. Hulin (2008) defines staff management as the process of fulfilling organizational objectives by acquiring, retaining, terminating, developing and properly using human resources so as to achieve the objectives of the organization. In the view of Barry (2013) staff management is the function of managing all employees in the organization, including the development of staff skills through training and other forms of staff development as well as the identification, development and implementation of training needs and programs available for staff. Employees according to Barry include permanent, temporary and part-time employees. In the opinion of Walker, (2010) staff management involves those activities undertaken by management of organizations in order to attract, develop and maintain an effective workforce within the organization. These activities according to walker include recruiting, training, directing, motivating, infrastructural development, discipline, good leadership and remuneration of staff among others. Staff management is essential because the success of any organization or establishment is closely related to the quality of staff who perform the tasks necessary for the attainment of organizational goals. In the view of Akpakwu (2008) the extent to which

organizations succeed in delivering services with an efficient of scarce inputs will depend largely upon the quality of staff engaged in the organization and upon the effectiveness with which they discharge individual and group responsibilities. Based on the foregoing view therefore, Management of academic staff would be seen as that part of the school or university management which is concerned with the academic staff at work and their relationship within the education industry (Vandiver, 2011). Management of academic staff seeks to bring together and develop into an effective educational organization, men and women who make up the teaching workforce, enabling each to make his/her own best contribution to its success. Managing academic staff in universities and every other institution is a task responsibility of the educational administrators or educational management. These administrators are the people that oversee educational programs for institutions (university inclusive). They provide direction and day-to-day management of Universities. Educational administrators perform very important roles in the enhancement of teaching and learning process. It is they who procure and manage funds, provide and maintain staff and students, physical facilities as well as equipment (Ijov, Hemen & Austin, 2016).

In another perspective, staff management strategies are comprehensive action plans that identify long-term direction and guides resource utilization to accomplish an organization's mission and objectives with sustainable competitive advantage. In the view of Luthans (2012) Staff Management Strategies are conscious and deliberate modalities mapped up and taken by management of organizations so as to strengthen an expected outcome of behaviour on the part of staff of the organization. Similarly, Aktouf (2012) refers to Staff Management Strategies as long-term planning that is carefully designed by management of organizations in order to accomplish organizations' goals. It represents top management's best guess regarding what must be done to ensure future success. For most if not all organizations, an overriding goal is to achieve superior performance. Therefore, staff management strategies could often be defined more precisely as the specific pattern of decisions and actions that management takes to achieve superior organizational performance. Management Strategies are therefore useful management tools handled by management of organizations in order to achieve organizational goals. In this study, the management strategies considered are motivation and provision of adequate infrastructural facilities. It therefore remains to be seen from this study the influence of these management strategies on academic staff job performance in public universities in North Central, Nigeria.

The concept of motivation is vast, as different people have defined it as they have seen or experienced it. In the opinion of Cole (2006) motivation is the term used to describe those processes, both instinctive and rational, by which people seek to satisfy the basic drives, perceived needs and personal goals, which trigger human behavior. In his own definition, Ako (2008) describes motivation as the discovery and the utilization of the stimuli that would bring about the desired behaviour pattern. Similarly, Mullins in Abejirinde (2009) sees motivation as some driving force within individuals by which they attempt to achieve some goals in order to fulfill some needs or expectations. Motivation is considered to be an important influence on job performance. Malik in Ado (2010) argues that research findings have proved beyond reasonable doubt that motivated employees are more productive. As such, management must motivate employees with respect to the roles they perform. Poor motivation according to the author is believed to breed low productivity, absenteeism, low morale, poor material control, conflict mismanagement, poor time management and bad staff communication skills. On the other hand, good job motivation brings about high productivity, quantitative service delivery, high moral and material control (Adigu & Omodafe, 2008). In other words, to motivate staff to a high level of job performance, the administrator or management might need to create some motivational stimuli or indices which the worker perceives, and which therefore influences his behaviour (Meidinyo & Ikurite, 2017). There are several indices for staff motivation however in the context of this study; the indices are limited to promotion as at when due, prompt payment of salaries and Provisions of enhanced welfare packages to academic staff of public universities as well as entrenchment of a reward system for hard working staff. Motivation is therefore crucial in harnessing effective job performance of academic staff of universities. When management of universities give adequate attention to motivation of staff, it is believed that the morale of staff will be boosted thus resulting into higher job performance. According to Ngu(2012) academic staff of any university can only reach peak performance of their jobs if they are adequately motivated. A study of this nature is therefore necessary to investigate the influence of motivation on job performance of academic staff in universities in North Central, Nigeria.

On the other hand, organizations be they educational or not cannot operate or function effectively without existing infrastructural facilities put in place. This is partly because infrastructural facilities provide the setting for effective functioning of organizations. Also, infrastructural facilities provide the ease, the comfort and the enablement needed for effective performance of job. In the opinion of McKay and Knowles in Agbe (2016), infrastructural facilities are seen as all the material objects such as buildings, roads, ground, walkways, pipe borne water, machineries, furniture, laboratory equipments, decorating objects, playfields, athletic facilities and many others. In another perspective, Olutola in Adesina (2011) gives a definition of infrastructural facilities to include the site, the buildings, and the equipments. According to him, infrastructural facilities embrace permanent and semi-permanent structures as well as items such as machines, laboratories, chalkboard, projectors and even the cleaner's tools. Similarly, Asemah (2010) sees infrastructural facilities or school facilities as things of education. According to him, they include school buildings, classrooms, assembly halls, laboratories, workshops, libraries, teaching aids and devices such as modern educational hardware and software. Adequate provisions of infrastructural facilities have a great influence on academic staff job performance. According to Agbe (2016), the physical provisions, equipments and materials are very important to the overall success of an organization. According to him, no matter how well trained an academic staff may be, for any meaningful achievement to be derived in an educational institution, there must be presence of physical infrastructural facilities put in place. He further maintained that without physical infrastructural facilities made available in schools, there cannot be effective

teaching and learning even though there may be a wonderful curriculum as well as a functional educational system. Similarly, Herman (2015) pointed out that many staff of educational institutions has found themselves extremely limited by the facilities with which they work with. He therefore advised that if the school system is to function properly, the head or management should provide adequate infrastructural or school facilities with which staff could work in order to ensure maximum performance and productivity. In the same vein, Asemah (2010) opines that good school or infrastructural facilities generally provide a conducive and healthy enabling environment for academic staff effective job performance. According to him, the level of students' concentration and contribution gets high when infrastructural facilities are made available thereby paving way for a more effective teaching, learning, research and other roles perform by academic staff.

On the other hand, academic staff job performance is one of the most important factors determining the quality of education in higher institutions of learning. It means the carrying out of duties, functions or roles by academic staff of universities in order to achieve the objectives of the institutions. These duties, functions or roles include teaching, research, supervision and other services as may be offered by the academic staff of universities. The entire education system will be shaky if the performance of academic staff is weak and ineffective. Therefore, effective job performance of academic staff is imperative for any educational improvement. Job Performance of academic staff therefore could summarily be referred to how he/she undertakes the professional duties in the school at a given time. University academic staff does complex work in an increasingly demanding environment. Traditionally, universities according to Vandiver (2011) have defined the role of academic staff according to the three domains of teaching, research, and service, with primary emphasis placed upon the teaching and research aspects and secondary emphasis upon service or administration. Public Universities on the other hand are universities that are owned, controlled and funded by public means through a national or sub-national (Federal or State) government as opposed to private universities.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Universities as institutions of higher learning are established primarily to impart knowledge. This impartation of knowledge can be done through teaching, research and community services. Universities are also expected to serve as centers of technological and scientific advancements, skills development, production of quality entrepreneur graduates and strategic researches and development strategies. The responsibilities of universities in Nigeria today are quite enormous. Within the North Central axis of Nigeria which is the actual focus of this study, there exist about thirteen public universities. The universities are also believed to have possessed an array of well qualified and competent academic staff that are saddled with the responsibilities of imparting knowledge, skills, values, worthwhile initiatives, profitable experience and exemplary conducts to students.

However, as observed by the researcher, most academic staff of universities in North Central, Nigeria seems to be unsatisfied, uninspired and unmotivated. The possible outcome of this scenario is low output in the performance of academic staff job coupled with incessant industrial disputes which more often than not results in frequent strike actions that do not in any way enhance the attainment of universities' goals. According to the World Bank Report of 2014, 23,000 qualified academic staff emigrates from Africa each year in search of better working conditions, and it is estimated by the report that 10,000 Nigerians are now employed in the United State Universities alone. It can be inferred from this report that lack of appropriate management strategies has no doubt, translated into academic staff continuous brain- drain, dampening of morale, political expedition and low job performance. What then is responsible for the low performance in job among academic staff in public universities in North Central, Nigeria as observed by the researcher? Is there any missing link in the academic staff management strategies employed by the management of these universities? Are the academic staff really motivated to do their jobs? The low output of these academic staff in the universities is indeed a worrisome phenomenon to the researcher. This scenario therefore constitutes the problem which the study sought to investigate using the influence of management strategies such as motivation and adequate provisions of infrastructural facilities on academic staff job performance in public universities in North Central, Nigeria.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the Influence of Staff Management Strategies on Academic Staff Job Performance in Public Universities in North Central Nigeria.

Specifically, the study sought to:

- Determine the influence of motivation on academic staff job performance in public universities in North Central, Nigeria
- Determine the influence of provision of adequate infrastructural facilities on academic staff job performance in public universities.

1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and they guided the study

- To what extent does motivation influence academic staff job performance in public universities in North-Central, Nigeria?
- To what extent does provision of adequate infrastructural facilities influence academic staff job performance in public universities?

1.4. Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Motivation does not significantly influence academic staff job performance in public universities in North-Central Nigeria
- Provision of adequate infrastructural facilities does not significantly influence academic staff job performance in public universities.

2. Research Methodology

The design adopted for this study is survey research design. The population of the study comprised 5735 academic staff in public universities in North-Central, Nigeria. A multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted from where a sample of 374 staff was drawn for the study. A 30-item questionnaire titled "Influence of Staff Management Strategies on Academic Staff Job Performance in Public Universities Questionnaire" (ISMSASJPPUQ) was used as instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by experts from two (2) universities within the study area. The reliability of the questionnaire was established using Cronbach Alpha statistics which yielded a reliability co-efficient of 0.82 which was considered adequate for the study. It elicited information on staff management strategies needed in the management of public universities under study in the areas of staff motivation and provision of adequate infrastructural facilities. The questionnaire was subdivided into two Sections of A and B. Section A dealt with Staff Motivation and its influence on academic staff job performance. Sections B on the other hand dealt with Provision of Adequate Infrastructural Facilities. The instrument was a four-point scale and self-structured questionnaire. Data was collected and analyzed. The descriptive statistics of Means and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions at a decision point of 2.50 and the non - parametric but inferential statistics of Chi-Square was used to test all the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that, staff management strategies of motivation and provisions of adequate infrastructural facilities significantly influence academic staff job performance in public universities in North Central, Nigeria in a positive way.

3. Results

3.1. Research Question 1

What is the influence of motivation on academic staff job performance in public universities in North-Central, Nigeria?

To answer this research question, teachers' responses on the influence of motivation on academic staff job performance in public universities in North-Central, Nigeria were collected and analyzed as shown in table1

S/N	Item Statement	N	VHI	HI	LI	NI	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Regular promotion of academic staff of public universities influences job performance.	374	121	93	83	77	2.68	.88	High Influence
2	Prompt payment of salaries influences academic staff job performance in universities.	374	118	111	90	55	2.78	.85	High Influence
3	Delay in payment of earned allowances negatively influence staff job performance in public universities.	374	194	77	63	40	3.14	.77	High Influence
4	Rewarding hard working staff of public universities influences job performance.	374	155	80	69	70	2.86	.79	High Influence
5	Provisions of enhanced welfare packages to academic staff of public universities influences job performance	374	133	99	57	85	2.75	1.01	High Influence
	Grand Mean						2.84	.86	High Influence

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on the Influence of Motivation Strategy on Academic Staff Job Performance in Public Universities

Source: Field Work: 2018. N=Number of Respondents, VHI=Very High Influence, HI= High Influence, LI=Low Influence, NI= No Influence, SD= Standard Deviation

Analysis of data as presented in Table 1 shows the mean responses of academic staff on the influence of motivation on job performance in public universities in North Central, Nigeria with corresponding Standard Deviations values. Data presented in Table 1 revealed that the respondents rated "High Influence" on all the items (1 – 5) with mean scores of 2.68, 2.78, 3.14, 2.86 and 2.75. The table also revealed close Standard Deviation values ranging from .77-.1.01 which showed that the academic staff were homogeneous in their responses. The grand mean of all the items was revealed to be 2.84 and SD= .86

3.1.1. Hypothesis One

Motivation does not significantly influence academic staff job performance in public universities in North-Central Nigeria

	Df	χ^2_{cal}	Sig	Alpha Level	Remark
Pearson Chi-square	3	87.061	.000	.05	Significant
Number of Valid Cases		374			

Table 2: Chi-Square Test of the Influence of Motivation Strategy on Job Performance of Academic Staff in Public Universities
 $P < .05$

Table 2 shows the Chi-square calculated value of 87.061, degree of freedom $df=3$ and a sig (P-value=0.00) which is less than the alpha value ($\alpha=.05$). Since $P < .05$, the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This implied that, motivation significantly influences academic staff job performance in public universities in North Central, Nigeria.

3.2. Research Question Two

What is the influence of provisions of adequate infrastructural facilities on academic staff job performance in public universities in North-Central, Nigeria?

S/N	Item Statement	N	VHI	HI	LI	NI	Mean	SD	Decision
6	Adequacy of infrastructural facilities in universities influences academic staff job performance.	374	171	81	79	43	3.02	.89	High Influence
7	Utilization of infrastructural facilities in public universities influences staff job performance.	374	167	81	79	47	2.98	.89	High Influence
8	Shortage of infrastructural facilities amongst public universities hinders academic staff job performance.	374	154	78	70	72	2.83	.98	High Influence
9	Maintenance of infrastructural facilities such as laboratories, workshops, staff offices, lecture halls etc. influences academic staff effectiveness in job performance.	374	169	89	71	45	3.02	.87	High Influence
10	Provisions of modern infrastructural facilities in the universities influences job performance by academic staff very highly.	374	170	79	83	42	3.00	.86	High Influence
	Grand Mean						2.97	.95	High Influence

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Responses on the Influence of Provisions of Adequate Infrastructural Facilities on Academic Staff Job Performance In Public Universities

Source: Field Work: 2018. N=Number Of Respondents, VHI=Very High Influence, HI= High Influence, LI=Low Influence, NI= No Influence, SD= Standard Deviation

Analysis of data as presented in Table 3 shows the mean responses of academic staff on the influence of provisions of adequate infrastructural facilities on job performance in public universities in North Central, Nigeria with corresponding Standard Deviations values. Data presented in Table 3 revealed that the respondents rated "High Influence" on all the items (6 – 10) with mean scores of 3.02, 2.98, 2.83, 3.02 and 3.00. The table also revealed close Standard Deviation values ranging from .86-.98 which showed that the academic staff were homogeneous in their responses. The grand mean of all the items was revealed to be 2.97 and $SD = .95$

3.2.1. Hypothesis Two

Provisions of adequate infrastructural facilities does not significantly influence academic staff job performance in public universities in North-Central Nigeria.

	Df	χ^2_{cal}	Sig.	Alpha Level	Remark
Pearson Chi-square	3	100.117	.000	.05	Significant
Number of Valid Cases		374			

Table 4: Chi-Square Test of the Influence of Provisions of Adequate Infrastructural Facilities on Job Performance of Academic Staff in Public Universities
 $P < .05$

Table 4 shows the Chi-square calculated value of 100.117, degree of freedom $df=3$ and a sig (P-value=0.00) which is less than the alpha value ($\alpha=.05$). Since $P<.05$, the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This implied that provisions of adequate infrastructural facilities significantly influence academic staff job performance in public universities in North Central, Nigeria

4. Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study are discussed in line with the research questions and hypotheses formulated for the study.

Findings of the study revealed that, motivation has high positive influence on job performance of academic staff in public universities in North Central, Nigeria. This is evident in the fact that academic staff on the average responded "high influence" to all the five (5) items on the influence of motivation on job performance of academic staff in public universities. As revealed by the findings of the study, regular promotion of academic staff, prompt payment of salaries, rewarding hard working staff as well as provisions of enhanced welfare packages to academic staff of public universities positively influences job performance. On the other hand, delay in payment of earned allowances negatively influences (hinders) staff effective job performance in public universities. In the same vein, a test of related hypothesis revealed that, motivation has significant influence on job performance of academic staff in public universities in North Central, Nigeria. This finding is in tandem with that of Abdulsalam and Mawoli (2012) whose study on "Motivation and Job Performance of Academic Staff reported that motivation exerts significant influence on teaching performance of staff however the finding is at variance with their further report that motivation does not exert any significant influence on research performance of academic staff. The finding corroborate that of Obeoda, Ugboha and Omaji (2016) whose study to evaluate the impact of motivation on teachers' (staff) job performance reported that, motivational factors or incentives are positively correlated with high and effective job performance and that motivated staff (teachers) are significantly different from the unmotivated staff (teachers) in terms of efficient job performance. The finding also corroborates the view of Ado (2010), who asserted that there would be more institutional productivity if academic staff are adequately motivated to perform their job.

The second finding of the study revealed that, provision of adequate infrastructural facilities has high positive influence on job performance of academic staff in public universities in North Central, Nigeria. This is evident in the fact that academic staff on an average responded "high influence" to all the five items (6-10) on the influence of provision of adequate infrastructural facilities on job performance of academic staff in public universities. As revealed by the findings of the study, adequacy of infrastructural facilities, utilization of infrastructural facilities, maintenance of infrastructural facilities such as laboratories, workshops, staff offices, lecture halls etc. and provisions of modern infrastructural facilities in the universities positively influences job performance of academic staff very highly. On the other hand, shortage of infrastructural facilities amongst public universities hinders (negatively influences) academic staff job performance. Similarly, a test of related hypothesis revealed a significant influence of provisions of adequate infrastructural facilities on job performance of academic staff in public universities in North-Central, Nigeria. This finding is in agreement with that of Issah, Abubakari and Wuptiga (2016) whose study on the State of School Facilities and its Influence on Teachers' Job Performance reported a significant relationship of variable for status of school facilities and teacher academic job performance. In the same vein, Asemah (2010) opines that good school or infrastructural facilities generally provide a conducive and healthy enabling environment for academic staff effectiveness in job performance.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that effective adoption of staff management strategies such as motivation and provision of adequate infrastructural facilities in public universities in North-Central, Nigeria will exert a positive influence on academic staff job performance.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the Study, the following recommendations were made

- For improved and better performance among academic staff, management of universities in north central, Nigeria should consider the strategy of motivation as a priority as it has been found to be a factor influencing their performance of job. This is because, by motivating the workforce, management creates the will to work which is necessary for the achievement of the goals of the organization
- Both tiers of government (state and federal) should aid management of universities in the provision of adequate infrastructural facilities in order to enhance performance among the academic staff of universities as it has been found to influence their performance of job.

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