



Communication Flow and Participation in Decision Making as Determinants of Job Performance among Academic Staff in Tertiary Institutions in Ekiti State, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study investigated communication flow and participation in decision making as determinants of job performance among academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State. Two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Sample of 450 respondents were selected using simple random and Proportionate sampling techniques. A structured questionnaire was used in data collection from the respondents. In other to ascertain the validity of the instrument used was given to experts in faculty of Education, Ekiti State University for both face and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was carried out using test re-test method and reliability coefficient obtained was 0.75. The findings of the study revealed that there was significant relationship between communication flow and job performance of academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State. The study also revealed that there was significant relationship between participation in decision making and job performance of academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the Management of tertiary institutions should involve the academic staff in the decision making concerning the institutions for improved job performance and there should be a good communication link between the management and the academic staff in order to facilitate strong and mutual understanding towards enhancing effective administration of the system.

Keywords: Communication flow, participation in decision making, job performance, academic staff.

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INTRODUCTION

Education, being an important aspect in everyone's life, undeniably contributes toward ensuring development in a country. Hence, the education system should be strategically planned in order to produce the best results for all concerned. The main players in the education field are the educators, who may be termed as teachers, tutors, facilitators or lecturers. Regardless of the title, or the institutions where they work, the educators shoulder responsibilities in educating the students. Lecturers roles are broad and challenging, apart from teaching, they are also expected to conduct academic researches and to publish their findings so that the society would greatly benefit from their findings. They also need to keep up with new

knowledge, new technologies and new techniques in order to deliver the best to their students. The key to efficient and effective education system depend on the ability of the academic staff to perform excellently. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) in the National Policy on Education States that no education system can rise above the quality of teachers.

Tertiary institutions contribute much to social, political and economic development of a nation and that is why every government must budget a huge amount to the education sector. It has been observed that one of the numerous problems which seem to be confronting tertiary institution in Ekiti State is the perceived poor job performance of

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some academic staff. In recent times, there have been series of complaints about the job performance of academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State. It has been the view of the public that academic staff are no longer dedicated and committed to their job in the areas of teaching, research and community services. There are reported cases of academic staff that prefer to rush for lectures when the semester is about to end in order to cover the number of courses allocated to them on the course outlines and this development seems to have contributed to the menace of examination malpractice in most of our tertiary institutions.

Observations have shown that some academic staff do not get promoted as and when due because of their failure to published the required numbers of paper during the years under review. This could be as a result of the school policy and guidelines for their promotion which placed high emphasis on offshore journal publications which seems to have affected their level of job performance negatively. It has also been observed that academic staff in most tertiary institutions in Ekiti State are not actively involved in community services in terms of consultancy services. The various variables responsible for poor job performance of academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State seems to be attributed to poor communication flow and poor participation in decision making process.

Communication flow in educational systems is an essential element in tertiary institutions. It harmonizes relationship, progress and cooperation of academic staff for effective operation which enhanced their level of performance. The interactions between tertiary institutions administrators and academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti appears not adequate and that academic staff seems not informed on the institutions' activities such as admission process, recruitment process and other issues concerning their personal progress. Most of the modern communication channels are not provided and even the available ones are not functioning due to unstable power supply.

It appears that some symptoms of poor communication flow within the tertiary institutions is evident where vital information are not attended to as a result of carefree attitude of some administrative staff to academic staff. Effective flow of communication in any organization is to ensure that accurate and relevant information gets to appropriate quarters in other to avoid irrelevant, unwanted, and unreliable information which is capable of causing confusion in the organization. Academic staff seems to lack access to useful

information which invariably affect their academic performance. Gray and Laidlaw (2004) opined that the overall organization performance could be improved when employees are adequately informed of necessary information adequately. They also posited that subordinates' communication satisfaction reinforce understanding of the role of communication practices and its relationship to overall satisfaction among other important factors. Gareth and George (2010) opined that inappropriate communication channel can affect employees' performance which influence their potentials. Tertiary institutions that sets a clear communication tones will be effective through the use of appropriate communication media and feedback mechanisms that will enhanced good interpersonal relationship and also ensures team spirit that could encourages high level of job performance of academic staff.

It appeared that there were cases of non-challant attitude of some Heads of units in some tertiary institutions in Ekiti State, some seemed to be autocratic, which depicted bad leadership quality; ruling the departments single-handedly without involving other members of the department which could have catastrophic implication on the progress of the school at large. All these attitudes seem to be discouraging and do not allow the lecturers to put in their best. These seem to contribute greatly to job dissatisfaction among academic staff in a situation where lecturers could not cope, they had to leave the system in search of other greener pasture. Husain, (2013) posited that by creating a sense of ownership in the organization, participation in decision making instills a sense of pride and motivates employees to increase performance in order to achieve their goals. Participation in decision making in an organization harmonize the relationship among the employees' because it will guide against complexities of superiority and inferiority. When academic staff are involved in decision making process on various issues, they feel recognized which may strengthen their level of job performance. Best decisions could be reached when academic staff ideas are sought, welcome and strategically considered on plan, programme, policy, regulation, community relation among others. These could enhance their level of job performance. Kalla (2015) ascertained the importance of consulting employees through holding meetings for their ideas before decisions are taken. This brings about commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and effective performance. This was in line with Helms (2006) submission that there can never be healthy understanding and commitment to duty on the part of employees without adequately involving them in decision making process. Employees who were involved in both formal and informal decision of the organization develop a

sense of togetherness, self-esteem and creative fulfillment therefore decision making should be based on consultation, deliberations, contribution of ideas among academic staff, authority delegation and group interaction. The above raises concern about the attitudes of academic staff towards their level of job performance. Hence it is against this background that the study intends to find out the relationship between communication flow, participation in decision making and job performance of academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were raised to pilot the study;

1. There is no significant relationship between communication flow and job performance of academic staff.
2. There is no significant relationship between participation in decision making and job performance of academic staff.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population for this study comprised all the academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State. Three institutions were selected using purposive sampling techniques. The sample for the study consisted of 440 academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State using proportionate sampling technique. A self-designed questionnaire titled Determinant factors of Job Performance’s Questionnaire (DFJPQ) was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was validated by experts and Test-retest method of reliability was adopted with reliability coefficient of 0.74. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and the two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between communication flow and job performance of academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State.

Table 1: Pearson Correlation of communication flow and job performance of academic staff

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r _{cal}	r _{table}
Communication flow	440	9.61	0.29	0.301*	0.195
Job performance	440	66.41	3.16		

*P<0.05

Table 1 reveals that r_{cal} (0.301) is greater than r_{table} (0.195) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between communication flow and job performance of academic staff.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between participation in decision making and job performance of academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State.

Table-2: Pearson Correlation summary showing participation in decision making and job performance of academic staff

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r _{cal}	r _{table}
Participation in decision making	440	7.45	1.35	0.349*	0.195
Job performance	440	66.41	3.16		

*P<0.05

Table 2 revealed that r_{cal}(0.349) is greater than r_{table} (0.195) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between participation in decision making and job performance of academic staff.

DISCUSSION

Finding of the study showed that there was significant relationship between communication flow and job performance of academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State. In other words, the ease of discussing with superiors, adequate communication of disciplinary procedures, sharing of useful information among staff and display of

information on the notice board significantly relate with level of academic performance in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State. The findings could be ascribed to the fact that academic staff as well as management of tertiary institutions rely to a large extent on information to make important decisions crucial to the attainment of goals. This finding is in consonance with Gareth and George (2010) who averred that organization that sets a clear communication tones will be effective, this means using appropriate communication media and feedback mechanism that would end in greater efficient management. The findings are also in consistent with assertion of Gray and Laidlaw (2004) that subordinates’ communication

satisfaction reinforce understanding of the role of communication practices and its relationship to overall satisfaction among other important factors. Hence, insufficient communication results in lack of sharing meaning between supervisor and subordinate, which could have irreversible consequences on task achievement.

The study showed that there was significant relationship between participation in decision making and job performance of academic staff. The findings agree with Helms, (2006) that by creating a sense of ownership in the organization, participation in decision making instills a sense of pride and motivates employees to increase productivity in order to achieve their goals. It also agreed with Kalla (2015) submission that there can never be healthy understanding, obligation and commitment to duty on the part of employees without adequately involving them in decision making process to identify themselves in its implementation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that communication flow and participation in decision making have significant relationship with job performance of academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ekiti State. It was therefore recommended that there should be a good

communication link between the management and the academic staff in order to facilitate strong and mutual understanding and Management of tertiary institutions should involve the academic staff in the decision making concerning the institutions for improved job performance.

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