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The Influence of Supervision and Communication on Staff Job Performance in Public Universities in North-Central States of Nigeria

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Abstract:

This study assessed the influence of supervision and communication on staff job performance in the public universities of North Central Zone of Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. A sample of 1430 out of the total population of the study which stood at 14,268 academic and non-academic staff was used for the study. The proportionate sampling technique was used to select the sample of 700 academic and non-academic staff of these universities. A questionnaire titled 'Influence of Supervision and Communication on Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (ISCSJPO)' was used for data collection. After all relevant data were collected; mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while chi-square was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that supervision and communication significantly influence both the academic and non-academic staff job performance in public Universities in the North Central zone of Nigeria. The p-value of $0.00 < 0.05$ level of significance for the hypotheses showed that job performance is influenced by proper handling of these administrative variables. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended among others that vice chancellors, managers of institutions, various heads of department and units should give required attention to these variables so as to enhance job performance in institutions of learning.

Keywords: *Influence, supervision, communication, performance*

1. Introduction

Effective supervision of workers in social and human service organizations therefore has the potential to generate positive client outcomes. It is important that job performance is constantly monitored and reviewed by departmental heads or appointed individuals for them to be abreast with changes and developments. Today, supervision appears to be sporadic and quite often, serves as a token activity that is unable to achieve the objectives for which it is intended. Supervision is then seen as a control mechanism which has the task of correcting the activities of individuals and groups to ensure that their performance is in accordance with plans. Plans as made might in some cases, never be timely or fully achieved unless activities are monitored, and deviation from plans identified and corrected as soon as they become apparent (Apenteng, 2012).

If supervisors have the responsibility of improving staff performance by equipping them with knowledge, interpersonal and technical skills, then one will say that organizations cannot do without supervisors' involvement. Supervisors can offer valuable educational, administrative, and social support. This support can contribute to worker effectiveness and can translate into quality service delivery (Kadushin & Harkness, 2002).

The significance of supervision for enhancing the performance of staff in an organisation cannot be ignored in the developmental process of any country. Supervision has been defined in various ways by different authors to suit their audience. Tanner and Tanner, cited in Apenteng (2012) perceive supervision as a vital aspect of organised education. This statement is evident in everyday business. Often, men strive to offer the best supervision to sustain workers' interest for increase productivity.

Supervision of instruction has the potential to improve classroom practices, and contribute to students' success through the professional growth of teachers and improvement of their work performance (Yimaz, Tadan & Ouz, 2009; Baffour-Awuah, 2011). Supervision is viewed as a co-operative venture in which supervisors and teachers engage in dialogue for the purpose of improving instruction which logically should contribute to teachers' performance, and improved student learning and success (World Bank, 2011).

As posited by Tyagi (2009), effective supervision results when a supervisor clearly sets out the criteria to be used in the evaluative process and ensures that even if the final assessment is a negative one, the teacher will benefit from the exercise and leave with his/her self-esteem intact. Effective teacher supervision leads to high level of teacher work performance. However, the causal relationship between teacher supervision and teachers work performance remains unclear. It is a plausible and common sense notion that improving teacher compensation and supervision leads to improved teacher work performance and an eventual student outcomes. In relation to this study, it becomes therefore clearer that for personnel administration to succeed commendably, administrators are to closely and constantly supervise and monitor staff performance activities and offer corrections, commendations, rewards or even punishments where necessary. However, the aim of supervision cannot be effectively achieved if there is no good communication between superiors and subordinates.

Communication is operationally defined as a technology and a system used in sending and receiving messages. Communication may include newsletter, circulation materials, surveys, emails and suggestion boxes among other. Vingil (2009) reveals that communication is an art of inducing others to interpret an idea in the manner intended by the speaker or writer. Vingil adds that, it is an art of imparting ideas and making oneself understood by others. Vingil further points out that communication is very important to all managers. Managing is getting things done through others, a task which requires the manager to communicate with other people.

Without communication, meaningful relationships would not be possible and without relationships among people, communication will not be necessary. In the views of Witzany (2007), communication is the process of transferring information from sender to a receiver with the use of a medium in which the communicated information is understood by both the sender and the receiver. In addition, the author points out that communication stands so strongly in the school system as both students and staff need to communicate often on common official issues so as to achieve educational goals and objectives.

Accordingly, to every organization and humans as social beings, communication is of vital importance, just as pros or cons of everything are inseparable in life (Ada, Alver & Fatma, 2008). Serious attention has been given to the study of organizational communication in organizational behaviour in related research generally as a result of the significance of this variable to organizational effectiveness. For instance, it has been found out that effective communication improves job satisfaction (Holtzhausen, 2002), and which in turn improves productivity (Litterst & Eyo, 2002). Research has also shown that clear and unambiguous or cautionary communication helps to improve employee job performance (Goris, 2007), while poor communication results in low employee commitment to the organization as observed by (Kramer, 1999).

1.1. Purpose of the Study

- To ascertain the influence of supervision on staff job performance in public universities in North Central Nigeria.
- To ascertain the influence of communication on staff job performance in public universities in the North Central Nigeria.

1.2. Research Questions

- How does supervision influence staff job performance in public universities in North Central Nigeria?
- What is the influence of communication on staff job performance in public universities in North Central Nigeria?

1.3. Statement of Hypotheses

- Supervision has no significant influence on staff job performance in public universities in the North Central States of Nigeria.
- Communication has no significant influence on staff job performance in public universities in the North Central States of Nigeria.

2. Methodology

The researcher employed survey design for the study. The survey design was chosen because, a large population was studied. Furthermore, this design also enhances the study situation in their natural setting without manipulation of variables. The study was confined to North Central States of Nigeria which is one of the six geopolitical zones in the country. North Central Nigeria comprises Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Niger and Plateau States, and Abuja Federal Capital Territory.

The population of the study comprised 14,268 university personnel made up of 6,674 academic staff and 7,594 non-academic staff from 13 public Universities in the North Central States of Nigeria (Academic Planning Unit, 2015). A sample of 1,430 out of 14,268 Academic and non-academic staff of public universities made up of 670 academic staff and 760 non-academic staff representing more than 10% of the total population. Samples were selected from 7 out of the 13 Public Universities in the North Central States of Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to arrive at the sample size used

for the study. By so doing, one (1) public university was sampled from each of the 7 North Central States and the FCT Abuja. Out of the 7 public Universities selected, 4 were State Universities while 3 were Federal Universities.

A structured questionnaire titled Influence of supervision and communication on staff job performance (ISCSJPO), with two sections; A&B was developed for the study. Section A was for Academic staff and section B for non-academic staff. The descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Chi-square (X^2) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The decision was that, if the p-value value is greater than the alpha value of 0.05, the null hypothesis was not rejected and vice versa.

3. Results

3.1. Research Question One

How does supervision influence staff job performance in public universities in North Central Nigeria?

S/N	Influence of Supervision on Staff Job Performance	Academic			Non-Academic			
		N	Mean	S.D	N	Mean	S.D	Decision
1	Supervision propels academic staff to frequently attend to their lessons and to promptly cover their scheme of work	670	3.14	0.87	760	2.92	1.02	Accepted
2	Supervision enhances quick and prompt making and submission of results	670	3.56	0.67	760	3.42	0.84	Accepted
3	Supervision ensures quick preparation of students results	670	3.53	0.58	760	3.29	0.87	Accepted
4	Supervision helps to speed up students' project work	670	3.33	0.75	760	3.25	0.73	Accepted
5	Lack of supervision makes academic staff lazy and does not make them to promptly and regularly go to classes to deliver their lessons	670	3.36	0.87	760	3.13	1.04	Accepted

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations of Responses of Academic Staff and Non-Academic on Influence of Supervision on Staff Job Performance

In Table 1, the mean values of the responses of both academic and non-academic staff in North Central Universities in Nigeria on training available to staff and the corresponding number of employees are stated. The mean values of items 1-5 for the academic staff are 3.14, 3.56, 3.53, 3.33 and 3.36 respectively while those of the non-academic staff are 2.92, 3.42, 3.29, 3.25 and 3.13 respectively. The corresponding values for the standard deviation in the responses for the academic staff are 0.87, 0.67, 0.58, 0.75 and 0.87 respectively. While those of the non-academic staff are 1.02, 0.84, 0.87, 0.73 and 1.04 respectively. From the table, all the mean values from the responses of both the academic and non-academic staff are above the benchmark of 2.50 indicating that both academic and non-academic staff agreed that staff on the job and in-service training has influence on job performance.

3.2. Research Question Two

What is the influence of communication on staff job performance in public universities in North Central Nigeria?

S/N	Influence of Communication on Staff Job Performance	Academic			Non-Academic			
		N	Mean	S.D	N	Mean	S.D	Decision
1	Regular communication among staff enhances team work which promotes staff job performance	670	3.47	0.60	760	3.45	0.83	Accepted
2	Communication enables staff to understand instruction pertaining innovation in teaching students	670	3.03	0.67	760	3.24	1.06	Accepted
3	Clear communication among staff helps to minimize errors in teaching	670	2.80	1.12	760	2.83	1.10	Accepted
4	Mutual communication amongst staff improve their job performance and mutual understanding	670	3.28	0.64	760	3.37	0.86	Accepted
5	Communication between examination officers and other lecturers enhance quick preparation of students' results	670	3.55	0.67	760	3.25	0.85	Accepted

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of Responses of Academic Staff and Non-Academic on Influence of Communication on Staff Job Performance

In Table 2, the mean values of the responses of both academic and non-academic staff in North Central Universities in Nigeria on communication styles and the corresponding number of employees are stated. The mean values of items 1-5 for the academic staff are 3.47, 3.03, 2.80, 3.28 and 3.55 respectively while those of the non-academic staff are 3.45, 3.24, 2.83, 3.37 and 3.25 respectively. The corresponding values for the standard deviation in the responses for the academic staff are 0.60, 0.67, 1.12, 0.64 and 0.67 respectively. While those of the non-academic staff are 0.83, 1.06, 1.10, 0.86 and 0.85 respectively. From the table, all the mean values from the responses of both the academic and non-academic staff are above the benchmark of 2.50 indicating that both academic and non-academic staff agreed that communication is imperative to efficient job performance.

3.3. Hypothesis One

Supervision has no significant influence on staff job performance in public universities in the North Central States of Nigeria.

	Df	χ^2	χ^2_{α}	Sig.
Chi-square	4	15.370	9.488	0.004
No of Valid Cases		1430		

Table 3: Chi-Square Test of Influence of Supervision on Staff Job Performance

Table 3 shows that $\chi_c^2 = 15.370$ and $\chi_{\alpha}^2 = 9.488$ at $df = 4$; Hence chi-square calculated (15.370) is greater than the tabulated value of 9.488, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that supervision has significant influence on staff job performance in public universities in the North Central States of Nigeria.

3.4. Hypothesis Two

Communication has no significant influence on staff job performance in public universities in the North Central States of Nigeria

	Df	χ^2	χ^2_{α}	Sig.
Chi-square	4	19.761	9.488	0.001
No of Valid Cases		1430		

Table 4: Chi-Square Test of Influence of Communication on Staff Job Performance

Table 4 shows that $\chi_c^2 = 19.761$ and $\chi_{\alpha}^2 = 9.488$ at $df = 4$; Hence chi-square calculated (19.761) is greater than the tabulated value of 9.488, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that communication has significant influence on staff job performance in public universities in the North Central States of Nigeria.

4. Discussion

The result of the study in table 3 revealed that supervision has influence on staff job performance. This can be seen from the responses of both the academic and non-academic staff in the study area that were sampled as majority of them agreed on the items in the questionnaire on the influence of supervision on staff job performance. Table 3 shows that $\chi_c^2 = 15.370$ and $\chi_{\alpha}^2 = 9.488$ at $df = 4$; Hence chi-square calculated (15.370) is greater than the tabulated value of 9.488, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that supervision has significant influence on staff job performance in public universities in the North Central States of Nigeria. On the other hand, from the responses of the interview, the category of staff usually affected by supervision in the universities in the study area mostly, are the junior staff because it is believed by respondents that senior staff are more experienced than the junior staff and as such can constantly supervise subordinates on their jobs and avail them with corrections.

This finding is consistent with that of Apenteng (2012) who in his study on the effects of supervision on staff performance in GA South Municipal Education Directorate of Ghana found that; supervision cannot at all, be overlooked since it is a major function for better staff job performance giving the right supervisors, right tools and right resources. The study also showed that appraisal results are important for counselling sessions since staff expect that they are directed where they fall short. It was however shown by Apenteng that Supervision cannot have effect on performance if staff job satisfaction is down played.

The study as shown in table 4, found that communication has influence on staff job performance. This was realized from the responses of both the academic and non-academic staff which showed agreement on the items in the questionnaire as regards the influence of communication on staff job performance. Table 4 shows that $\chi_c^2 = 19.761$ and $\chi_{\alpha}^2 = 9.488$ at $df = 4$; Hence chi-square calculated (19.761) was greater than the tabulated value of 9.488, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that communication has significant influence on staff job performance in public universities in the North Central States

of Nigeria. Furthermore, the responses of the interview revealed that the modal of communication used in public universities are memos, letters, circulars, telephone and face-to-face.

This finding corroborates with that of Onyenze (1999) who posit that good communication was responsible for the creation of cordial rapport between teachers and principals in her research area and that good communication style used by school heads, motivates higher performance in teachers. The findings of the study is also in line with Moghimi, Chamanzamin, and Shaghghi (2013) who agreed that good superior-subordinate communication was an important influence on job performance of the employees of Fire Managers of Rasht City of Ghana. They found that internal organizational communications have significant impact on employee job satisfaction. The impact of formal communication is highest among the three listed types of communication. Although the organizations needed to focus on all types of communication, they should make their formal communication networks effective in order to increase job satisfaction among employees.

5. Conclusion

Supervision and communication have been found to have significant influence on staff job performance in public universities in North Central states of Nigeria. This implies that personnel administrators must ensure that the activities of staff are frequently supervised and also endeavor to. It has also been made clear by this study that academic performance of students is greatly dependent on both academic and non-academic staff job performance which eventually metamorphosis into community and national development. It is pertinent for all educational administrators and policy makers to put up continuous checks on personnel administrators in public universities to ensure that the ultimate, which is job high performance, is achieved.

6. Recommendations

Based on findings, the researcher therefore recommends the following:

- Supervision should be carried out regularly among university staff so as to ensure that they are performing their duties effectively.
- University staff should adopt unambiguous, cordial and efficient mode of communicating among themselves as well as their subordinates to provide a conducive and tension free work environment.

7. References

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