



Human Resources Management and Job Performance of Non-Academic Staff in Universities in Rivers State

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Abstract

The study investigated the human resources management and job performance of non-academic staff in universities in Rivers State. The study adopted the correlational research design. It was conducted in three public universities. The population of the study was 4,963 and the sample of 370 non-academic staff respondents was determined using the Taro Yamene formula and used for the study. Questionnaire instruments were developed and the test-retest scores of the sample were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) and reliability coefficients of 0.83 and 0.76 were obtained. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) tested the null hypotheses at 0.05 significance. The study revealed among others that working conditions and career development enhanced the job performance of non-academic staff members in universities. There was a significant relationship between working conditions, career development and non-academic staff job performance in universities in Rivers State. Based on the findings, university management was charged to conduct extensive training programmes to build the capacity of their staff members relevant to the changing demand of jobs; organize and implement human resources management practices which includes adequate safety measures, improved work facilities, proper maintenance on buildings, regular in-service training and study leave to achieve the institutional-based goals and objectives.

Key words: Human Resources Management, Job Performance, Non-academic staff

Introduction

Human Resources Management fashions an enabling climate for effective work delivery in every organization. It is that part of management process that focuses in the management of people in an organization. An overview of this process indicates that human resources are the most essential resources of every organization. Undoubtedly, people form the fundamental part of an organization. This is basically why organizations make use of their human resources to make things happen and maximize and actualize set goals. According to Osibanjo, Kehinde and Abiodun (2012), the best asset in any organization are the highly skilled, educated and competent workforce who need to be managed effectively to ensure job satisfaction and maximum development. From the foregoing it can therefore be deduced that human resources management is the term used to describe formal systems dedicated to the management of people within an organization. Wadak (2011) opined that human resources management in the educational system is concerned with three major issues which include: assessing the need of staff



members; satisfying the need of staff members; maintaining and improving the staff services.

Therefore, when the staff members in the educational sector are adequately recruited, selected and supervised, inducted and adequately rewarded, provided for, developed, appraised and promoted on the job, they will be committed and productive in their job delivery. Thus, creating an enabling environment for staff members is a pre-requisite for excellence and most expedient way to institutional success. Human resources management emphasizes that staff members are critical to achieving sustainable competitive advantage. Therefore, the survival of any institution of learning solely depends on the effectiveness of its human resources management. Though the success of any university depends upon several elements and factors but the most important factor and element that affect the institution's performance are the human resources.

The purpose of human resources management is to maximize the productivity of staff members in educational institutions or organization by optimizing the effectiveness of their work delivery. According to the Encyclopedia of Human resources management (2018), the modern human resources management is guided by several principles, the paramount principle is a simple recognition that human resources are the most important assets of an organization, a business cannot be successful without an effective management of the human resources. Another important principle is that for a business to achieve success, the personnel policies and procedures of the institution must be closely linked together to make a major contribution to the achievement of the organizations objectives and strategic plans. The principle similar in scope holds that it is the human resources manager's responsibility to find, secure, guide and develop employees whose talents and desires are compatible with the operating needs and future goals of the organization. Hence, a successful implementation of human resource policies is vital to the achievement of organizational goals (Muthis & Jackson, 2008).

According to Bevan (2012), job performance is a very significant factor affecting profitability of an organization. It can therefore be deduced that the way job performance level is managed and sustained in an organization determines to a large extent the success or failure of the organization. Performance is important for organizations as employees' performance leads to business success and performance is also important for accomplishing tasks which can be a source of satisfaction (Muchhal, 2014). Hence, performance appraisal of staff members is needed to evaluate and justify the performance level in maintaining the highest priorities of the organization outcomes. On a similar note, Johari and Yahya (2009) noted that a growing emphasis has been given to employee's job performance as a source of competitive advantage to promote responsiveness in enhancing overall organizational effectiveness.

Thus, performance is the level of an individual's work achievement after having exerted effort. However, Saetang, Sulummed, Thamppitak and Sungkaew (2010) argued that performance is often confused with effort which refers to energy expended, whereas performance is evaluated and measured in terms of results. Anderse (2010) supported this idea by stating that performance can be defined as the accomplishment of an



employee's assigned duties and the outcome generated on a specified job function or activity within a specified time or period given. Therefore, the success of any organization depends on the participation and the job performance of employees. Every organization should seek to maximize human efficiency in job performance.

In the view of Adeniji and Adekunjo (2010), universities in Nigeria operate with people performing certain specialized complementary roles to make the system work effectively. For example, there are lecturers imparting knowledge to students, librarians offering support to academicians and administrators executing the policy of governing councils. There are technologist, clerical staff and others. Universities are increasingly engaging their academic and non-academic professionals in facilitating performance outcome. Due to the dynamic and competitive nature of the educational environment, an innovative human resource management practices must be employed to equip staff members with diverse skills and to ensure flexibility in their work ethics, which will enable them respond to change. The relevance of university education to the economic, industrial and technological development of Nigeria and other countries of the world cannot be over-emphasized. Nasurdin, Hemdi and Guat (2008) opined that the education sector plays a dynamic role in the developed and developing economics; thus, the universities are expected to provide communities, the local and international market with high-skilled graduates. Higher education institutions in recent times are viewed as agents of social change and development. Hence, universities are established to accomplish specified objectives (Akpan, 2012). This is in agreement with the Federal Republic of Nigeria, FRN (2013) in its articulated objectives of higher education in Nigeria as stated thus: the contribution to national development through relevant manpower training, the acquisition, development and inculcation of proper values for the development of intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate the local and external environment.

The non-academic staff members in universities are professional employees who contribute immensely to the success of the universities' goals and objectives. Their input and opinions are vital to many of the decision-making process of the institution. The contribution of the non-academic staff highly impacts on student experience as they support students through admission and registration process, issue scholarship and awards, orient them about the university, facilitate residence life programming and monitor their completion process. Furthermore, the non-academic staff members are usually the first point of contact for numerous students who need assistance in one form or another (Nwosu, Olaore, Oyenuga & Oladipo, 2014).

The deteriorating level of staff job performance in the Nigerian tertiary institutions is fast becoming a serious threat to the survival of universities in Nigeria if not addressed urgently (Ogbulafor, 2011). Thus, managing human resources in higher institutions is not an easy task. If staff members are subjected to work under conditions where there are few or no office facilities, promotion, payment of salaries and other entitlements are unduly delayed or denied, where the management and staff relationship is not cordial and there is little or no adequate support, the morale of the staff could sag. According to Mowday, Porter and Steers (2013), most employees of today have a high



degree of job dissatisfaction which create attitudes that are undesirable on their job and in turn degenerate their performance abilities. Therefore, the human resources management is saddled with the sole responsibility of managing the staff members for optimal productivity in their job performance.

Working conditions is one of the major tools for effective or optimal productivity of task delivery in any organization. Hence, any institution that wishes to succeed in achieving its aims and objectives will have to maintain good working conditions. If the staff members have negative perception of their working conditions, they are likely to be absent, have stress related illness, and their productivity and commitment to work will dwindle. On the other hand, institutions that have a friendly, trusting, and safe environment, experience greater productivity, communication, creativity, and financial health outcome. According to Jayaweera (2014), having the right environmental factors both physical and psychological will lead to increased performance. Bakotic and Babic (2013) noted that the conditions under which a job is performed can be different; it varies from those completely comfortable to those very difficult and dangerous to employees' life and health. Difficult working conditions can be influenced by the following: external factors which includes climate-meteorological conditions, temperature, humidity, drafts, lighting in working place, noise and interference, gases, radiation, dust, smoke and other harmful factors; Subjective factors which includes: gender and age of the worker, fatigue, monotony and unfavorable posture during work; and Factors related to the organization's production such as duration of the work shift, work schedule, working time, work place excessive strain among others. Therefore, employees' demand more friendly and conducive work conditions for effective productivity.

Career development is a key strategic consideration for all organizations regardless of size, sector, market or profile (Price, 2009). The development of the capacity and capability of the institution's staff members has a fundamental impact on the efficiency, effectiveness, morale and profitability of the institution. Staff career development has long been hindered by lack of adequate funds for the running of the universities. It is a herculean venture and organizations need some assurance of return on investment and development in form of enhanced productivity. Staff members' career development is an essential element in the concept of the human resources management strategy. Career development of human resources is undertaken through formal and non-formal education, to make workers useful to themselves and the organization. According to Kakui and Gachunga (2016), career development is an on-going process of work life.

It benefits not only the employee, but the organization also shares its advantages. A career development practice enables higher institutions to develop and place staff in positions compatible with their individual career interests, needs, and goals. This will aid to promote employee's satisfaction and optimal use of their abilities. Career development covers an employee working life. It starts with staff orientation on-job training, experience, short courses, professional courses, post graduate degrees or diplomas (Pillay, Dawood & Karodia, 2015). Therefore, staff development is a very important part of an organization's activities and it is also related to their business



strategies. Career development is often used to close the gap between current performance and expected future performance. According to Armstrong (2009), today's dynamic environment requires a continuous professional and managerial development. However, this study sought to investigate the relationship between human resources management practices such as: working conditions and career development and determine its extent on the enhancement of non-academic staff's job performance in universities in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

The failure of non-academic staff members in the execution of their duties or job performance in any university, will no doubt affect the image of that institution. Evidently, the functions of the human resources management will be called into question for any such failure. Therefore, the non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State cannot execute their duties properly as employees if the relevant functions of the human resources management are not met. These functions which includes; creating an enabling environment for work (working conditions) and career development, if ignored by the human resources managers will adversely affect the job performance of the non-academic staff members. The problem of boredom and job dissatisfaction which consequently result in staff's low productivity of service, delay in administrative performance, work stress, psychological breakdown, absenteeism, lateness and eventually withdrawal of services are common experience or occurrence in most public institutions. However, good human resources practices will lead to good job performance. Therefore, the human resources managers are saddled with the responsibilities of bridging the gap in terms of job performance of the non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State. It is against this backdrop that the study sought to investigate the relationship between the human resources management practices and non-academic staff's job performance in universities in Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

This study investigated the relationship between the human resources management and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. determine the relation that exist between working conditions and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State.
- ii. determine the relation that exist between career development and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

- i. What relationship exists between working conditions and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State?
- ii. What relationship exists between career development and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

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



- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between working conditions and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between career development and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State.

Methodology

The correlational research design was adopted for the study to quantifiable information and with a population of 4,963 non-academic staff in Universities in Rivers State. Taro Yamene’s formula was used to determine the sample size of 370 respondents. The sample size was proportionately distributed to the three institutions, namely: Rivers State University, University of Port Harcourt and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The instruments used for the study were questionnaires made up of two sets. 370 copies of the questionnaire containing two Sections were distributed while 354 copies were successfully retrieved from the respondents, representing 96% of the sample size. The Instruments were structured on a four-point scale. The test-retest method was adopted for the reliability of the instruments and the test-retest scores of the sample were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) which yielded reliability coefficients of 0.83 and 0.76 respectively thereby guaranteeing the reliability of the instruments. The analyses were done on an item by item basis. The data analyzed was collected using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) statistics was used to answer the two research questions and to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: what relationship exists between working conditions and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State?

Table 1: Correlation Result for Working Conditions and Job Performance of Non-academic Staff Members

Variables	N	$\frac{\sum x}{\sum y}$	$\frac{\sum x^2}{\sum y^2}$	$\sum xy$	df	r-cal	Remark
Working conditions	354	283.9	4666.75	4978.08	352	0.76	High Positive Relationship
Job Performance	354	1370.6	5315.32				

Table 1 shows the result for research question 1. It revealed a high positive relationship between working condition and job performance of non-academic staff in universities in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: what relationship exists between career development and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State?

**Table 2: Correlation Result for Career Development and Job Performance of Non-academic Staff Members**

Variables	N	$\frac{\sum x}{\sum y}$	$\frac{\sum x^2}{\sum y^2}$	$\sum xy$	df	r-cal	Remark
Working conditions	354	1289.6	4705.76				
Job Performance	354	1370.6	5315.32	4999.73	352	0.81	High Positive Relationship

Table 2 shows the result for research question 2. It revealed a high positive relationship between career development and job performance of non-academic staff in universities in Rivers State.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between working conditions and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State

Table 3: Correlation Result for Working Conditions and Job Performance of Non-academic Staff Members

Variables	N	$\frac{\sum x}{\sum y}$	$\frac{\sum x^2}{\sum y^2}$	$\sum xy$	df	α	r-cal	r-crit	Remark
Working conditions	354	283.9	4666.75						
Job Performance	354	1370.6	5315.32	4978.08	352	0.05	0.76	0.088	Reject Ho

Result from Table 3 revealed that the r-calculated 0.76 is greater than the r-critical 0.088 at 0.05 level of significant and the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between working conditions and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in River State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between career development and job performance of non-academic staff in universities in Rivers State.

**Table 4:** Correlation Analysis for Career Development and Job Performance of Non-academic Staff Members

Variables	N	$\frac{\sum x}{\sum y}$	$\frac{\sum x^2}{\sum y^2}$	$\sum xy$	df	α	r-cal	r-crit	Remark
Career Development	354	1289.6	4705.76	4999.73	352	0.05	0.81	0.088	Reject Ho
Job Performance	354	1370.6	5315.32						

The result in Table 4 showed that the r-calculated value of 0.81 is greater than the r-critical of 0.088 at 0.05 level of significance and the null hypothesis was rejected. This however means that there is a significant relationship between career development and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings on research question one revealed that adequate provision of working conditions such as; provision of work facilities, increased staff welfare, fairly distribution of workload, provision of safety measures, and proper maintenance on buildings enhanced the job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State to a high extent and hypothesis one revealed that there was a significant relationship between working conditions and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State. This is in conformity with the findings of Bushiri (2014) who opines that organization's working environment has an impact on the staff members' job performance. In same vain, Jayaweera (2014) posited that having the right environmental factors both physical and psychological will lead to increased performance. Furthermore, Inuwa and Muhammad (2016) also confirmed that adequate work facilities and physical working environment play a vital role in organization's competitiveness if they take the lead to restructure the work environment.

Finally, the result from research question two showed that career development strategies such as; in-service training, career counseling, study leave, adequate research support, job rotation, and conferences enhanced the job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State to a high extent. Based on the findings, it was revealed in hypothesis two that there is a significant relationship between career development and job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State. This corroborates with the findings of Kakui and Gachungs (2016) who noted that career development promotes and enhances employees' job performance.

They maintained that career development practice enables institutions and organizations to develop and enhance productivity. Dialoke and Adighiji (2017) in same vein noted in their findings that there is a positive and significant correlation between career development and the job performance of non-academic staff in the university environment. Therefore, working conditions and career development enhanced the job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State and a positive



significant relationship exist between these variables and job performance of non-academic staff members in Rivers State.

Conclusion

The evidence from this study showed that working conditions and career development have a positive significant relationship on the job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State. These practices of human resources management directly enhance the job performance of non-academic staff members in universities in Rivers State. Therefore, the study has proven that career development enhances staff's job performance. Another line of evidence in this study also showed that having the right working conditions which includes environmental factors both physical and psychological will ultimately lead to a better job performance of members in universities in Rivers State.

Recommendations

- (1) University management should conduct extensive training programmes for their staff members relevant to the changing demand of jobs.
- (2) University authorities should implement human resources management practices to achieve the institutional-desired goals and objectives.
- (3) The university management should expose the non-academic staff to opportunities for specialty courses of instruction in their various administrative capacities as they are essential in the improvement of the staff's performance which in turn will transform into remarkable organizational performance.
- (4) University management should ensure that the workplace environments are comfortable enough to support staff's job performance.

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