Expository Of Staff Development And Employee Productivity In Selected Federal Universities In The North - East, Nigeria (2012-2018)

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Abstract: The study focused on the effect of staff development on employee productivity using selected Federal Universities in the North East Nigeria, 2012 – 2018. The increased turnover of employees occasioned by the poor development of academic staff among tertiary institutions in the country necessitated this research. Hence, the objectives were to ascertain whether there is a significant relationship between staff development and the quality of services delivered by the employees of the selected Universities, to determine the effect of staff development on career progression of the employees of the selected Universities. The study was anchored on Organization learning theory by Agyris and Schon (1960). The study adopted cross sectional survey design. Stratified random sampling was used for analyzing the qualitative result obtained through oral interviews. The findings show that staff development influences service delivery, career progression and employees engagement of academic staff in tertiary institutions. Hence, the study recommends: firstly, Staff development programmes should be tailored specifically to areas that accounts for greater capacity development and skill delivery among academic staff, thereby allowing for increased service delivery in tertiary institutions. Secondly, Career progression path should be clearly stated, designed and free from repression and undue political interference. The progression should be empowering and enriching, therefore, allowing for increased commitment

Keywords: Career progression path, Employee Productivity, Staff Development,

Introduction

Federal Universities are public organizations or institutions established by the Federal government for the developpent of society.One of the key importance of University education is to harness the potentials of a nation, her citizens in other to produced high class manpower.The staff of any university stand as the most important components of the university system. They contribute to the attitudes of the society, thereby shaping the nation (Nkpodia, 2001).The quality of the university system depends highly on the development of the skills of the staff in the system. Staff development in any institution or organization involves how best to keep employees current, vibrant and versatile, so that they can continuously perform their roles effectively in this age of rapid socioeconomic, political, scientific and technological changes and globalization. Ademolekun (1983) in Eze (2014) views staff development as the training, education and career development of staff members in an organization. Naris (2009) elaborate that staff development refers to a number of formal and informal activities that enhance staff members' individual capacity to improve their work productivity and to deliver quality services.

Employee productivity as one of the output of staff development, is one of the most vital objectives for every organization; the reason is that employee productivity has much advantage for both the organization and its employees. For example, productivity leads to favourable economic growth, large profitability and better social progress (Sharma & Sharma, 2014). In the same vein, employees who are more productive will earn good renumerations, better working conditions, and favourable employment opportunities. Productivity also maximizes organizational competitive advantage through cost reductions and improvement in high quality of output (Baily et al.2005; Hill et al, 2014; Wright, 2004). The success of any organization relies so much on the productivity of its employees (Cato & Gordon, 2009; Gummesson, 1998; Sharma & Sharma, 2014).Kiima (2015) noted that as an organization become more complex, it will becomes vulnerable to human errors. These persistence human errors result in low productivity in organizations; these seem to be a common phenomenon in the selected federal universities.Some staff seems to demonstrate lack of capacity to participate in staff development, some have spent far more than the numbers of years required in some staff development programmes, some have collected resources to attend staff development programmes but end up not attending. As observed, these attitudes by some staff have continued unabated in these selected federal universities even when they have been several efforts to curtail such. But if employee productivity is to be achieved, sophisticated and high impact staff development is therefore required. Clark (1992) agreed with this view when he notes that employee contribution to an organization does not just occur naturally but rather, it is the duty of employers to mould and develop their employees if efficiency is to be expected. Although salary and benefits play significant roles in recruiting and retaining employees, people are also looking for opportunities to learn new things to meet the challenge of new responsibilities and the prospect of personal and professional growth (Wagner, 2000). These are intrinsic needs. According to Nunn (2000), satisfying these intrinsic needs helps build trust, morale, loyalty and overall satisfaction for employee productivity.

Delivering quality service is the desire of any organization or University, which in turn   depends   on   its   valuable employees to achieve this. This implies that effectiveness of academic staff is predominantly framed in terms of delivering quality service in teaching, research and community services. Globally, quality service delivery by academic staff has been recognized as essential in the realization of the core objectives of universities. Academic staff are expected to be effective in teaching curriculum content that is relevant, preparing before teaching, using appropriate teaching methods, assessing learners' resources and conducting research (Walters & Openjuru, 2016).Delivering quality service will further enhance the quality of work environment and foster personal growth and development of staff. Through staff development activities,academic staff acquire knowledge about educational issues and problems, develop and utilize new or improved skills or work ethics and methods, clarify work-related attitudes and values, derive greater satisfaction from work with students, and develop more stimulation and supportive relationships with their colleagues (Boyel, 2004). Chi and Gursoy (2009) agree with this view as they point out that the success of organizations in delivering quality services depends upon the employees' satisfaction. Organizations can achieve this by providing the staffwith training and development opportunities, better working environments and compensation packages, which are comparable to what is obtains in other organizations in competition. But it is worrisome to observe in recent times thatin some selected universities, which are used as sources of data in this study, there seems to be evidence of low productivity in terms of quality service delivery. One candid act which seems responsible for inadequate quality service delivery is inadequate staff development programmes. Some of the academic staff in the universities under study seems far less productive as they supposed to be, maybe due to inability of the university administration to expose them to further studies, conferences, research, community service and current practices in their fields. The resultant effect include reduction in quality service delivery. Thus, qualified manpower which would have emanated from staff development seems to have decreased tremendously (Okebukola, 2005).

Previous studies such as Bingilar and Etale (2014) is in consonance with this view. The scholar opine that rapid changes in technology requirethat university academic staff should engage in continuous learning in order to remain current with technology to carry out these functions. Not all the lecturers have the ability and the technical skills required for dissemination of new knowledge. Lecturersare developedby different educational background and institutions. This gives room for inequalities in background training. It is staffdevelopment programmes that compensate for the inequalities created by this background development. The onus then lies on the management of the universities or organizations to put in place concrete plans on how such low performance of their staff can be revitalise and revived through planned knowledge, capacity building and staff development programmes.

Employee career progressionin any organization is vital for employee – organisationalrelationships. Organisations that provide mechanisms for employee career progression create a mutual investment type of relationship with their employees (Tsui, *et al.,* 1997 in Dialoke & Paschal, 2017). Employees'career progressions occur through continuous acquisition of managerial or professional skills and experience, which are indexes for promotion especially in the university system.Thus, an employee's career progression is a very important part of an organisation's activities and is alsorelated to their business or organizational strategies (Belcourt and Wright, 1994). An employee's career progression, in dealing withindividual's development at different career stages,do not only fulfill an individual's need but also thatof the organisation (Torrington and Hall, 1998 in Dialoke & Paschal, 2017). An organisation uses many activities, techniquesand staff development programmes that map out their employees' career (Greenhaus and Callanan, 1994), which playsan important role in maintaining the balance between an individual's need (job security, staff development and promotion) and the organization's need (employee's loyalty, trust, commitment).Armstrong (2001) agrees and that today's dynamicenvironment requires continuous professional and managerial development. He argues that career progression is of great importance to both the individual employee and the organisation, noting thatthere is an interaction between the organisation for which he/she works and the development of theorganisation through the employee's career.

Conversely, performance is considered to be related with the concepts of ability, opportunity andmotivation (Ivancevich and Matteson, 2008). Employees being the key element of the organisation determine the success or failure of the organisation through their performance.Today's employees are more career conscious than ever.They also make more demand from their employers in areas of fulfillment, personal growth and job satisfaction. Hence, employees are expressing a strongdesire to pursue more than just a job. They are looking for employment opportunities that promisean extension of their interests, personality and abilities. They want variety of things from their jobsoutside a pay cheque and a few fringe benefits.Theirloyalty to the organisation depends uponthe degree to which their employer satisfies these wants (Bartlett, 2012 in Dialoke & Paschal, 2017). Regrettably, it has been observed that in the selected federal universities,there seem to be inadequate planned mechanism for employee career progression due to inadequate staff development programmes which include conferenceattendance, etc. This definitely has continued to affect employee career progression. The employees in these universities are often pained by the fact that they perceive that the universities do not seem to be prepared to create adequate environment for the employees tomeet their career-related needs.

Employee engagement has generated a great deal of attention among many human resource practitioners, business entrepreneurs and academic researchers across the globe (Larkin, 2009; Sharma & Anupama, 2010). In this era of globalization and industrialization, where there is large scale competition in the market and organizations, it is necessary for the organizations to

have engaged workforce for the survival and smooth functioning of their activities. Employee engagement is considered as an important technique that matches this competition. The success or failure of the organizations is largely dependent upon employees working in it (Khan, 2013). As sophistication of technologies continues to evolve, they pose more challenges for management because organizations will have need of more employees with increased technical and professional skills. These knowledge driven employees can not be managed with old styles of totalitarian management. They expect operational autonomy, job satisfaction and enhanced status. It is because of these facts that the attention of management is shifting towards employees' side of organization on the ground that efficiency and productivity lie within the employees' ability and commitment. Management of organizations keep pay close attention to the employees that they have engaged. Employers realize that by focusing on employee engagement, they create more efficient and productive workforce. However, initiatives of improvement which are taken by management can not be fruitful without wilful involvement and engagement of employees. Engaged employees are emotionally attached to their organization and highly involved in their job with great enthusiasm for the success of their employer as well as the organizations, going extra mile beyond the employment contractual agreement. Sundaray (2011) notes that staff development is another important area which contributes to employee engagement. Learning new skills may trigger renewed interest in such aspects of the job which had not been meaningful to the employee earlier.

Through staff development, newly recruited and current employees acquire the knowledge and skills to perform their jobs in most effective ways. The employees who enhance their skills through staff development are more likely to engage fully in their work because they derive satisfaction from mastering new tasks (Swarnalatha & Prasanna, 2012). Staff development provides opportunities to raise the profile development activities in the organization, helps the employees to perform their work well and it is hence useful in the reduction of the problem of attrition. If an employee is recruited for a particular job, the employee should be developed according to the work for which he/she has been recruited. Lack of staff development has been cited as one of the reason for employee turnover.

Unfortunately, as its has been observed, the management of the selected universities seem not to have made much efforts towards employee engagement as a result of inadequate staff development. The management of the universities under study seem not to have played active roles in increasing the morale of the employees and building satisfaction among the employees to make them engaged in their work. Majority of the employees seem not to be engaged. This definitely has continued to affect employee productivity and the achievement of the goals and objectives of the universities.

Staff development strategies of the universities like any other organization ought to develop standards, core values, and ethics for staff development to enhance academic staff teaching, research and community services.Effectiveteaching approaches will in turn enrich the quality of lessons and raise learning outcomes.It is common for many employees, after a period of time, to have mastered the basic skills of their job. When this occurs, some employee may begin to feel the job as becoming a bit predictable as the thrill and challenges of learning fade and become replaced with a sense of routine. Some other employees feel a sense of relief that the learning curve has subsided, giving them a sense of stability in their jobs. But there are others employees who need to keep things moving, fresh and exciting. For the last group, it is important to their sense of wellbeing and growth to be able to tackle new challenges. If the university wants such employees to continue to be motivated and stick to the job, there is need for the university to provide them with new challenges. The key is to be proactive and take steps to ensure that there is ample opportunity for growth.

Unfortunately,it appears that seem not much has been put in place by the selected universities to turn the situation around. The above observation demonstrates a clear lack of well-defined policies, standards and measures in the selected universities to ensure that staff development programmes have the capacity to bring about quality academic staff for effective teaching and learning. One would expect that proper measures are taken to strengthen the staff development programmes through comprehensive and adequate staff development programmes. Thesituation in the selected universities seems to indicate that staff development programmes have not been given the needed attention. Theexisting staff development programmes at the selected federal universities do not seem to be adequate to address the varying needs of staff;this has led to some deficiencies in the areas of teaching methodologies, research publications, mentoring and supervision.

Some of the selected Federal Universities seem to be lukewarm over staff development; none of the selected universities have 35% of her academic staff at Professorial cadre or above 50% of her academic staff with PhD which is the minimum benchmark qualification for academic staff according to National University Commission (NUC). Oyebanji (2012) confirms this in his study on Ekiti State University.Information from the study show that, majority of academic staff in Ekiti State University are in the cadre of lecturer I downward with 65.1% of the entire academic staff in the lower cadre. The staff mix did not meet up with National Universities Commission (NUC) ideal recommendation of only 45%.Kibwika(2006) study shows that more than 70% of the academic staff in our universities have Masters degree and below as their highest academic qualifications. This raises the question of capacity of the academic staff to undertake graduate teaching and research supervision. It also raises concerns about the nature or quality of university teaching and research supervision that is rendered to students. Academic staff need to be highly trained and developed soas to effectively and efficiently discharge their roles as 'coaches', 'professional educators'and 'managers of learning'. Often times, young academics are left to struggle on the job to acquire the rudimental knowledge of the job. Their efforts in most cases have not yielded much in their ability, capacity, effectiveness and efficiency in carrying out their duties as academic staff.

NERDC (2004) in Peretomode and Chukwuma (2004) note that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. If these trends should continue in our Federal Universities system, the problem of these Ivory Towers will become more apparent. It will entail that several academic staff may be lacking in relevant skills and abilities required to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of their job performance in the university system. This development implies that academic staff teaching and research skills and abilities will be significantly affected by lack of adequate staff development. Theconsequences for the individual staff and the selected Federal Universities communities as a whole may be devastating. Obviously academic input and output will continue to declineif the managementsof universities do not urgently proffer ways to improve its academic staff development interventions. The university as an academic institution can hardly be "a centre of academic and professional excellence" as its vision seems to suggest.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study

i.   Is there any significant relationship between staff development and the quality of services delivered by the employees of the selected universities?
ii.   What is the effect of staff development on career progression of the employees of the selected universities?
iii.   To what extend does staff development enhance employees' engagement in the selected universities?
iv.   What are the challenges to effective staff development strategies in the selected universities?

Area of Study

The areas of study are the selected Federal Universities in the North East Nigeria. North East Nigeria is a geo – political zone in Nigeria made up of six states of Yobe, Borno, Adamawa, Taraba, Bauchi and Gombe state, the five successor states of the defunct North – Eastern State. The zone also has six federal universities, one in each of the states; Federal University Wukari, Taraba state, Moddibo Adama University of Technology, Yola, Adamawa state, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi (ATBU), Federal University, Gashua (FUGASHUA), Yobe State and Federal University, Kashere, Gombe State. For the purpose of this study, three of the federal universities were selected; Federal University Wukar, Taraba State, Moddibo Adama University of Technology, Yola, Adamawa State and University of Maiduguri, Borno State.

Staff Development and Service Delivery

The quality of service delivery in any educational system depends on the skills of the staff in the system. Such qualities and skills of staff can only be noticed when such staff are further developed through staff development programmes. This is so because staff development focuses on professional growth, bringing about change in individuals' knowledge, understanding, behaviour, attitudes, skills, values and beliefs (Ozurumba& Amasuomo, 2015). Bingilar & Etale (2014) emphasis that, academic staff quality service delivery includes; good decision-making, management of students, management of classroom activities, communication, research and research reporting. All these demand specialized skills which makes an experienced lecturer different in the profession, hence the need for staff development of lecturers in order to make them highly experienced professionals in their fields of specialization. Ozurumba & Amasuomo (2015) posit that, academic staff need to further their studies, attend conferences and seminars regularly to update their knowledge, expand their capacity to developed their skills and knowledge needed for the new challenges. This will help each of the lecturers to be competent in their area of specialization and thus will offer qualitative service delivery. But in a situation where academic staff cannot live up to these expectations particularly in preparation of lessons, teaching their students, evaluating their performance and conducting research it becomes worrisome.

Quality Service delivery is the delivery of quality services to customers according to their desire and expectations (Zeithaml & Bitner, 1996 in Irfan, Mohsin, & Yousaf, 2009). One of such ways through which the university can achieve this is by ensuring that they have staff with the requisite skills to deliver such quality services. In literature on service quality the first and foremost objective of the service quality focuses on customer values (Ravald & Gronroos, 1996; Woodruff, 1997; Parasuraman & Grewal, 2000 in Irfan, et al, 2009) and it is perceived as the principal driver of customers satisfaction (Jones & Sasser, 1995 in Irfan, et al, 2009) which is ultimately a key determinant to win customers' loyalty (Clement Sudhahar, Israel & Selvam, 2006 in Irfan, et al, 2009). Quality service delivery has become a key to success. A developed and motivated human resource played an important role for quality service delivery by identifying the needs and wants of their customers (Subhash, Kundu & Jay Vora, 2004 in Irfan, et al, 2009). A satisfied, motivated and committed employees in the organization are more dedicated and involved in quality service delivery to the customers (Rachel, Yee, Yeung & Edwin Cheng, 2008 in Irfan, et al, 2009).

Employees' attitude and behavior for superior services to their customers strongly depends upon the supportive working environment of the organization and its aspiration for superior quality services to their customers (Tzafrir & Gur, 2007). A satisfied and motivated employee, when interacted with the customer, creates a positive impact on customer's perception about high quality services (Schneider, White & Paul, 1998 in Irfan, et al, 2009). Strawderman & Koubek (2008) view employees' role for effective services delivery as base on the concept that organizational policies related to human resource management play a positive role for employees' and customers' satisfaction for quality services. This means organizations where quality human

resource practices are implemented, a healthy culture and competitive working environment develop, this brings about commitment among employees. Quality service delivery strongly depends on employees' commitment with the organization, staff development to enhance skills, learning abilities to perform their tasks efficiently and effectively and the employees' role for providing quality service to the customers to enhance customer satisfaction and achieving quality objectives of the organization. Quality services strongly depend on the organizational culture that facilitates their human resource by implementing and practicing those policies that cause employees' motivation, satisfaction with the job, commitment with employees' the organization and customers as well. Commitment represents a strong association and loyalty with the organization.

Delivering quality services stated that, the strong relationship between an organization and employee leads to a real improvement in the services provided. A knowledgeable and skilled employee through staff development programme on current trends of quality service as compared to their competitors can lead the organization to gain competitive advantages (Hughey & Mussnug, 1997is strongly dependent on an organization motivated and committed human resource. Most of the theorists in the field of motivation, agree that there exist a strong association between motivation, job satisfaction and employees' commitment with the organization (Basset-Jones & Lloyd, 2005., Chen, Chang & Yeh, 2004., Lok & Crawford, 2004., Pool & Pool, 2007 in Irfan, et al, 2009). Employees' satisfaction is directly related to quality services. Schneider & Bowen (1995)., Al-Khayyat & Elgamal, 1997., Hallier & Butts, 2000 in Irfan, et al, 2009). Employees' staff development increase employees' commitment and loyalty with the organization and it strengthen organizational competitiveness (Bushardt, Fretwell, *et al.*, 1994., Hughey & Mussnug, 1997., Burden & Proctor, 2000 in Irfan, et al, 2009). Organizations are to invest on staff development to attract and retain the talented people to develop a human resource to gain competitive advantages against their competitors. Sahinidis and Bouris (2008) observe that, organizations are investing to train their workforce and develop it for future so that they can perform their jobs efficiently and effectively and therefore, it is expected that staff development has a positive impact on both employees' quality service delivery, motivation and committment.

Staff Development and Career Progression

Career is a series of positions occupied by an individual throughout his or herlifespan (Robbins and Coulter, 2002in Dialoke& Paschal, 2017). It is the constant progress, experience and skillacquisition of a person in a specific work field. Even though career, in the general sense, is definedas the total of the jobs a person undertakes throughout his or her entire life, it has a meaning beyondand wider than this definition. The career of an individualis not only the jobs they have, but theirtraining for fulfilling the expectation, goal, emotion, and desires related to their job role, and, as aresult, progressing in that workplace with the knowledge, skill, quality and desire to work (Yalçın,1994 inDialoke& Paschal, 2017). Dialoke& Paschal(2017) noted that, the development of skills required by an employee for career progression in an organization is facilitated by the development of professional skills of such an employee. Also Mullins (2007) pointed out that staff development provides more opportunities for careerprogression because it boost competence levels of employees. Staff development is therefore seen as vital for career progression for employees. There is no contest about the beneficial relationship between staff development and career progression. Career progression is important, especially to employees who have worked for an organization for a long time. If they wereunable to finish their education, this could be the key to further success and progression in theircareer. They might want to take their education further.

Staff development and career progression are two related processes that increases the capacity of employeesto contribute to the organisation. Daniels (2003) refers staff development simply to make employee grow with the organization so that they can be fitted for available higher positions within their capacity. Career progrssion is defined as "an ongoing, formalized effort by an organisation that focuses ondeveloping and enriching the organisation's human resources in light of both the employees' andthe organisation's needs" (Byars and Rue, 2004). Employees are major assets of any organisation, theyplay an active role towards organisational success that cannot be underestimated. Equipping theseunique assets through staff development becomes imperative in order to maximize the jobperformance. Career progression covers an employee's working life. It starts with staff orientation, on-jobtraining, experience, short courses, professional courses, post graduate degrees or diplomas.

Kaya & Ceylan (2014) opion that the basis for the successful organization is qualified employees, on the awareness that organizationsare gradually more dependent on their human resources. Investments in human resource development skilled and experienced employees in the organization is the basis for the achievement of these main goals. Itis very essential for the organization to provide staff development for the new employees, and assist for the development of the present employees which is only possible by an efficient career system. Development of human resources is associated with organizational success. The prerequisite for making a difference in a competitive environment lies in investing in people and performing both individual and organizational career progression. Lee & Bruvold (2003) in Kaya & Ceylan (2014) states that, organization that spend the most on employee staff development are the most competitive in all developed countries in the world. Granrose (1997) in Kaya & Ceylan (2014), also pointed out that, the greater the match or similarity between individual career goals and plans and the organization's plans for the employee, the more positive the outcomes of motivation and satisfaction. Qualified production is achieved by qualified labour. To achieve the intended level in productivity, factors such as creativity, change, quality and speed which are the building blocks of an organization is strongly related with good and proper use of human resource. Ko (2012) in Kaya & Ceylan (2014) underlined that staff development includes growing professional knowledge and independence to improve creativity, job

performance, and innovation. Given that labour capital gives a great advantage in competitive environments, it has become urgent for organizations to use more efficient human resources, skilled workers and investment in human resources development programmes such as offering permanent learning for employees to improve present abilities.

If companies intend to maintain high levels of productivity, they must ensure their employees are properly develope for their tasks. When their employees have the drive and initiative to expand theirknowledge, it is a good sign that they will be able to benefit the company further. Ariely (2009) posit that, when employees are satisfied with their job and are aware of the room for staff development, they will try hard to prove themselves so they can take advantage of that opportunity.They will also be less likely to leave the position they have for another company that pays better,has better incentives or lets them work in a manner or schedule they appreciate. When staff are developed or gone back to college for a higher degree, they feel more pride and satisfactionin the work they do. It benefits the company to have knowledgeable and develope experts working in each department.Spector (2003) in Dialoke & Paschal (2017) definedcareer progression as an improvement in the positions of employeeswho put in an effort to gain necessary skills and upgrade their performance. Weng and Hu (2009) posit that career progression is both a function ofthe employees' own efforts in making progress toward their personal career goals and acquiringnew skills and the organization's efforts in rewarding such efforts, through promotions and salaryincreases. Weng's (2010) argues that career progression is a measure of the degree to which an individualperceives that their current organisation creates an environment in which the employee is able tomeet his/her career-related needs and reinforces those accomplishments through promotions andcompensation (Weng *et al.,* 2010). Career progression is the lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions inorder to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future (Armstrong, 2009).

Today's employees are more career conscious than ever and are more demanding from their workin terms of fulfillment, personal growth and satisfaction. Hence, employees are expressing a strongdesire to pursue more than just a job. They are looking for employment opportunities that promisean extension of their interests, personality and abilities. They want variety of things from their jobsoutside a pay cheque and a few fringe benefits, and their loyalty to the organisation depends uponthe degree to which their employer satisfies these wants (Bartlett, 2012 in Dialoke & Paschal, 2017).

Staff Development and Employees Engagement

Employee engagement is a key organizational issue that should be strictly given enormousconsideration by organizational management in the current scenario of challenging businessenvironment (Saxena & Srivastava, 2015). This is because highly engaged and motivated employeesreflect the core values of the organization, and this resultantly reinforces overall brand equity(Ramanujam, 2014). The review of literature reveals that engaged employees yield positiveorganizational outcomes. In the rapidly changing markets, business leaders recognize that highlyengaged employees can increase their productivity and firm performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008;Markos & Sridevi, 2010). In other words, engaged employees feel passionate about their work, happyto work in their organization, and have the enthusiasm to go to their work every day (Ramanujam,2014). Besides that, employees who are engaged in their work are deemed very important for theirorganizations in maintaining competitive advantages; coping with changes, and ensuring workinnovations.

When employees are engaged in their work, they have good relationships with their co-workers and working environment becomes better. An engaged workplace encourages commitment and energy among the employees of the organization to improve production and business performance (Kumar and Swetha, 2011). High levels of engagement in domestic and global firms promote retention of talent, foster customer loyalty and improve organizational performance and stakeholder value ((Wilson, 2009; Markos & Sridevi, 2010). Engaged employees are not only happy in their job, but also translate that satisfaction into higher productivity and profitability of the organization (Larkin, 2009; Lee, 2012). The organization that understand the conditions which enhance employee engagement will have accomplished something that their competitors will find very difficult to imitate (Kumar & Swetha, 2011). Engaged employee is almost three times more sincere toward his job in comparison to those employees who are actively disengaged (Kular, Gatenby, Rees, Soane, & Truss, 2008). Therefore the organization should focus on the aspect of employee engagement in order to improve organizational performance (Basbous, 2011; Sundaray, 2011). Employee engagement can be a deciding factor for organizational effectiveness. It does not only have the potential to significantly affect employee retention, productivity and loyalty, but also has a key link to customer satisfaction, company reputation and overall stakeholder value (Sundaray, 2011). Engaged employees provide a lot of benefits to the organization such as productivity, improved quality, customer care, cooperation among the employees, reduced employee turnover, reduced absenteeism and disputes (Wilson, 2009; Mortimer, 2010). In the present business environment, organizations across the globe are enhancing the level of engagement of their employees in order to gain competitive advantage in the form of higher productivity, profitability, lower turnover and safety of the organization (Mani, 2011).

Hanaysha(2016)define employee engagement as one of the main business priorities for organizational executives.McEwen (2011), noted that, employee engagement depends on employees' perceptions and evaluations of theirworking experience, including their employer, organizational leaders, the job itself, and workenvironment. Echols (2005) advised that in order to enhance employee engagement, managers shouldpay attention to the skills, knowledge and talents of their staff. The author added that when employeesare aware of their strengths and talents, their level of engagement will be higher, and this ultimately leads to better performance and productivity. Rothmann and Storm (2003) demonstrated that employee engagement can bereflected

through the energy, behavioural satisfaction, efficacy and involvement. Swaminathan and Rajasekaran (2010) posit th atemployee engagement results from employee satisfaction and workmotivation. Fleming and Asplund (2007) in Hanaysha(2016)describes employee engagement as, "the ability to capture the heads, hearts, and souls of youremployees to instil an intrinsic desire a nd passion for excellence". Employee engagement is also view as a construct which consists of cognitive, emotional, and behavioural elementsthat are related to the role of employee performance (Shuck et al., 2011in Hanaysha, 2016). It reflects the commitmentand involvement of an employee towards his/ her work that is aimed to improve organizationalperformance (Sundaray, 2011 in Hanaysha, 2016).

Kahn (1990) posit that, employee engagement is the level of commitment and involvement of the employees towards their organization and its values. While Perrin (2003) defined employee engagement "as willingness or enthusiasm that the employee holds to spend optional effort towards the job." Saks (2006) defines employee engagement as the extent to which an individual is attentive and absorbed in the performance of his/her roles. It is the positive feeling that employees have towards their jobs and also the motivation and effort they put into it. Bakkar and Scheufeli, (2008) have defined the term employee engagement that "it is a psychological state where employees feel a vested interest in the organization's success and perform to a high standard that may exceed the stated requirements of the job." An engaged employee is aware of business context and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefits of the organization (Sharma & Anupama, 2010). It is a positive attitude held by the employees towards the organization and its values. The organization must work to develop and nurture employee engagement, which requires a two-way relationship between employer and employee (Robinson, Perryman, & Hayday, 2004). Baig (2010) argued that employee engagement is concerned with the individual contribution under healthy working conditions, promote individual development, encourage mutual confidence and understanding between the employer and the employee and between the employees themselves. Zinger (2010) defines that "employee engagement is the art and science of engaging people in authentic and recognized connections to strategy, roles, performance, organization, community, relationship, customers, development, energy and transform the work connections into final results." Rashid, Asad, and Ashraf (2011) have highlighted that employee engagement is the capacity of the employees to work honestly, obligation and aspiratio n enduring in a business. Wilson (2009) noted that an engaged employee is that who is fully energetic, emotionally connected with the organization in achieving the goals. Thus employee engagement is a barometer that determines the association of a person with the organization (Vazirani, 2007).

Bhatla (2011) has explained that the employee engagement is all about having a psychological commitment toward the assigned task, which is clearly reflected in his/her dedication towards the work. Mani (2011) noted that an engaged employee is fully aware with the business environment and works with the help of other employees to improve the performance within the job for the benefits of the organization. Engaged employees put their all efforts and enthusiasm towards their work and also care about the future of the organization (Mani, 2011; Sundaray, 2011). By making the employees involved in organization's business, the HR manager will have to motivate them to contribute in the business and productivity success and at the same time, it increases their sense of well-being (Swarnalatha & Sureshkrishna, 2013). Cattermole and Johnson, (2014) opine that employee engagement is a workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to business, its values and goals. Chandhok and Bhavet, (2014) perceived engagement as a passion and commitment of the willingness to devote oneself and expand one's discretionary effort to contribute towards achieving the goals and objectives of the organization as a whole. Thus employee engagement is the extent to which employees think, feel and act in ways that represent high levels of commitment to their organization. Kahn (1990) says that in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during their role performances. The ideas of each and every employee differs from each other and every employee should be given freedom to express their views and thought. This kind of activity increases the morale of the employees, hence the employees are motivated and engaged towards their work and increases the productivity of the organization. He further describes that lack of connection with the organization, emotional absence, passive and incomplete role causes disengagement among the workers. In the views of Robinson, Perryman, and Hayday (2004) employee engagement is closely related with feeling and perception of the employees and the key driver of the employee engagement are effective leadership by the top management, two way communication among the workers of the organization, well designed human resource policies and organizational development of employees. Anand (2011) opines that employee engagement plays a crucial role in the hotel because it affects everything from retention and productivity to profitability and safety. There is an intrinsic link between employee engagement, customer loyalty and profitability. Kahn (1992) has highlighted that fully engaged employees lead to the success of the organization. There are many dimensions which makes the employees engaged towards their job. These are continuity in the organization, connected with other staff members, integrated and focussed in their job. Saradha and Patrick, (2011) have discussed that employee engagement activities significantly improve the overall performance of an organization. It is a technique for the successful functioning of the organization and improvement in performance of the employees.

Sundaray (2011) noted that,staff development is another important area which contributes to employee engagement. Learning new skills may trigger renewed interest in such aspects of the job which had not been meaningful earlier. Through staff development new recruited and current employees acquires the knowledge and skills to perform their jobs in most effective way. The employees who enhance their skills through staff development are more likely to engage fully in their work, because they derive satisfaction from mastering new tasks (Swarnalatha & Prasanna, 2012). As staff development provides the opportunities to

raise the profile development activities in the organization, helps the employee to perform their work well and hence useful to reduce the problem of attrition. If an employee is recruited for a particular job, the employee should be develope accordingly to the work for which he/she has been recruited. Lack of staff development has been cited as one of the reason for employee turn over.

Types of Employee Engagement

Gallup, the Consulting Organization, identify three types of employee engagement that occur in every organization. There are different in terms of involvement and the role played by employee in the organization.

Engaged Employees

An engaged employee is considered as the base of the organizational development. Such kind of employees carry the organization in positive direction. They not only perform their work but also play an important role in achieving the organizational goals and objectives. Engaged employees want to use their talent and strength at work every day. They perform with passion, drive innovation and move their organization forward through their performance (Vazirani, 2007).

Not Engaged

These kind of employees care only about their work not any other things like goals, objectives and development of the organization. They do not have energy and enthusiasm in their work (Reilly, 2014). These categories of employees do not have cooperative relationship with their colleagues as well as the employers also. Their contribution is little in the success and development of the organization.

Actively Disengaged

Actively disengaged employees do not perform their work in a proper manner and do not complete their work timely. Their contribution is almost negligible in the success and development of the organization. They are unhappy at work and look after the work of the other member of the organization. Such kind of employee carry the organization in the negative direction and organization suffers in achieving its goals and objectives (Vazirani, 2007).

Characteristics of Engaged Employees

Robinson, Perryman, and Hayday (2004) noted that an engaged employee has the following characteristics: engaged employees have emotional attachment with their job as well as the organization; they have in trust the employers of the organization; engaged employees are more committed towards their work as well asorganization also;create healthy working environment and respect other employees of theorganization; cooperate with their colleagues to perform effectively; engaged employees perform beyond the expectation of the employers; perform their work in view of goals and objectives of the organization and engaged employees make necessary change as per requirement and keepupdate with the knowledge in their field.

Challenges to effective Staff Development Strategies

University institutions are perceived as greatasset, both for individuals and the nation as the knowledge, skills, creativity and researchdeveloped is supposed to be a major factor in successful creation of jobs and thecountry's prosperity (Naidoo, 2008). Ostensibly, universities all over, are facing challenges to effective staff development which is meant to trained and developed academic staff morethan ever before so as to remain relevant in global-knowledge economy era (WorldBank, 2000; Jowi, 2003; Kibwika, 2006). In this global – knowledge economy, there is high expectation on universities to have a highlyeffective and efficient academic staff workforce capable of preparing students with thecapability to add value to the country's economic, social and political development.This has raised a lot of concern among policy makers, scholars and educators regardingwhat can be done to improve academic staff quality in the universities. Ignoring staff development of academic staff is a risky option for universities and the nation since the quality of teaching, research and community service largelydepends on the staff in question. More so, the fact that there is increased national andinternational competition for quality academic staff, demands that more than ever before, universities must devise strategies on how best to develop her academic staff. The relevant onthe development of these academic staff in the universities cannot be overemphasized; although most universities over the years have made frantic effort towards the development of academic staff to curtail the dwindling rate of teaching and research in these ivory tower by putting in place staff development strategies. Despite these efforts, there have been challenges on the side of the university management, the government and staff that have hindered the effective implementation of these staff development strategies.

Firstly, there is no effective policy document guiding staff development. Most human resource policies are guides to management's thinking and they help to achieve theorganization's human resource objectives (Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield, 2000). Policies help define acceptable and unacceptable behaviors and establish the organization's position on an issue. Policies for staff development should be part of the university educational policies package.Corcoran (1993) in Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield (2000) posit that policies on staff development should concerned with the quality and character of experiences provided for academic staff. Carrell, Elbert and Hatfield (2000)state that to ensure efficiency, staff development policy should be in written form and must be communicated to all employees so as to ensure that employees are familiar with human resource policies. Regretabbly, most universities lack this staff development policy document to address issues of staff development for the growth of the university.Ezeani (2008) confirmed this when he stated that, most Universities do not have staff development policies document and those who do are not critically dedicated to it. The conclusion from the study was that, it affects the growth and continuing education programmes of many academic staff. For continuing education to be properly tackled, Universities should of necessity have a well-articulated staff development programme document which will guide the building of capacities in relevant and needed

areas in the Universities. The fact is visible because without regular staff development the individual staff cannot perform as expected in the profession. Onah (2003) share this view as he stated that universities do not have clearly articulated staff development policies written in a given document. Such a document would enable a staff member to know his training and development entitlements in his or her career life.

Second, government support for staff development at the university is inadequate. In Nigeria the funding of universities has been the sole responsibility of government, this has deteriorated greatly since the 80's due to the establishment of more universities for political reasons (Matheson 1994). In order to meet the funding needs of the universities in the area of staff development and research, the government introduce an educational tax which led to the establishment of Tetfund. Despite this, the institutions are still underfunded, staff unpaid, teaching and research suffer due to lack of funds to ensure staff development and continuity of research activities in the universities. Lack of funds for effective human resource development has made some departments such as medicine and allied disciplines to be understaffed. This is because training in these areas are expensive hence just a few individuals can sponsor themselves for further improvement.

Third, there is perceive favoritism in the award of staff development opportunities. It often noticed in universities that political approach instead of administrative approach is preffered by management in the awards of staff development opportunities. Whereloyalists, and favourites of management used their status to secure training opportunities over and above their colleagues who in most cases merit the staff development programmes available. This approach is embedded with lots of discrimination, nepotism, favouritism and god-fatherism (Cornelius, 2001; Edralin, 2004; Cole, 2002; Dale, 2005 in Oni-Ojo, et al, 2014). Onah (2003) share the same view when he posit that, the problems of staff development are connected to the inability of the authorityin addressing the issue of selecting and releasing staff for training by the organization. Heemphasized that in a bureaucracy where merit forms only a part of the system of recruitingand promoting civil servants instead of being the ultimate, the process of selection for staffdevelopment is bound to be affected by non-merit criteria. He maintains that in Nigeria, theprocess has been affected by other criteria such as political, qualification, years of service,gender, ethnicity and favouritism, and the geo-political spread of development opportunities(quota system based). This phenomenon is contrary to the principles of development by itsmerit to enhance efficient management in the sense that some staff selected for staff development programmes may not know the job or cope with the tasks of educational development.

Fourth,inadequate institutional sponsorship for staff development, most universities have being adamant towards staff development sponsorship. This might be one of the reason most of the universities do not have a staff development policy document, a staff development programme sponsor by the university internally generated revenue, etc. The institutions rarely support persons who are ready to pursue further studies and if at all they do, it is selective.

Fifth, financial constraints on the part of the individual academic staff for staff development. Most academic staff that sometime goes ahead with developing themselves without waiting for the university expresses serious concerns regarding their individual financial capacity to pursue vigorous staff development programme.

Findings

The summary on the researcherfindings are as follows;

Finding confirms that there is a significant positive relationship between staff development and the quality of service delivered by employees in the selected universities. The researcher therefore accepted the alternate hypothesis which state that there is significant relationship between staff development and the quality of services delivered by the employees of the selected universities.

It reveals that the relationship between staff development and career progression is high and positive. Thus, it implies that staff development has significant effect on employee's career progression in the selected universities. Hence, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternate hypothesis, which implies that staff development has significant positive effect on career progression of employees in the selected universities

It shows that the relationship between staff development and employees engagement is high and positive. The result implies that staff development does enhance employee engagement in the selected universities. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected by the researcher, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted, which implies that staff development enhances employee engagement in the selected universities.

Findings indicates that poorly structured staff development strategies are not a challenge to staff development among employee's in the selected universities. The researcher therefore rejected the alternate hypothesis and upholds the null hypothesis that poorly structured staff development strategies are not a challenge to staff development in the selected universities.

Conclusion

Staff of any organization are that which are expected to bring about the competitive difference, since the success or failure of an establishment is basically dependent on the quality of these resource as well as its orientation. This is based on the notion that human resource is one of the competitive advantages of an organization. This is because while equipment, infrastructure, methods of production, packaging and distribution strategies could all be copied by other competitive organizations, the innate qualities, innovativeness, knowledge, abilities and skills of the human

resource cannot easily be copied. Staff development focuses on increasing the knowledge of staff to enable them fit in, in the event of new responsibilities and challenges.So organizations should invest hugely on the human resource capital because the productivity of employees will ultimately increase the performance of the organization. Employee productivity is vital for the performance of the organization and so staff development is beneficial for the employees' improvement. The need for improved productivity has become universally accepted and that it depends on efficient and effective staff development is not less apparent. It has further become necessary in view of advancement in modern world to invest in staff development. It is no longer in dispute that staff development contributes to improving employee productivity. Thus, staff productivity is a function of ability, will and situation. Thus staff development is based on the premise that staff knowledge need to be improved for organizations to grow.

New entrants into organizations have various skills, though not all are relevant to organizational needs. Staff development is required for staff to enable them work towards taking the organization to its expected destination.

Recommendations

Based on the findings from the research study, the researcher recommends that;

1.   Staff development programmes should be tailored specifically to areas that accounts for greater capacity development and skill delivery among academic staff, thereby allowing for increased service delivery in tertiary institutions. Hence, the regular development programmes shoul be scrabbled to allow for new programmes that will incorporates reproducible outcomes. For example, limiting staff development to just academic conference attendance in the staff discipline alone should be discouraged. But rather it should cover teaching pedagogy, emotional intelligence, and stimulus development, coaching and mentoring among others.

2.   Career progression path should be clearly stated, designed and free from repression and undue political interference. The progression should be empowering and enriching, therefore, allowing for increased commitment. This implies that Career progression of academics should be a major interest in the staff development plans of university management, given that it determines the extent the employee evaluates the staff development programme in the university.

3.   Engagement should be adopted as a staff development technique, thatwould give employee a sense of value and foster greater commitment towards increased and superior innovative behaviour. This adoption can be done through increased participation in the university administration and management.

4.   The strategies towards staff development should be well structured to accommodate and reflect global best practices of developing academics for superior outcome, however, it must be done with caution, given that the poor structuring of the strategies were not significant, thus, implying that there were other factors that could account for this. This could be fear, individual self-determination, and passion for the job, among others. Therefore, the strategies for staff development should stimulate the right behaviour for increased academic excellence.

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