

Impact of Emerging Trend in Academic Staff Appointment and Service Delivery in University Of Nigeria Nsukka and Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, 2014 – 2020

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Abstract: *The appointment of academic staff in any university be it public or private is of paramount importance to the Educational sector. This is so because it is the academic staff that turns the vision and mission of the institutions into reality. The decreasing quality of performance in public universities is believed by certain individuals and unions to be the consequence of not only infrastructural decay but the pattern of academic appointment in recent time, which with the envisaged improvement in government condition of service could possibly be the panacea. Thus, the objectives of any university can only be realized through the effective co-ordination of the human resource (staff) within the institution. This paper attempts an examination on the impact of emerging trend in academic staff appointment and service delivery in UNN and UNIZIK, 2014 - 2020. Two relevant research questions were raised and addressed. Ex-post-facto research design was adopted. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse the data collected from respondents to the questionnaire designed for this purpose. A population size of (1600) one thousand six hundred was randomly selected comprising both universities under study, of which a sample size of 320 was taken using Taro Yamani formular. The results obtained showed that merit is often jettisoned on the altar of primordial interest in appointment of academic staff into the Nigerian university. The study also reveals that though there are stipulated periods for appointment based on need into the public University, these are often sidelined. It was recommended among others that uniform appointment policy and procedures be formulated, also the implementation must be monitored by external agencies and regulatory bodies.*

Keywords: Academic Staff Appointment, Service delivery, UNN, UNIZIK, Meritocracy, Primordial interest.

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

The world of work and organization has become increasingly demanding and turbulent. Thus, competition among organizations has tremendously increased (Burke & Cooper, 2005). Most organizations today can facsimile technology, manufacturing processes, products, strategy, etc. However, human resource management (HRM) practices and organization are difficult to copy, thereby representing a unique competitive advantage (Pfeffer, 1994, 1998). Increased global competition coupled with enhanced societal expectations means that the growth, or even survival, of a firm is difficult. It is no longer sufficient to be effective in selling a particular product or service or to rely on past reputation (Newell, 2005). To be successful within the competitive environment, organizations will have to enhance their organizational capability. Human Resource professionals and Human Resource Management practices will be required to create value by increasing organizational competitiveness (Ferris, 1999).

Hiring competent people is of supreme importance and this is reliant on effective appointment procedures, which aim to select the 'right' individuals and reject the 'wrong' ones (Newell, 2005). The importance of this should not be underestimated because a poor appointment decision can cost an employer an amount equal to 30percent of the employee's first-year earnings (Hacker, 1997). These costs can include: lower productivity; potential loss of clients; training costs; advertising costs; appointment fees and redundancy packages (Smith and Graves, 2002).

Presently, Nigeria educational institutions are facing challenges on several fronts in their efforts to remain competitive. These include the need to increase its productivity (graduating employable students), improve service delivery, the prospects of expanding into global markets (successfully competing with their counterparts abroad), new technological developments (aligning with new technologies of teaching), responding to changes in the marketplace (aligning with strategic changes in the education sector). These challenges are emerging in the context of changing needs of the workforce, changing attitudes in the broader society and heightened legal requirements (Cappelli, 1999). These challenges are making it both more important and more difficult for the institutions to be successful. There is now a greater emphasis on organizational results in terms of its service delivery, productivity and output (quality of students).

Not surprisingly, many educational institutions in Nigeria are looking for ways to improve their performance and service delivery. The past decade has produced research evidence supporting the critical role human resource management plays in the success of an

organization. At the same time, however, many of the traditional methods of employee attraction and retention in Nigeria Universities are being challenged by the need for organisations to address the increased complexity, greater ambiguity and rapid pace of change in the contemporary environment. This study examines the impact of emerging trend in academic recruitment and service delivery. A comparative study of UNN and UNIZIK, 2014-2020.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The salient role of Nigeria Universities in the provision and development of human capital required for the social, economic and technological advancement of any nation cannot be over-accentuated. By their inimitable nature, universities are expected to be a repository of the most specialized and skilled intellectuals. They are meant to serve as lumber rooms of knowledge for nurturing the manpower needs of the nation and hence for satisfying the aspirations of the people for a good and humane society. However, the universities in Nigeria are being threatened by their inability to attract and retain specialised, skilled and knowledgeable academic staff due to several crucial but avoidable reasons. The issue of lack of adequate training and development, above all godfatherism were identified as the problems influencing the attraction and retention of quality academic staff. Provision of good learning and working climate, job flexibility, recognition, rewards and compensation, effective employee training and development were offered as viable strategies to help enhance the attraction and retention of quality academic staff in Nigeria universities.

As is the case in other sectors, human capital is considered most important of all the resources, by virtue of its potency in manipulating other resources (Akpan, 2004). It does appear, in Nigeria, for decades, emphasis has been on achieving increased funding, probably due to its perceived ability to procure other resources required for task performance. So far, infinitesimal attention has been paid to the process of attracting and selecting quality academic staff that can offer best services in Nigerian public universities.

The understated research questions are made to fill the gap in literature, which will guide the study.

- i Does the pattern of academic staff appointment exercise influence service delivery in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020.
- ii To what extent did non merit system in the appointment of academic staff increase academic contents quality in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020?

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective is to examine a comparative study of emerging trend in academic staff appointment and service delivery in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020. The specific objectives of the study are to:

- i. Investigate if the pattern of academic appointment exercise influenced service delivery in UNN and UNNIZIK from 2014 to 2020.
- ii. Determine if non merit system in academic staff appointment increased academic contents quality in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020.

Hypotheses

1. The pattern of academic appointment exercise did not influence service delivery in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020.
2. Non merit system in academic appointment did not increase academic contents quality in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This study focuses on a comparative study of emerging trends in academic staff appointment and service delivery in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020. Accordingly, the aim of this review is to examine pertinent literature with respect to the above mentioned research questions:

Merit System and Indicators of Merit System

We can define merit as ‘the appointment of the best person for any given job, it is the thrust, the French idea of ‘une carrière ouverte aux talents’. The definition is hoary and uncontroversial, but has some implications which run counter to the practice of many administrations. The appointment process may be arbitrary, merit system relates to the management of professional personnel in a neutral, pressure-free environment. Shafritz, Hyde, and Rosenbloom in Sulardi (2005) “As with many questions in public administration, the issue of how the overall public personnel function should be organized have been plagued by an attempt to realize several incompatible values at once. Thus, achieving neutral competence requires the creation of a relatively independent agency to help insulate public employees from the partisan demands of political executives.”

Merit system is characterized by equal opportunity, open competition and fairness, it is a culture in every appointment process. To provide equal opportunities for the public to participate in the appointment, announcement is made through the mass media and the government's official web. Thus public can have equal access. Indications of selection that is not transparent and ignores the element

of fairness are not easily revealed. Corruption, collusion, and nepotism occur systemically involving many actors, the politicians, godfathers, administrators/management team etc.

Merit is a characteristic of the individual, meritocracy is a characteristic of societies as a whole in which individuals are awarded a direct proportion of the results of operations and the ability of the individual (McNamee and Miller, 2009). Michael Young popularizes the concept of meritocracy in his book "The Rise of the Meritocracy". In a broad sense, it is defined as a social order built around a notion of merit particularly subject, which is admitted as to be able to anticipate the social nature of the ideal (Daniels, 1978). Thus, meritocracy is a social system in which a person's overall proportion awarded directly from the results of operations and ability. Thus, meritocracy can be run if there is a mechanism called the merit system.

Further elements of the merit system include withdrawal activity, development, and maintenance of employees. While the merit system indicator associated with appointment and selection appointment are:

1. Good and reliable planning through creative and aggressive appointment techniques;
2. All who participate in the program must be responsible and well-defined;
3. Appointment involves capable individuals and appropriate sources in an effort to get workers from all segments of society; etc (Sulardi, 2005)

Due Process in Appointment and Selection Process

Due process preaches, good democratic governance, transparency and economic / industrial revolution are the bed rock of prosperity. Thus, Due process could be seen as the mechanism for the enforcement of government rules, policies and procedures in the prosecution of government business, at the Local, State and Federal levels to ensure probity, accountability, efficiency and transparency in all "facets of governance". (Ugwu, 2006). Therefore, Due process basically is meant to achieve such objectives as: 1) To harmonize and update all Federal Government policies and practices on public matters. 2) To ensure that projects conceptualizations and packaging match defined priorities and targets and set in annual appropriation. 3) To strictly enforce the due process principles of transparency, competition and efficiency and values, etc

Due process, to a large extent focuses on matching resources to future needs, structure, quality, values and commitment in line with the appointment and selection processes in an organization.

Appointment Processes

Pre-appointment – Advertisement-selection-interview (written/unwritten) = Appointment

Hereafter, selection procedures are used to determine the most likely to fit both the position and the organization through series of structured or laid-down evaluation by the Human Resource department. This is why Omisore and Okofu (2014) opined that a successful appointment is sine-qua-non for successful selection and staffing. Ineffective appointment precludes any chance for effective candidate selection. ... Hence some university deemed it feet to procure guides for excises for appointment processes.

Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka appointment (recruitment and selection) guidelines for academic staff. Subject to the provisions of Section 3.3 (a) relating to the making of temporary appointment by the Vice Chancellor, vacancies on the established staff list shall be advertised in at least two (2) widely read newspapers in Nigeria, notice boards and website of the University, except where, for good reason the committee may authorize that any particular vacancy be filled without advertisement; provided that the candidate shall not be exempted from the usual assessments (UNIZIK, 2014). The guideline further specified that the University Assessment and Interviewing Panel for fresh appointments shall consist of:

- a. The Vice Chancellor - Chairman
- b. Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic)
- c. The Provost, Dean of Faculty/Director of Institute
- d. The Heads of Department concerned, except that if the Head of Department is himself a candidate or interviewed, he shall not serve on the panel.
- e. At least two external assessors with knowledge of the subject or field in respect of which candidates are being assessed or interviewed.
- f. University Librarian
- g. The Registrar
- h. Director of Academic Planning
- i. Two representatives of the University Governing Council
- j. A staff of Establishments Division, appointed by the Registrar shall serve as the Secretary.

The sequential steps in the academic staff appointment and selection procedures to some extent, helped to sift out applicants considered unfit for university academic jobs. At that period, people in the labour market did not see university academic jobs as being attractive due to very poor condition of service prevalent in the sector. People who willingly choose to work in this sector were very few. Also, the phobia of imminent embarrassment and humiliation during the interview session and lectures with students further killed the interest of many incompetent job seekers. Interestingly, many of those who passed through the appointment procedure of public universities were individuals who could beat their chest to proclaim high level of competence in the discharge of duties. Also, the quality of services delivered by the university workers was very commendable, leading to the sub sectors' remarkable contribution to the general development via effective training and research.

As a result of universities top management deviation from standard academic staff appointment and selection procedures, campuses recently became dumping ground for frustrated politicians, external retirees, spouses and relatives of politicians, forged certificate carrying members and candidates presented by university management personnel etc. In other words, recent employment in the public universities such as University of Nigeria Nsukka and Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka mostly tailors toward the line of sentiment and utter discrimination rather than merit and due process.

The glaring overstaffing condition in the universities environment in terms of quantity and not quality has been the outcome of the deviation from the standard of appointment procedures. The presence of many incompetent personnel in public university system gives rise to declining quality of both individual and institutional performance, Service delivery, increased corrupt practices, wanton sexual harassment and other vices. Public universities established through special state edicts or federal acts, were aimed at undertaking the molding of individuals for purpose of formal/special skill acquisition, as well as embarking on research, to foster human and general societal development.. The obvious departure from the standard academic staff appointment and selection procedure has led to infiltration of incompetent employees, giving rise to poor individual and universities performance and climaxed wanton and heinous behaviours on the campuses.

Primordial Interest and Academic Appointment in UNN and UNIZIK

Available evidence indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between appointment and service delivery, as well as the performance of institutions of higher learning (Gamage, 2014).

Primordial interest is a common phenomenon that is very popular in the Nigerian public institutions especially in the educational sector. It is a trending issue, common and has currently become pronounced or known as Godfatherism. This is a special case of dyadic/two persons ties involving a largely instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socio-economic status (patron) uses his/her own influence and resources to provide protection or benefit or both for a person lower status (client) who for his part reciprocates by offering general support and assistance including personal service to the patron.

They however, cut across appointments, recruitments, promotions, deployment and posting exercises. Godfatherism in appointment process as variously described by many scholars such as Okoro (2010), Chukwuemeka (2012) and Ude (2008) involves the interference of the godfathers in appointment process to ensure that his godson is appointed whether qualified or not. Okoli (2000) argued that sometimes in the process of this godfatherism, known organizational processes and ethics are by passed or completely ignored. Applications could be written and submitted after the job might have been offered to the applicant. Consequently, appointment were given to ghost applicants, it could as well be made in anticipation.

Ajadike (2010) views the idea of applying “man know man” principle in promotion, conversion of non-academic to academic and training of academic staff as awful as well as bad administrative practice which has affected the Nigerian sustainable development. Chukwuemeka (2008) contends that there are many other factors that are synonymous to godfatherism but still impede on merit system and efficient performance. This includes nepotism, bribery, job racketeering etc.

The challenge of Academic job racketeering and marketability of university products. Education at the university level is for the development of the highest manpower need of every society. It is the level of education that produces a “total man”. A total man is one who’s cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains have been sharpened by the instrument of education, and thus can contribute maximally in high level job positions with minimal supervision.

Academic job racketeering no matter how new the nomenclature may sound is not new, rather a trending and a profiteering business in Nigeria. Academic job racketeering is the acquisition of academic position through dishonest and illegal activities, either by kind or cash etc. It is also the act of obtaining academic position dishonestly through “job buying”, use of influence and outright purchase of vacant position. Oladunni (2000), Alutu and Aluede (2007), are of the opinion that most job vacancies today are no longer the basis of intellectual capabilities but on the highest bidder. Crimefact (2013) reported the high level of “cash for job” scam going on in Nigerian Law School. The author lamented on the dwindling standard of legal profession in the country, blaming it on alleged conspiracy on the part of University management.

Today, there is an over emphasis on paper qualification in Nigeria. Nigeria is rated as one of the leading nations in examination malpractices (Dailytimes, 2015). The author blamed the trend on too much emphasis on paper qualification as necessary requirement for securing employment and appointment. This worrying phenomenon could be discouraged only if less emphasis is accorded to certificates and greater consideration given to practical skills. The irony is that government agencies as well as Organized Private Sectors (OPS) tend to strongly attach much value to paper qualifications rather than practical skills. Professor Suleiman Bogoro, the Executive Secretary, Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), is quoted in Dailytimes (2015) to have observed that in the current prevailing corrupt socio-economic atmosphere, the danger is that certificates could easily be obtained through so many dubious channels and used in securing academic job. Speaking recently at the 44th graduation ceremony of the Air Force Institute of Technology (AFIT) in Kaduna, he decried a situation where people strive to acquire paper qualifications without necessarily passing through the academic rigours to attain them. Bogoro lamented that such qualification has become a cog in the wheel of true educational growth in the country hence, giving room to job buying. According to Bogoro, it is something of concern to see young

Nigerians with higher academic qualifications who cannot defend their certificates in practical terms, (Dailytimes, 2015). The position expressed in the forgoing analyses possess a strong challenge to academic appointment and recruitment in Nigerian Universities.

The university system and other higher institutions of learning must, therefore, become primary tools for Africa's development in the 21st century. The current trends in job racketeering leaves doubt to the marketability of Nigerian educational instruments and products, especially at the international arena. This should constitute a serious challenge and a matter of concern to university administration in Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the Marxist theory of post-colonial state which came into limelight as a counter to the proposition of the Western liberal democracy theory which contends that the state is an independent objective force and an impartial judge that not only cater for the overall interest of every member of the society but also regulates equitably their socio-economic transactions and processes (Okolie 2006, cited in Ayka, 2017)

Fundamentally, the theory of post-colonial state agrees that state is an instrument of domination and exploitation of available resources by the dominant class and their collaborators (Alavi, 1972 cited in Ayaka 2017).

The choice of using the Marxian theory of post-colonial state in explaining how the ruling class in the post-colonial Nigerian state has become a cog on the wheel of the Nigerians development and its failure to address the fundamental issues of nations building, development and good governance, are glaring.

The theory anchored on the tenets that the ruling class in the post-colonial African state is continuously exploring many ways to perpetuate themselves in power and expand their economic interest. This they achieve, using state apparatus. The state as pointed by Ake (1996) is that it has limited autonomy. The post-colonial state is constituted in such a manner that it is reflection of the interest of the dominant class.

The Marxist theory of post-colonial state is found credible in interrogating the emerging trend in the academic staff appointment in its fourth republic. Marx and Engels (1975) jointly buttressed that the executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie, mostly at the expense of the poor and less privilege. The states of Africa in the post-colonial era is a capitalist type where it differs from the state in Western world.

Therefore, contrary to the Liberal scholars, Karl Marx believes that the State is totally immersed in constant class struggle within and between the various institutional groups that makes it a reality (Obi, Herbert and Eleagu, 2016).

Political positions are central in many ways to the process of private wealth accumulation and source of self – advancement. These practices of post-colonialism in Nigeria are purely an expansion of colonial policies and practices which serve to entrench moral decadence.

Application of the Theory to the Study

Marxist theory of post-colonial state cannot be farfetched going by the fact that presently the privileged ruling class has continuously explored means of perpetuating themselves into power to the detriment of the weak. As a result they deploy their influence to secure academic positions for their own people, family, friends and loved ones. Since this theory is a reflection of the interest of the dominant class, the Nigerian Universities now becomes a fertile ground for politicians, academic godfathers, and other unseen hands operating within and outside, to laud over candidates for appointment in various fields of academic endeavour.

However, the theory possesses several tenets. To Okereke (2008) the basic tenet includes that:

- Society is divided into the few who have power using it to allocate values among the many who do not.
- The dominant class is drawn disproportionately from the masses.
- The dominant class share consensus on behalf of the values of the social system.

Adeoye (2017) argued that there is high tendency for the emergence of patron – client politics in a contemporary democracy where the society is hierarchically patterned like a pyramid. For the theory, the dominant class (powerful politicians) stands at the top and wield power in their different domain. In our context, the striking values of the theory in its application to the study, is that it provides the basis for governance. It is quite relevant to comprehending the dynamics of patron – client political relationship, as manifested in the academic staff appointment phenomenon. There is hardly any aspect of life in which the state does not exercise power and control. This character of the Nigerian state encourages clientele politics which according to Huntington (1997) exist where the state control opportunities for commerce and a wide range of jobs in the academic, administrative and legal fields. Within this context, politics means more than competition for political power but assumes the character of a desperate struggle for positions in the bureaucracy or for access to those who have influence over government decisions (Leeds, 1981). Issuing from the profitability of state power for primitive accumulation, the struggle for state power is reduced to public service and ethic of governance becomes secondary (Egwu, 2005). Thus, political power does not only represent the license to wealth, it is also the means to security and the guarantor of the general wellbeing (Ake, 2001). It is within the context of the dominant role of the state in public administration that

one can explain the desperation of Nigeria’s governing elites for state power as evidenced in the brazen manipulation of the electoral process, many times with impunity, just in a bid to usurp power, place their allies in vantage positions, especially in area of academic appointment.

The emerging trend in academic appointment is a systematic issue arising from the weakness and lack autonomy of post-colonial periphery state like Nigeria. The institutional weakness of the Nigerian University Commission and other relevant agencies are the first set of brick wall that are supposed to put a check on this menace. These agencies are supposed to effect and influence the behavior of individuals in the academic system and beyond. But these agencies by their acts of omission and commission, appears to lack complete independence. Osaghae. (2002) argued that the establishment of the center periphery relations between Britain and Nigeria has been the consequence of Nigeria’s categorization as extractive economy, a rentier state and a raw material exporting country in the international capitalist system This foundation to a large extent, led to the identifiable factors that set the pace for emerging trends in academic appointment in Nigerian Universities. This factor is associated with, the colonial legacy, social pluralism and its centrifugal tendencies, the preponderance of corrupt leadership, poor labour discipline, lack of entrepreneurship expertise, inadequate planning and poor management, anti-people policies etc (Ake, 1996). Ake submitted that the aforementioned factors could be responsible however, reasoned that the political conditions that brought the new elites, who took over the rein of leadership from their colonial masters, were corrupt. State power was the principle means for grasping economic power which became contentious among the existing ruling class and their rivals within the ethnic and social classes.

Methodology

This study shall employ the ex-post-facto research design which according to Kellinger, (1968:360) is the research in which the independent variable or variables have already occurred and in which the researcher starts the observation of a dependent variable or variables. He then studies the independent variable in retrospect for their possible relations to, and effect on, the dependent variable or variables

To generate data for this study we shall use both survey and documentary methods of data collection (mixed method). The survey design will be used in getting first-hand information from primary data elicited from the target population. To this end, the primary data for the study will be obtained through Questionnaires and interviews, which will be designed to achieve the study objectives and test the hypothesis.

Based on the instrumentation and validity of the data, the number of academic staff in UNN and UNIZIK, both from Enugu and Anambra State respectively, including non-teaching staff ie few principal officers randomly selected, stand at one thousand, six hundred (1,600) staff (March, 2019). Consequently, the sample size to be used for the data collection and analysis will be drawn using Taro Yamani (1968) formula for sample size determination, of which is a total of 320 represent the sample size of the population under investigation

Analysis and findings

The findings or results were analyzed using different data analysis methods. The purpose of the analysis was to establish the impact of emerging trend in academic appointment in Nigerian Universities on service delivery. Mean scores, standard deviation, Minimum, Maximum, frequencies and percentage scores were used to carry out analysis of data collected. Chi-square Analysis technique was used to test the hypotheses. The raw data were coded, evaluated and tabulated to depict clearly the results of the problem encountered.

Analysis of the Research Questions

Research Question One: Does the pattern of academic appointment exercise influence service delivery in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020?

Table 4.1: Pattern of academic appointment into UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020

s/n	Response	SA	A	U	DA	SD	FR	Mean	Decision
1	Appointment process in my institution is advertised for suitable qualified candidates to apply	10	10	5	120	175	320	4.2	Accepted
2	Appointment process of my institution is based on merit	10	10	20	130	150	320	4.1	Accepted
3	Appointment process of academic staff in my university is based on attraction of skilled manpower to the institution	10	20	10	100	80	320	4.4	Accepted
4	Academic staff appointments is usually done using due process in the university	15	25	10	180	90	320	4.1	Accepted
5	Appointment and recruitment of Vice Chancellors in my institution is based on the	150	120	10	20	20	320	4.2	Accepted

	influence of external forces confidence and trust of customers and the general public.								
6	Appointment is usually political and not merit-based through certain influence	180	115	5	10	10	320	4.2	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 4.1 above shows the mean distribution of opinions of the respondents on Pattern of academic appointment into UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020 were affirmed (based on tabulated acceptance mean rating of 3.0).

In item number one, the data shows that 10 respondents strongly agreed, 10 respondents Agreed, 5 respondents were undecided, 120 respondents Disagreed and 175 respondents strongly disagreed. The mean score is 4.3 is a strong indication that majority of the respondents declined accepting that Appointment process in my institution is advertised for suitable qualified candidates to apply. On item two, 10 respondents strongly agreed, 10 respondents Agreed, 20 were undecided, 130 respondents Disagreed and 150 respondents strongly disagreed. The high mean score of 4.1 is an indication that majority of the respondents strongly disagreed with the proposition that Appointment process of my institution is based on merit.

With reference to item three, 10 of the respondents strongly agreed, 20 respondents Agreed, 10 respondents undecided, 100 respondents disagreed while 80 respondents strongly disagreed. The result shows a mean score of 4.4 which directly implies that majority of respondents were not in agreement that Appointment process of academic staff in my university is based on attraction of skilled manpower to the institution.

For item number four, the high mean of 4.4 depicts that respondents are not in agreement that Academic staff appointments is usually done using due process in the university, 15 respondents strongly agreed, 25 respondents agreed, 10 respondents were undecided, while 180 respondents disagree, 90 respondents strongly disagree.

Item five with the mean of 4.2 showed that the respondents agreed that Appointment and recruitment of Vice Chancellors in my institution is based on the influence of external forces and not in confidence of the general public. Thus, item 6 with mean score of 4.2 showed that Appointment is usually political and not merit-based through certain influence.

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

The chi-square test technique was applied in analyzing the hypotheses.

The chi-square formula is.

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where:

χ^2 = Chi-square

O = Observed Frequency

E = Expected Frequency

\sum = Summation of all items

Assumptions:

Level of significance = 0.05

Decision rule

Reject Ho if the calculated value of χ^2 is greater than the critical value of χ^2 otherwise accept Ho. Software Package for Social Science (SPSS Version 16.0 for Student Version) was used to test the hypotheses

4.2.1 Test of Hypothesis One

Ho: The pattern of academic appointment exercise did not influence service delivery in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020.

Hi: The pattern of academic appointment exercise did influence service delivery in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020.

Table 4.2: Chi-square test for Pattern of academic appointment exercise and service delivery.

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	18.000(a)	6	.238
Likelihood Ratio	8.318	6	.216
Linear-by-Linear Association	.000	1	1.000

N of Valid Cases	4		
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a 12 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .25.

Source: Authors compilation SPSS Output

When reading this table we are interested in the results of the "Pearson Chi-Square" row. We can see here that $\chi(6) = 18.00$, $p = .238$. This tells us that there is a statistically significant association between Merit system and appointment and selection.

From the Phi and Cramer's V are both tests of the strength of association. We can see that the strength of association between the variables is very strong.

Result: The chi-square test showed that if calculated value is less than the table value, then we accept the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

Decision Rule: The decisions rule for χ^2 is that if the calculated value of χ^2 is less than the table value, then we accept the "null hypothesis" but if the calculated value is greater than table value we reject the null hypothesis.

Decision: Since the calculated value of $\chi^2 = 8.00$ is greater than the table value of $\chi^2 = 9.95$, we therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. The statistical significance indicated that Pattern of academic exercise did not influence service delivery in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020. This shows that academic job vacancies were not advertised within this period of study. Appointment exercise starts with advert which stands to attract qualified personnel for necessary recruitment exercise, from which the best will emerge.

Research Question 2: Did no merit system in the appointment of academic staff increase academic content quality in UNN from 2014 to 2020?

Table 4.2: Effect of non-merit on the appointment and selection of academic staff into UNN from 2014 to 2020

s/n	Response	SA	A	UD	DA	SD	Total	Mean	Decision
1	Academic staff appointment in my institution is based on (need) request from the department	40	40	20	100	120	320	4.0	Accepted
2	Inappropriate hiring practices, unprofessional management styles is often reflected on academic staff appointment process in my university	90	180	10	20	20	320	4.1	Accepted
3	Suitable qualified candidates are given free hand to participate in staff appointment exercise	50	70	10	120	50	320	3.2	Accepted
4	Appointment and selection in my institution is based essentially for satisfying the academic godfathers in the university	160	80	10	30	40	320	4.0	Accepted
5	Academic staff appointment and selection process in my university is based on experience and competence	40	40	20	100	120	320	3.6	Accepted
6	My university academic staff appointment process reflects the institution's belief in professionalism	25	25	10	200	60	320	4.1	Accepted

Source: Field Survey 2021

Table 4.2 above shows the mean distribution of opinions of the respondents on the: Effect of non-merit system on the appointment and selection of academic staff into UNN from 2014 to 2020 were affirmed (based on tabulated acceptance mean rating of 3.0).

With regards to item one, the data shows that 40 respondents strongly agreed, 40 respondents agreed, 20 respondents were undecided, 100 respondents disagreed and 120 respondents strongly disagreed. The mean score is 4.1 is an indication that majority of the respondents did not accept that Academic staff appointment in my institution is based on (need) request from the department.

On item two, 90 respondents strongly agreed, 80 respondents agreed, 10 respondents were undecided, 20 respondents disagreed and 20 respondents strongly disagreed. The high mean score of 4.1 is an indication that majority of the respondents accepted that the Inappropriate hiring practices, unprofessional management styles is often reflected on academic staff appointment process in my university.

With reference to item three, 50 of the respondents strongly agreed, 70 respondents agreed, 10 respondents undecided, 120 respondents disagreed while 50 respondents strongly disagreed. The result shows a high mean score of 3.2 implies that majority of respondents accepted the fact that Suitable qualified candidates are given free hand to participate in staff appointment exercise.

For item number four, the Agreed mean of 4.0 depicts that respondents accepted that Appointment and selection in my institution is based essentially for satisfying the academic godfathers in the university, while item five with the mean of 3.6 on the other hand showed that the respondents did not accept that Academic staff recruitment and selection process in my university is based on experience and competence. Item six with the mean score of 4.1 as well did not accept that their university academic staff appointment process reflects the institution's belief in professionalism.

Test of Hypothesis Two

Ho: Non merit system in academic appointment did not increase academic content quality in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020.

Hi: Non merit system in academic appointment did increase academic content quality in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020.

Table 4.11: Chi-Square Tests for non-merit system in academic appointment

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	25.000(a)	12	.245
Likelihood Ratio	13.322	12	.346
Linear-by-Linear Association	.976	1	.323
N of Valid Cases	5		

a 20 cells (100.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .20.

Source: Authors compilation SPSS Output

The result indicated that $\chi(12) = 25.00$, $p = .245$. This tells us that there is a statistically no significant association between merit system and academic appointment

Result: The chi-square test showed that if calculated value is less than the table value, then we accept the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

Decision Rule: The decisions rule for χ^2 is that if the calculated value of χ^2 is less than the table value, then we accept the "null hypothesis" but if the calculated value is greater than table value we reject the null hypothesis.

Decision

Since the calculated value of $\chi^2 = 25.00$ is greater than the table value of $\chi^2 = 9.95$, we therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. The statistical significance indicated that there is no relationship between merit system and academic appointment in UNN and UNIZIK from 2014 to 2020.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this paper show similarities and differences in the academic appointment practices in both public universities under study. It revealed that public university appoint annually within the period under review as opposed to the common practice that academic staff appointment can only be done based on need. HR practitioners in both Unn and Unizik considers equality and diversity in their appointment practices but argued that equality is difficult to attain because of the twin factors of favouritism and nepotism found within the Nigerian work environment, giving rise to primordial interest approach.

Recommendations

The study based on the findings puts forward the following recommendations:

1. Appointment of academic staff in UNN and UNIZIK should be based on needs of the department.
2. Departmental quota system must of necessity be easily adhered to, as its now, most departments have outshoot their quota and is creating crisis in the system.
3. University Governing Council must give approval before any academic appointment is done, this will eliminate academic staff appointment racketeering.
4. Academic staff appointment must be monitored by relevant regulatory bodies, such as (NUC) Nigerian University Commission.

5. Heads of department must be on the know, give consent before academic staff appointment is approved by the University management.

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