

VALUE ORIENTATION AND JOB EFFECTIVENESS OF NEW ACADEMIC STAFF OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN NORTH-CENTRAL NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the extent of value orientation programmes on the performance of lecturers in public Universities in North-central, Nigeria. The study was precipitated by perpetually observed problems of weak University culture and the constant poor job effectiveness of most teaching staff in public Universities in North-Central Nigeria. Most of them are unhappy and uninspired with the uncondusive working environment. The lack of good working condition has no doubt, translated into poor pedagogy, lack of commitment and dedication to duty, poor feedback to students, reduced levels of research outcomes and community service with resultant effect on students' performance and University's goals attainment. The conduct of induction training is often justified for its purpose to help new employees to fit smoothly into an organization. The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey method. The population of this study consists of all the seven thousand seven hundred and forty seven (7747) academic staff members and two hundred and fifty three thousand eight hundred and seventy two (253872) students working and studying in the thirteen public Universities and the Federal Capital Territory in North-central Nigeria

The sample of 501 lecturers and 2363 students from six public Universities was used. This was based on the Yamene (1967) formula for sampling. Data was collected using the 'Value Orientation Programmes and Job Effectiveness of New Academic Staff' Questionnaire (VOPJENASQ) for lecturers and Academic Staff Effectiveness Questionnaire (ASEQ) for students. Mean, Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions while Pearson Correlation was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that there is significant relationship between job effectiveness of lecturers and value orientation programmes in public Universities in North-central Nigeria. The findings also revealed that value orientation programmes for new academic staff members have a positive influence on job effectiveness of lecturers. Thus, in order for new academics to be effective in their job duties, administrators should encourage value orientation programmes for new academic staff to stabilize them in their new job challenges by designing induction programmes and guidelines for job effectiveness and University goal achievement. Senior academics should not only be concerned with administrative, teaching and supervisor/supervisee relationship, they should be made by policy and insist they share time, skills, knowledge and competences to new staff members as a necessary means of handing over professionalism.

Keywords: value orientation, job effectiveness and public universities

INTRODUCTION

There has been quest by government to improve access to University education as well as quality education. This expansion is not without its challenges, particularly with respect to quality of education service delivery. To cope with the increased enrolment due to increase access and to adequately provide staff for their various programmes, Universities have had to employ more academic staff. These new lecturers are expected to immediately carry out academic activities such as teaching, research and community service. However, there are complaints by students and parents that such new academic staff members are not adequately prepared to face the new job challenges and demands considering their different backgrounds and experiences. There is need to provide new lecturers with some value orientation and induction programmes to help them perform efficiently and effectively. Universities like any other organizations become one of the institutions that face a lot of changes and transformation to enhance their skill and performance towards international standard. The development of lecturers' efficacy and teaching performance are often in the centre of attention in Universities. The challenges experienced by Universities currently, such as large student enrollments, globalization of education with inherent competition has called for more current expertise in delivery of quality education and research output. The emerging issues of University staff turnover, brain drain have now placed pressure on lecturers to perform and improve the status of the University in the global academia. Thus, lecturers' are required to prove their credibility in the Universities based on the strength and magnitude of their research activities, teaching and community services among other ethics.

Value orientation is formal structured programmes intended to help new lecturers to integrate themselves properly into the University system. It is also to enable new lecturers to adequately acquire professional ability and competences to enable them face their job exercises. With the rapid global workforce changes, value orientation and induction programmes have been fully responded to as a means of enhancing job effectiveness of especially new employees. Starting a new job in a new work environment brings series of adjustment challenges

to an individual. It is crucial therefore, that to achieve institutional performance and enhance credibility, Universities should emphasize the effective acquisition, utilization of value orientation and induction programmes. Induction enables new lecturers to understand the University culture and how they can be most effective in it, become familiar with departmental practices, policies and guidelines, appreciate and understand fully the expectation of their roles (Anijaobi-Idem & Archibong, 2012). A value orientation and induction programme has become the vehicle for meaningful change which plays an integral part in developing the University's philosophy, goals and expectations. Beliefs are the convictions that we generally hold to be true, sometimes without proof. They are basically judgments that we make about ourselves and the world around us. Our values therefore stems from those beliefs. The strong conviction that a school has on the relative worth of certain abstractions such as; hard work, equality, honesty, education, effort, perseverance, loyalty, faithfulness constitutes its beliefs and core values Adetoun (2006). Schools will be mindful of all these important variables that will lead to the attainment of its goals. For example, only qualified teachers will be employed to teach and admissions will only be given on merit, the school environment will be made safe and conducive for learning and effective supervision will be given to monitor performance.

The improvement of access to University education is not without its challenges particularly with respect to adequately provide staff for the various programmes and the expected quality of education service delivery, Universities' administrators have had to employ new lecturers. These new academic staff members are expected to immediately begin to carry out academic activities such as teaching, research, examination administration and supervision of students' projects and theses. One wonders whether all new recruits are adequately prepared to face the new job demands. If staff members are to establish themselves quickly, efficiently and effectively, there is need to provide them with guidance, support and information in a planned and considered way (Anijaobi-Idem & Archibong, 2012). Starting a new job in a new work environment presents series of challenges to an individual irrespective of previous experiences. An induction process serves as a starting point from the training and development of new staff. Well-meaning organizations take positive steps to cushion the effect of these demands and ensure an easy transition period for the new employee in terms of roles and responsibilities, organizational norms and relationship with work colleagues. Induction enables new staff to understand the culture of the University and how they can be most effective in it. It also helps new employees become familiar with departmental practices, policies and guidelines and understand fully the expectation of their roles, duties and activities of the job and to begin to perform them effectively. A conducive work environment in terms of early socialization at work place for academic staff is needed for their job performance (Ajayi, Awosusi, Aroguntade & Ekundayo, 2011).

According to Ajao (2011), the benefits of a thorough induction are: staff feels welcome and valued; accelerated success and effectiveness, improved personal and professional well-being; heightened job satisfaction; greater self-confidence and enhanced commitment to students, school and profession. There is no doubt that when academics are provided with an appropriate and well-planned induction programme they are more highly motivated. Induction programmes can extend new lecturers range of skills and knowledge, enabling them to be more adaptable and are less likely to waste the University's resources and staff time. Such programmes are beneficial and could reduce the levels of stress and anxiety for new lecturers. Despite these importance and benefits of professional socialization, Universities do little to integrate their new members, leaving them as it were to find their own solutions in the complex academic world which needs investigation (Anijaobi-Idem & Archibong, 2012). This contradicts Hendrick and Louw-Potgieter (2012) that found out that value orientation does not have any significant influence on employee performance. This contradiction needs further examination to ascertain the claim. An induction process serves as a starting point for the training and development of new staff. Given the challenges confronting new staff, it is therefore vital that Universities ensure that new staff understand the mission, vision, goals, values, expectations and demands of University education as well as learn new behaviours and 'unlearn' things acquired in previous settings. Beyond this, the institution must take positive steps to provide enabling environment, so as to ease the adjustment process of new staff. If early socialization in their first academic appointments is deficient or unsuccessful, it could result in unmet expectations, dissatisfaction and lack of commitment on the part of new recruits.

Such academics are also likely to take more time to settle down, make more mistakes and may even become disillusioned with the job and then personal frustration and institutional disappointment may ensue. Personal observation reveals that University management sees value orientation and induction programmes as processes of completing paper work by new staff or a series of uncoordinated events during which new academics are hurriedly introduced to the general work environment, rather than offering them experiences that inspire and prepare them for the challenges of their new jobs. Yakubu(2000). An effective induction programme helps a new employee to feel assured and comfortable in the new work environment which is critical for early assumption of a new role. It is even more disturbing especially as it concerns effective staff integration, given the fact that the

early experiences of a new employee has important and lasting impact on their performance on the job and in some cases their willingness to remain in the institution. It is evident that value orientation of new lecturers is a very needful activity that should not be ignored. But the crucial issue of concern is that this has been inadequately done or not done at all for newly recruited staff in the public Universities in Plateau state Nigeria.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Personal observations showed that there are complaints by stakeholders that there are no formal structured programmes to help new academic staff to integrate themselves properly into the University system. New lecturers seem to complain they lack the required guidance through formal value orientation and induction programmes for effective job performance. It is therefore not an exaggeration to see new lecturers in public Universities in North-central Nigeria confused and irritated trying to find out lecture venues or even to recognize their colleagues. This trend continues anytime new lecturers are employed leading to confusion, absenteeism and lateness to classes, poor feedback to students, personality issues, poor students application, leading to ineffectiveness in teaching, reduced level of research productivity and community service activities in the Universities.

Aim and objectives of the study

The aim of the study is to:

1. examine the extent of value orientation of new lecturers in public Universities in Plateau state Nigeria.
2. ascertain the extent of job effectiveness of new lecturers in public Universities in Plateau state Nigeria.
3. find out the relationship between value orientation for new lecturers and their job effectiveness in public Universities in Plateau state Nigeria.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the extent of value orientation of new academic staff in public Universities in North-central Nigeria?
2. What is the extent of job effectiveness of new academic staff in public Universities in North-central Nigeria?
3. What is the extent of relationship between value orientation and job effectiveness of new academic staff of public Universities in North-central Nigeria?

HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant relationship between value orientation and job effectiveness of new academic staff of public Universities in North-central Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this study is the descriptive survey method. Descriptive survey design is concerned about the phenomenon of interest and pursues the factors that influence, affect, cause or relate to the phenomenon (Polit & Hungler, 1991). The design is attractive where control of subjects is quite difficult to achieve or implement. It is justified on the ground that, someone could adopt one time observation, involving proximate and ultimate variables necessary for a study. The choice of the design is further informed due to its simplicity and ease of administration since it requires no more than the collection of two or more measures on a set of subjects at one point in time and requires no treatment or manipulation. The population of the study consists of all 7747 academic staff members and 2363 students of the public Universities in North-central Nigeria. 373 lecturers and 401 students using Yamene sampling formula was used to obtain the sample for the study. The Unit Heads, Heads of Departments and Deans of Faculties were included in the study due to their key administrative position and related activities as school administrators. Their roles among others are to monitor lecturers' efficiency and effectiveness in implementing the academic programmes and practices in their Universities. Two research instruments tagged 'Value Orientation Programmes and Job Effectiveness of New Academic Staff' (VOPJENAS) for lecturers and Academic Staff Effectiveness Questionnaire (ASEQ) for students of public Universities in North-central Nigeria were used to collect data for the study. The Mean, Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions and Pearson Correlation coefficient was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Question One

What is the extent of academic staff value orientation in public Universities in North-central Nigeria?

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation Result on Academic Staff Value Orientation of Public Universities in North-Central Nigeria.

S/N	Item	N	Agg. Mean	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Punctuality	2363	9.960	3.320	2.406
2	Absenteeism	2363	10.560	3.520	2.424
3	Students' application	2363	13.920	4.640	3.027
3	Feedback to students	2363	17.270	3.454	4.317
4	Personality	2363	42.510	3.270	7.694
5	Academic calendar	2363	14.350	4.783	3.549

Table 1 reveals the mean and standard deviation result on extent of academic staff value orientation in public Universities in North-central Nigeria. The result shows that all the items have Mean scores above the criterion mean of 3.00, indicating that punctuality, absenteeism, students' application, feedback to students, personality and academic calendar are affected by value orientation programmes for academic staff.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between value orientation and academic staff effectiveness in public Universities in North-central Nigeria

Table 2

Pearson Correlation of Relationship between University Culture of Value Orientation and Academic Staff Effectiveness in Teaching in Public Universities in North-Central Nigeria.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	r	P value	Decision
Value orientation	2363	85.82	18.68	0.306	0.000	Accept Ho
Academic staff effectiveness	2363	363.59	85.95			

Table 2 shows the Pearson Correlation result analysis of relationship between University culture and academic staff effectiveness in teaching in public Universities in North-central Nigeria. From the table the Mean score of University culture ($\bar{X} = 85.82$) is higher than that of academic staff effectiveness in teaching ($\bar{X} = 38.34$). The result yielded $r = 0.306$, $P < 0.05$ which shows a weak positive relationship between the two variables. Since the P value (0.000) is less than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. It was concluded that there is a significant relationship between University culture and community services in public Universities North-central Nigeria.

DISCUSSION

The study examined the influence of University value orientation on academic staff job effectiveness in public Universities in North-central Nigeria. This was due to the perpetually observed problems of weak University culture and poor job performance of academic staff experienced in public Universities in North-central Nigeria. Results tend to show that University value orientation culture is weak and negatively influenced job effectiveness of academic staff of public Universities in North-central Nigeria and hence University goals are hardly attained.(Ogundele,2013)

Result also showed that only a few new academic staff received value orientation and induction in terms of staff handbook and condition of service while a very high percentage did not. This result showed negligence on the part of University management in carrying out their responsibilities. This has made many lecturers to remain ignorant of the basic terms of conditions of employment. It is not surprising that a good number of academic staff have never seen the University handbook and have remained ignorant of basic terms, and conditions of employment, values and practices. It is important that new lecturers be acquainted with all necessary information, history, rules and procedures available among other things. This will help new lecturers adjust to the demands of the University and the possibility of picking any negative tendencies prevalent in the system is reduced. The finding showed that new lecturers do not get adequate support from members to help them adjust to their new environment. Value orientation programmes for new lecturers are required to ensure that departmental practices are learning-friendly. With regards to information, majority of new lecturers were not given information booklets in the form of handbooks containing all they need to know about their University as well as their conditions of service. Personal experience shows that even the very senior lecturers that have spent years in

the University system have never seen the University handbook. Adequate information is vital to put the new staff on the right footing to know the mission, vision as well as procedures and practices of the Universities. The result corroborates Ajayi, Awosusi, Aroguntade and Ekundayo (2011), starting a new job in a new work environment presents series of challenges to an individual irrespective of previous experiences. Therefore, positive steps should be taken to cushion the effect of these demands and ensure an easy transition period for the new employee in terms of roles and responsibilities, organizational norms and relationship with work colleagues. The result accord well with Oke (2011) that the benefits of a thorough induction are: staff feels welcome and valued; accelerated success and effectiveness, improved personal and professional well-being; heightened job satisfaction; greater self-confidence and enhanced commitment to students, school and profession. There is no doubt that when academics are provided with an appropriate and well-planned induction programme they are more highly motivated, can extend their range of skills and knowledge, enabling them to be more adaptable, are less likely to waste the University's resources and staff time, and benefit from reduced levels of stress and anxiety.

The implications of the study is that value orientation programme is increasingly and strongly emerging as one of the most valuable instruments for employees' development in organizations. It has become obvious that it is beneficial to lecturers as a development method used to determine career interest, values, aptitudes, attitudes and behavioural changes. The University management is to identify opportunities and personal areas needing employees' improvement and to provide assessment information for identifying strengths, weaknesses, interests and values. In fostering value orientation activities, evaluation and feedback at different stages of lecturer career is a powerful tool for determining learning and development needs.

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