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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LECTURERS' COMMITMENT AND UNIVERSITY GOAL ACHIEVEMENT IN SOUTH-WEST GEO-POLITICAL ZONE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Lecturers need to be committed to the university in order to be efficient and effective. Most often than not, lecturers in Nigerian universities are blamed for under- performance of universities. This study therefore investigate (i) the level of lecturers' commitment in south west geo-political zone, Nigeria, (ii) the level of university goal achievement in south west geo-political zone, Nigeria, and (iii) if there is any relationship between lecturers' commitment and university goal achievement. Descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study is 4,951 lecturers of five federal universities in south west geo-political zone, Nigeria. Proportional sampling technique was used to select 1,361 lecturers and students' academic performance pro-forma was used to collect data on university goal achievement because it was limited to university goal achievement in teaching. Percentage was used to answer the research questions while Chi-square statistic was used to test the hypothesis formulated. The findings of the study showed that (i) university lecturers in south west geo-political zone, Nigeria are committed, (ii) the level of university goal achievement(in teaching) in south west geo-political zone, Nigeria is on the average, and (iii) there is significant relationship between lecturers' commitment and university goal achievement in south west geo-political zone, Nigeria. The study concluded that to enhance university goal achievement high lecturers' commitment must be ensured. It was therefore recommended that lecturers' commitment should be enhanced through the provision of adequate developmental programmes, adequate compensation, high supervisory and co-worker support.

Key Words: Lecturers' commitment, university goal achievement

Introduction

Universities worldwide including Nigerian universities have always had as their fundamental objectives, the pursuit of its triple mandate of: knowledge generation (or research function); knowledge transmission (or teaching function); knowledge application (or community services). According to Abdulkareem (2015), university goal achievement in research is usually determined by the number of publications and development programmes attended by the lecturers. The university goal achievement in community service on the other hand is usually determined by number of administrative responsibilities and committee handled by lecturers over specific period. The university goal achievement in teaching (knowledge transmission) according to Abdulkareem (2015) can be measured by the students' academic performance. This study focussed on the university goal achievement in teaching because it could be said that knowledge transmission is 'primus inter pares' (first among equals) of the trifocal functions of university education system because teaching is the first task of the lecturer although the three functions are interrelated and can hardly be divorced from one another (Aguire & Martinez, 2002).

Lecturers play an important role in the achievement of university goals through their work in the institutions. They contribute to the future of their students and the society either positively or negatively. The commitment of lecturers is a key factor influencing the teaching-learning process and subsequent achievement of university goals. Lecturers' commitment is the psychological identification of the individual lecturer with a university and the subject matter or goals, and the intention of that lecturer to maintain organisational membership and become involved in the job well beyond personal interest (Ndubueze, 2013). He further stressed that there is no effective education without a committed lecturer who is willing and ready to give his best to his/her students. A committed lecturer is one that is not only concerned about his payment or promotion but also sees to it that his students get the very best meaning of what is been taught in class and strive towards the achievement of university goals in general.

Teaching is the most important of the entire triple mandate of university lecturers. Teaching is not a mission; it is a profession, and like any other, it requires a certain set of knowledge, competencies, skills, and behaviours. A lecturer who is truly committed to students is one that puts students' learning and interests above everything else. The commitment of lecturers should go beyond just communicating with their students in class but should include providing opportunities for students to keep in touch with them by way of classroom blogs, Facebook pages, phone calls and the like (Ndubueze, 2013).

Indeed, the responsibilities of propounding, preserving, promoting and propagating knowledge fall squarely on the university system (Babalola, 2008). The lecturers are the main agents of achieving these goals. Thus, their commitment is highly important. Ambayi (2011) lamented that academic staff (in higher education) in the developing countries are often under qualified, lack motivation and are poorly rewarded. The lack of motivation and poor reward of academic staff is likely to result to low commitment of lecturers. This is evident in the findings of Darolia, Kumari and Darolia, (2010) that employees with higher commitment were more motivated when compared to employees with lower commitment. Obeng and Ugboro, (2003) compared employees with low organizational commitment level to employees having a high level of commitment and discovered that employees with high commitment were of higher performance and were more productive. Ambayi (2011) support this assertion when he concluded that students are poorly taught and curricula underdeveloped in higher educational institutions in developing countries. With only few exceptions, across most of the developing world, the potential of higher-education to promote development is being realized only marginally (The World Bank, 2012). It is therefore rationale to carry out a study on Lecturers' commitment and university goal achievement in South-west Geo-political Zone, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. Are university lecturers in south-west geo-political zone, Nigeria committed?
2. What is the level of university goal achievement (in teaching) in South-west Geo-political Zone, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between lecturers' commitment and university goal achievement in South-west Geo-political Zone, Nigeria

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted in carrying out this study. The study focussed on the Federal Universities in South-west geo political zone in Nigeria. The target population of the study include 4951 lecturers and 96,595 graduates of the five federal universities in South-West geo political zone of Nigeria. Proportional sampling technique (using Krejcie & Morgan (1970) sample determination table) was adopted to select 1361 lecturers that constituted the sample of the study. The sample includes 297 out of 1255 lecturers in University of Lagos, Akoka; 297 out of 1,290 lecturers in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile Ife; 291 out of 1202 lecturers in university of Ibadan, Ibadan; 234 out of 570 lecturers in University of Agriculture, Abeokuta; and 242 out of 634 lecturers in Federal University of Technology, Akure. One researcher-made questionnaire titled lecturers' commitment questionnaire (LJCQ) was used to collect information on lecturers' job commitment while the Student Academic Performance Pro-forma (SAPP) was used to collect information on university goal achievement in teaching. The questionnaire was validated by three experts from the department of Educational Management, University of Ilorin while Crumbach Alpha was used to the reliability of the instrument (0.69). The research questions were answered using percentage; Chi-square statistic was used to test the hypothesis formulated.

Results

Research Question One: Are university lecturers in south-west geo-political zone, Nigeria committed?

Table 1: University Lecturers' Commitment in South west Geo-political Zone

S/N	ITEMS	AGREED		DISAGREED	
		TOTAL	%	TOTAL	%
1	I am willing to put in a great effort beyond normal expectation in order to help this institution succeed	801	58.9	560	41.1
2	It will be very hard for me to leave this institution	1002	73.6	359	26.4
3	If I am offered a job in another organization with a slight increase in pay, I will still not change my teaching job	1002	73.6	359	26.4
4	I feel like part of the family in my institution	1200	88.2	161	11.8
5	It is better to stay in this institution because of the uncertainties in leaving for any other job	1000	73.5	361	26.5
6	It is not easy to get another job in Nigeria, so it's better to be committed to this one	1200	88.2	161	11.8
7	Sharing my knowledge with other people makes me happy	1008	74.1	353	25.9
8	To know that my own work has made a contribution to the good of this institution pleases me	1300	95.5	61	4.5
9	The success of this institution is beyond my personal Satisfaction	400	29.4	961	70.6
10	The respect given to my institution motivates me to work harder beyond my personal satisfaction	805	62.7	508	37.3
Percentage Average(%)		69.1		30.9	

Source: field survey (2015)

From table one, it can be deduced that 69.1% of the lecturers (on the average) agreed that university lecturers in south west geo-political zone are committed while 30.9% disagreed. Invariably the highest percentage (69.1) of the respondents (on the average) agreed that they are willing to put in great effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this institution to be successful, if they are offered a job in another organization/institution with a slight increase in pay, they will

still not change my teaching job, they feel like part of the family in their institutions, it is better to stay in this institution because of the uncertainties in leaving for any other job, it is not easy to get another job in Nigeria, so it's better to be committed to this one , sharing their knowledge with other people (students) make them happy, the success of this institution is beyond their personal satisfaction, and that the respect given to their institutions motivate them to work harder while 30.9% of the lecturers disagreed. The higher percentage of agreement and lower percentage of disagreement showed that the lecturers are committed to their institutions.

Research Question Two: what is the level of university goal achievement (in teaching) in south west geo-political zone, Nigeria?

Table 2: Level of University Goal Achievement (in teaching) in South west Geo-political Zone, Nigeria

SN	Years under study	Number of Graduates according to Classes of Degree				
		1 st Class	2 nd class upper	2 nd class lower	3 rd Class	Pass
1	2008/2009	347	5032	15,936	1100	50
2	2009/2010	298	4,699	16,464	1302	72
3	2010/2011	303	7,820	17,107	930	100
4	2011/2012	101	3,110	14,157	1519	89
5	2012/2013	73	2,320	13,143	2091	132
Total		1,122	22,981	65,107	6942	443

Source; Graduation brochure of five federal universities from 2008/2009- 2012/2013 academic sessions.

Table two showed that 1,122 (1.2 %) students graduated with first class, 22,981 (23.8%) students graduated with second class (upper division), 65,107 (67.4%) students graduated with second class (lower division), 6,942 (7.15%) students graduated with third class while 443 (0.45%) graduated with pass between 2008/2009 to 2012/2013 academic session in the five federal universities in south west geo-political zone. This analysis showed that the universities produced more

average students (67.4%) compare to high fliers (25%) and low classes graduate (7.6%). It therefore showed that the universities in south west geo political zone to a great extent achieved their goal (in teaching) to a moderate or average extent.

Research Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between lecturers' commitment and achievement of goals in Universities in South-west geo-political Zone, Nigeria.

Table 3: Analysis of Lecturers' Commitment and University Goals Achievement

Variable	N	P-value	Level of Significance	Decision
Lecturers' Commitment	1361	0.00	0.05	Ho Rejected
University Goal Achievement(in teaching)	1361			

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

Table three shows that the p-value of 0.00 is lesser than the significant level of 0.05. Therefore, the research hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between lecturers' commitment and achievement of goals in Universities in South-west geo-political Zone, Nigeria was rejected. Thus, there is significant relationship between lecturers' commitment and achievement of goals in Universities in South-west geo-political Zone, Nigeria

Discussion of Findings

The finding from the testing of operational hypothesis showed that there is significant relationship between lecturers' commitment and university goal achievement in south west geo-political zone, Nigeria. The finding is in agreement with the position of TengkuShahdan, Ghani, and Elham, (2012), that to be a professional, it is a necessity for teachers to be emotionally committed to their work, for without these emotional connection teachers faces the constant danger of burn-out in an increasingly intensified work environment. Muthuveloo & Rose (2005) conformed that; the willingness of employees go a long way in the

achievement of organization' goals. The stronger and deeper lecturers' commitment is, the longer employees stay in the same organization and are more motivated to put more effort into their work (Cohen, 2007; Martin & Terblanch, 2003)

Conclusions

The achievement of university goals is at risk when lecturers put up a lackadaisical attitude towards teaching the student. Lecturers should not allow their personal problems or needs affect their works. Even when they have to miss work, they should find a way to minimise the effects of their absence on students by: providing a detailed lesson plan for the substitute lecturer; whenever possible, choosing a day in which their absence will jeopardise students' learning the least; if choosing the date is not possible, rearranging the content so that the most challenging aspects will be dealt with on a day they will be present. When students don't receive proper teaching from the lecturers, their school fees and right are being tampered with. In the same vein, when lecturers fail to perform their research and community services very well, the achievement of university goals may also be jeopardized.

In conclusion, since factors such as quality of trainings, supervision, participatory decision making process, role conflict, role ambiguity and role overload are determinants of lecturers' commitment, management of universities need to consider long term indirect investment in employees (since they are the agent for university goal achievement). Investment in trainings, more advanced management systems, organization of staff meetings and other organizational activities such as holiday gatherings would help to develop committed staff who would be devoted to the achievement of university goals.

Recommendations

Training and development opportunities, the absence of role ambiguity, participation in decision making, and co-worker and supervisory support appeared to be the main factors leading to higher level of lecturers' commitment. Therefore, suggestions that could help target each of the factors and thus, would lead to higher lecturers' commitment to the universities towards achievement of its goals.

1. Training and development should be adequately provided to make lecturers' believe that the university support their personal development thus enhance their commitment to the university goal achievement
2. The absence of role ambiguity is crucial to lecturers' commitment, therefore, it is important to define the tasks and responsibilities an academic is in charge of when working in a particular job position. In order to eliminate role ambiguity, universities management should organize employee socialization programs, which increase communication among employees and thus, allows undertaking the roles of each and every of them. Also, the introduction of effective orientation guidelines to the newly employed persons would also be helpful..
3. Keeping employees involved in the decision making of all organization related issues is also a factor leading to higher level of lecturers' commitment. Therefore, it is crucial for the universities, which still operate under hierarchical superior-subordinate management system to switch to horizontal management structures, where employees, who are otherwise hierarchically unequal, are involved in decision making process to the higher extent. The involvement into decision making process could be stimulated by organizing more staff meetings and discussions focused to particular issues.
4. Social support (co-worker and supervisory support) within the organization also plays an important role while determining lecturers' commitment towards university goal achievement. It is therefore crucial to implement certain policies that would ensure safe, friendly, trustworthy and supportive working environment in the universities.

5. To improve co-worker support, the universities should make efforts to create a less competitive environment among the academic staff. The absence of competition among employees makes them more helpful to each other, In order to ensure higher levels of co-worker interactions and support, interpersonal relations should be encouraged. This could be achieved by organizing more organizational activities for the employees (such as holiday gatherings, group trainings and trips), encouraging teamwork through joint researches and recognition of achievements.
6. In terms of supervisory support, as lecturing and other academic duties are rather autonomous and do not require direct supervision, it is highly important for the university management not to set the requirements to the working staff unilaterally, but to provide all the information and communicate first and agree on rules that seem fair to both parties. This could be achieved by continuous appraisal and achievement recognition.

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