

INFORMATION GATHERING AND DISSEMINATION ON JOB PERFORMANCE OF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA.

BY

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the extent to which Information gathering and dissemination influences job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria. The population of this study consisted of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South geo-political zones in Nigeria, which are 665 in number. The study adopted descriptive survey design while stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting the respondents. Data was obtained using a research questionnaire "Information Gathering and Dissemination on Job Performance of Administrative Officers' Questionnaire (IGDJPAOQ)". Data obtained from respondents was analysed using mean statistics while independent t-test analysis was used for hypothesis 1 and One-way analysis of variance for hypotheses 2. It was concluded that information gathering and information dissemination has significant influence on job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South in Nigeria. It was therefore recommended that administrative officers should be trained on proper method of information dissemination as this will enhance efficiency of their administrative duties.

Introduction

Information Management is a process of handling information and using it for the purpose for which it was made. It can be classified into information gathering, codification, content management, information processing and information dissemination. Titus (2012) supported that all these components of information management are brought together in order to bring about effective performance by the workers. Information management ensures that the data needed by the organizations are collected and processed efficiently and effectively into information and knowledge useful to the organization. Information management supports decision-making through efficient access to accurate and relevant information.

Young (2011) assert that for administrative officers to be effectively directed and to perform better in their roles they must be adequately trained on information gathering and the training must be given adequate attention by the management. At this point, good leadership qualities, practical-oriented training policy, participatory management, conducive working environment and free flow of information, will create a platform for the administrative staff to be trained on information gathering with the ultimate aim of enhancing their administrative roles (Aina, 2004). In addition to other roles, the administrative officer should include selection,

ordering and acquisition, automated circulation of information resources and digitization of information resources.

Administrative officers have different roles and functions in a given University environment. According to Smith (2008), the work related task of the administrative officers are numerous and so needs some element of codification in order to promote effectiveness. Such roles as strengthening admission process of students, recruitment methods for administrative staff; the gender imbalance and the prevalence of males in the higher levels of administration; career mapping and job re-evaluation; in-house training for administrative staff; representation on college committees; recent developments in college policies with regard to administrative staff; and recommendations for the future promote the administrative staff needs for codification of the available information. While a number of the issues which are often discussed are of concern to all staff, they are better dealt with from the viewpoint of administrative staff.

Information dissemination helps to educate, enlighten, and provide knowledge which in turn transform peoples outlook by what they know. The administrative officer makes sure that dissemination of information is done day-to-day in their organization for success stories. It is quite true that the knowledge distributed by administrative officer enhances understanding and gives good orientation which invariably generates the transformation of self. This in turn creates peace and tranquility between and within organizational members (Eze, 2009). Therefore, the major focus of this research work is to examine the influence of information gathering and dissemination on job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Federal Universities in Nigeria are often confronted with many information management challenges which affect smooth running of administrative activities in the schools. Most times this occurs when organizational change is engendered. Federal Universities in the South-South region of Nigeria are not exempted from these challenges. The novelty of new systems architectures and lack of experience with new styles of information management require a level of organizational change in the process of administrative duties and that is why it is difficult to deliver. As a result of a general organizational reluctance to change, to enable new forms of information management, there might be a shortfall in the requisite resources. Similarly, failure to acknowledge new classes of information and the new procedures in using them, lack of support from senior management leading to a loss of strategic vision and even political maneuvering that undermines the operation of the whole organization. It is a fact that the implementation of new forms of information management would normally lead to operational benefits but many people do not understand the need for this.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to determine the extent to which Information gathering and dissemination influences job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the extent to which information gathering influence the job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South- South, Nigeria.

2. determine the extent to which information dissemination influence the job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study:

1. To what extent does information gathering influence job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria?
2. To what extent does information dissemination influence job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria?

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were postulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. H_{01} : There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female administrative officers on the extent of influence of information gathering on their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.
2. H_{02} : There is no significant difference in the mean responses of administrative officers on the extent of influence of information dissemination on their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria based on marital status.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Information Gathering and Job Performance of Administrative Officers

Information gathering is the process of collecting information about something. It refers to gathering information about the issue you are facing and the ways other organizations and communities have addressed it. There are obviously many sources of information and are varied depending on what a staff is looking for, these are: Existing sources: - This term refers to published material of various kinds that might shed light either on the issue or on attempts to deal with it. These can be conveniently divided into scholarly publications, mass-market sources, and statistical and demographic information. Natural example: - These are programs or interventions developed and tried in organizations that have addressed your issue. Studying them can tell you what worked for them and what did not, and why.

Mello (2006) opined that gathering of relevant and up-to-date information is a key to business progress. Information consists of organized facts and figures that have meaning within the context that the information is intended to be interpreted by people. Regardless of the field of study or preference for defining data (quantitative or qualitative), accurate information is essential to maintaining the integrity of decision. Both the selection of appropriate information gathering instruments (existing, modified, or newly developed) and clearly delineated instructions for their correct use reduce the likelihood of errors occurring. The main purpose of gathering information is to allow team members and administrative staff to know what is lacking in the organization in regards to the personnel needs and how management can help to meet such needs. Information gathering enables the Administrative Staff to perform their job effectively and efficiently by bringing multiple pieces of information into one source file, confirm at a glance you have the information you need, remove the obstacle of missing collated information,

and repurpose documents for sharing, web printing with the right level of security as well increase accuracy in the decision-making process.

Information gathering is closely related to planning and forecasting. Planning is the process of thinking about and organizing the activities required to achieve a desired goal while forecasting is the process of making predictions of the future based on past and present information and analysis of trends. This helps to reduce risk and uncertainty. Information gathering also helps to collect and submit relevant data to authorities entrusted with compiling statistics. Accurate information reporting gives rise to accurate analyses of the facts on the ground, inaccurate information gathering can lead to vastly uninformed decision based on erroneous evidence. The information system designed for an organization must meet the requirements of the end users of the organization.

Information Dissemination and Job Performance of Administrative Officers

Dissemination involves a sender and receiver. Here, the sender sends information and the receiver collect the information, process it and send the information back. Information flows in a circular format. According to Opara (2003), information is the life blood of modern organizations. That is to say that without information, an organization is bound to collapse. Information is needed to control the day- to-day running of an organization. Olowu (2004) said that information entails data, facts, ideas, and imaginations, opinions, cultural values in a variety of media which includes print, audio-visual –materials and electronic processes. This shows how information flows within and between people in an organization. This means that data is necessary to produce information which in turn is necessary for creating knowledge that is conveyed (e.g. via paper network, speech, observable action). Aguolu (2002) assessed information as the message of human experience, that is, what is transmitted as signal, or a stimulus assumes a response in the receiver, and therefore possesses a response potential.

Psychologists have described information dissemination or communication as a need comparable with other basic needs while philosophers posit that the free flow of information is a right of the people which enables them to participate effectively in organizational activities. For personnel in an organization to take calculated and appropriate decisions on issues affecting them, Eze (2002) and Agolu (2009) believe that the presence of information creates opinion and sets the stage for meaningful decision-making. Information constitutes the raw materials from which options or alternatives emerge. There are various ways to disseminate information in an organization. The effectiveness of a given dissemination strategy depends on factors such as the characteristics of the innovation, the target audience, and the information channel. The means of delivery is a key part of the strategy for better information. The key is to adopt a method that will work for the target audience and for the type of content you have to deliver. In the development of an organizational structure, communication channels are an important consideration. The manager in a hierarchical system becomes a link in the communication chain. It is the hierarchical system that gives direction to and imposes restriction upon the flow of communication. Management decisions and directions flow from higher to lower levels in the organization. Responses and reports from the lower levels managers flow upwards in the organization.

To disseminate information effectively, there is need to pay greater attention to the communication process. The three basic communication channels are formal, informal, and

unofficial communication. Formal communication (written or oral) follows the chains of command of the formal organization, the communication flows from the manager to his immediate subordinates. Each recipient then re-transmits the message in the selected form to the next lower level of management or to staff members, as appropriate. The message progresses down the chain of command, fanning out along the way, until all who have a need to know are informed. Formal communication also flows upward through the organization on the same basis. Formal communication normally encompasses the transmittal of goals, policies, instructions, memoranda, and reports.

METHOD

Design of the Study

This study adopted the descriptive survey design. This design fits this study, because it focuses on the examination of the influence of information gathering and dissemination on job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Area of the Study

The study area for this study is South South Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria namely: Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers States.

Population of the Study

The population of this study comprises administrative officer in Federal Universities in South-South geo-political zones in Nigeria, which are 665 in number (Source: Office of Assistant Registrar of each University, 2016).

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample size of 250 respondents was drawn from 665 administrative officers using Yaro Yamane's (1967) formula. A proportional stratified random sampling technique was used to determine the sample from each Federal University.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection in this study is a researcher - developed questionnaire tagged "Information Gathering and Dissemination on Job Performance of Administrative Officers' Questionnaire (IGDJPAOQ)". The questionnaire was made up of two sections.

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument was subjected to face validation by three validates. Two from Department of Vocational Education, and one from Test and Measurement unit of Department of Educational Foundations all in University of Uyo.

Reliability of the Instrument

Test retest reliability test was conducted using twenty (20) respondents. These respondents were not part of the sample used for the main study. The scores of the twenty respondents were subjected to Cronbach's Alpha technique to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument. The overall reliability coefficient was 0.87

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed using Mean statistics to answer the research questions while independent t-test analysis was used for hypothesis 1 and One-way analysis of variance for hypotheses 2. Test of significant difference was done at 0.05 alpha levels.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: To what extent does information gathering influence job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria?

Table 1

Mean responses of respondents on the extent to which information gathering influence job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria. n = 250

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Collecting information on student’s through their registration forms enhances my job performance	3.51	0.55	VHE
2	Collecting information on students through their course forms enhances my job performance	3.45	0.54	HE
3	Collecting information on student through exams sheet enhances my job performance	3.18	0.58	HE
4	Collecting information on student through school database enhances my job performance	3.52	0.53	VHE
5	Collecting information on student through their records in the school registrar’s office enhances my job performance	3.71	0.49	VHE
	Cluster Mean	3.47	0.54	

Note: VHE = Very High Extent, HE = High Extent, LE = Low Extent, VLE = Very Low Extent
 Table 1 presents the summary of the item by item analysis of the influence of information gathering on job performance of administrative officers. The result show that the mean range of the influence of information gathering on job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria is between 3.18 to 3.71. The result also shows that the standard deviation range from 0.49 to 0.58 which are not far away from the mean as the score cluster around the grand mean of 3.47. This means that there is a great extent of the influence of information gathering on job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.

Research Question 2

To what extent does information dissemination influence job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria?

Table 2

Mean responses of respondents on the extent to which information dissemination influence job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.

n = 250

S/N	Item	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Distributing information to student through email enhances my job performance	3.82	0.39	VHE
2	Distributing information to student through memo enhances my job performance.	3.77	0.42	VHE
3	Distributing information to student through the use of face book enhances my job performance.	2.95	0.92	HE
4	Giving information to student in hard copies enhances my job performance.	3.81	0.39	VHE
5	Distributing information to student through the use of text messages enhances my job performance.	2.95	0.76	HE
Cluster Mean		3.46	0.58	

Note: VHE = Very High Extent, HE = High Extent, LE = Low Extent, VLE = Very Low Extent

The result presented in Table 2 shows that the mean range of the influence of information dissemination on job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria is between 2.95 to 3.82 and the mean range is all above the cut-off point of 2.50. as it was observed that the standard deviation range from 0.39 to 0.92 which are not far away from the mean as the score cluster around the grand mean of 3.46. This means that there is a great extent of the influence of information dissemination on job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.

Hypotheses Testing

Null Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of male and female administrative officers on the extent of influence of information gathering on their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.

Table 3
t-test analysis of the difference between the mean responses of male and female administrative officers on the extent of influence of information gathering on their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.

S/N	Item	Male (1)		Female (2)		t.cal	t-tab	Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
1	Collecting information on student's through their registration forms enhances my job performance	3.50	0.55	3.61	0.50	-0.93	1.96	NS
2	Collecting information on students through their course forms enhances my job performance	3.46	0.53		0.63	-1.33	1.96	NS
3	Collecting information on student through exams sheet enhances my job performance	3.27	0.51		0.45	-1.14	1.96	S
4	Collecting information on student through school database enhances my job performance	3.52	0.53		0.51	0.02	1.96	NS
5	Collecting information on student through their records in the school registrar's office enhances my job performance	3.71	0.48		0.56	0.13	1.96	NS

Cumulative t-value

0.71 1.96

Note: $p > .05$, $df = 248$ NS=Not Significant, S=Significant Male $n_1 = 227$, Female $n_2 =$

The result presented on Table 3 reveals that summary of t-test analysis comparing the mean responses of male and female administrative officers on the extent to which information gathering influence their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria. The result show that each of the items has t-cal values less than the critical value of 1.96. The result also shows that the cumulative t-value is 0.71. Since the cumulative t-value is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at .05 alpha level, the null hypothesis is retained. Thus, there is no significant difference between the mean responses of male and female administrative officers on the extent to which information gathering influence their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria. From the null hypothesis tested it is concluded that most responses of the respondents agree that gender (male and female) of the administrative officers has no significant influence on the extent to which information gathering influence their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.

Null Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the mean responses of administrative officers on the extent of influence of information dissemination on their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria based on marital status.

Table 4
t-test analysis of the difference between the mean responses of administrative officers on the extent of influence of information dissemination on their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria based on marital status.

S/N	Item	Married (1)		Unmarried(2)		t.cal	t-tab	Remark
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
1	Distributing information to student through email enhances my job performance	3.81	0.55	3.61	0.50	-0.93	1.96	NS
2	Distributing information to student through memo enhances my job performance.	3.77	0.53		0.63	-1.33	1.96	NS
3	Distributing information to student through the use of facebook enhances my job performance.	2.96	0.51		0.45	-9.14	1.96	S
4	Giving information to student in hard copies enhances my job performance.	3.81	0.53		0.51	0.02	1.96	NS
5	Distributing information to student through the use of text messages enhances my job performance.	2.96	0.48		0.56	0.13	1.96	NS

Note: $p > .05$, $df = 248$ Male $n_1 = 227$, Female $n_2 = 23$ NS=Not Significant, S=Significant

Table 4 gives the summary of the t-test analysis on the differences in the mean responses of married and unmarried administrative officers on the extent to which information dissemination influence their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria. The result reveals that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of married and unmarried administrative officers on the extent to which information dissemination influence their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria for items 1,2,4 and 5. The null hypothesis is retained for these items since the calculated t-value ranging from -0.02 to -1.33 were less than Table value of 1.96. However, there is significant difference between the mean responses of married and unmarried administrative officers on the extent to which information dissemination influence their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria for items 3. Therefore, the null hypothesis for this items is rejected since calculated F=values of -

9.14 is greater than the Table value of 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance and 248 degree of freedom. From the null hypothesis tested it is concluded that all of the respondents agrees that marital status (married and unmarried) of the administrative officers has no significant influence on the extent to which information dissemination influence their job performance in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The finding on research question one reveals that information gathering has significant influence on the job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria. Therefore, the finding is in agreement with the findings of Mello (2006), who opined that gathering of relevant and up-to-date information is a key to business progress. Information consists of organized facts and figures that have meaning within the context that the information is intended to be interpreted by people.

The finding on research question two reveals that information dissemination has significant influence on the job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria. The findings are not supported by that of Olowu (2004) who said that information entails data, facts, ideas, and imaginations, opinions, cultural values in a variety of media which includes print, audio-visual –materials and electronic processes. This shows how information flows within and between people in an organization. This means that data are necessary to produce information which in turn is necessary for creating knowledge that is conveyed (e.g. via paper network, speech, observable action). The results of hypothesis two also proved that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of the administrative officers on the subject matter by marital status.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the research work, it was deemed necessary to conclude that Information Management has remarkable influence on job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria. It was also specifically concluded that information gathering and information dissemination has significant influence on job performance of administrative officers in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made

1. The administrative officers should adopt proper method of information gathering which is accurate and dependable so as to give the best result when used in their administrative work.
2. Administrative officers should be trained on proper method of information dissemination as this will enhance efficiency of their administrative duties.
3. Information codification method should be adopted by all as this will not only help in reducing the volume of information but also in the security of the information against hackers and also against improper usages.

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