

participation in decision making and job satisfaction among academic staff in the university of calabar, cross river state, nigeria.

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Participation in decision making and job satisfaction among Academic staff in the University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria.

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Abstract

This study examined participation in decision making and job satisfaction among academic staff of University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. One purpose of the study was stated and converted into one research question and statement of hypothesis. Literature review was carried out based on the variable understudy and the correlational survey research design was used in the study. The method of data collection was a 15 items four points rating scale questionnaire. A sample of 357 respondents was used in the study out of a population of 3,567 and the reliability index of the instrument was .87 using the Cronbach Alpha Reliability method. The statistical tool for data analysis was the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation at .05 level of significance. The study's result showed that there is a significant relationship between academic staff participation in decision making and job satisfaction in the study area. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that employees should always be updated with what is happening in the University; giving them credit and praise when they do good work or put in extra effort; they should be supported for extra training; and be permitted to attend regular meetings to discuss personal staff development issues if need arises.

Keywords: Participation in decision making, Staff, Job satisfaction, University, Organization

Introduction

Education is the driving force behind economic development and social advancement in a country. For an educational institution to function effectively, staff must be satisfied with the jobs that they

do. In other words, Job satisfaction is a pre-requisite for employee performance in any organization. It is important for both the employee and the employer. For the employee, job satisfaction gives them a sense of security and fulfillment. In return, it leads to employee commitment, decreased absenteeism and reduced employee turnover. For the employer, employee job satisfaction ensures committed staff and stable workforce which reduce cost of recruitment and training. According to Stogdill (2015), successful organizations consider worker morale and job satisfaction an output just as important as productivity.

Locke (2016) defines job satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences. Schneider and Snyder (2015) on the other hand defined job satisfaction as a personal evaluation of conditions present in the job, or outcomes that arise as a result of having a job. Job satisfaction thus, has to do with an individual's perception and evaluation of his job, and this perception is influenced by the person's unique circumstances like needs, values and expectations. People will therefore evaluate their jobs on the basis of factors, which they regard as being important to them.

Okoth (2013) asserts that job satisfaction is a positive state, resulting from the appraisal of one's job experiences. Job satisfaction is a collection of feelings and beliefs that managers have about their jobs. She further argues that managers, who are high in job satisfaction generally like their jobs, feel that they are being fairly treated and believe that their jobs have many desirable features such as interesting work, good pay and job security. Workers who are satisfied in their jobs will be cooperative and well motivated while those who are dissatisfied will be more inclined than others to produce low quality output, go on strike, and be absent from work, invoke grievance procedures or even leave the organization. A worker's sense of achievement and success is generally perceived to be directly linked to productivity as well as to personal wellbeing. Job satisfaction implies doing a job one enjoys, doing it well, and being suitably rewarded for one's efforts. Job satisfaction further implies enthusiasm and happiness with one's work. The Harvard Professional Group (2018) sees job satisfaction as the key radiant that leads to recognition, income, promotion, and the achievement of other goals that lead to a general feeling of fulfillment.

Decision making can be defined as choosing between alternatives (Moorhead and Griffin, 2014). It can be regarded as an outcome of mental processes (cognitive processes: memory, thinking, evaluation) leading to the selection of a course of action among several alternatives. Decision making involves mapping the likely consequences of decisions, working out the importance of individual factors, and choosing the best course of action to take. In the decision-making process, the decision maker's actions are guided by a goal. Each of the several alternative courses of action is linked to various outcomes. Information is available on the alternatives, on the value of each outcome relative to the goal. The decision maker chooses an alternative on the basis of his/her evaluation of the information (Moorhead & Griffin, 2014). Employee Participation is generally defined as a process in which influence is shared among individuals who are otherwise hierarchically unequal (Wagner, 2014).

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Participatory management practice balances the involvement of managers and their subordinates in information processing, decision making and problem solving endeavors (Wager, 2014). Claydon (2017), define worker's participation as the distribution and exercise of power, in all its manifestations, between the owners and managers of organizations and those employed by them. It refers to the direct involvement of individuals in decisions relating to their immediate work organizations and to the indirect involvement in the decision making, through representatives in the wider socio technological and political structures.

The actual amount of participation in decision making ranges from one extreme where the manager makes the decision and asks for no help or ideas from anyone, to the other extreme of full participation, where everyone connected with, or affected by the decision is completely involved. In practice, the degree of participation will be determined by factors such as experience of the person/group and the nature of the task. The more the experience and unstructured the task, the more the participation there will tend to be (Luthans, 2015).

The benefits of staff participation in decision include gaining different perspectives on specific issues, because individuals have different experiences, knowledge and interests which help them to look at a problem and tackle it from diverse perspectives. It provides the opportunity for further discussion and reveals more suitable decisions by identifying potential drawbacks among alternatives (Simsek, 2015).

Staff themselves can also benefit from the participation process. For example, individuals can be trained during the process by engaging with experienced participants, which will increase their knowledge and experience and enable them to participate more effectively in the future. Indeed, this is a form of personal development which should satisfy the employees by providing them with new skills (Martin & Sherry, 2019) and benefit the organisation over the long term by training employees at no additional cost (Hashim, 2010). In practice, these benefits overlap and interact, with organisations and staff benefiting mutually from this engagement. When staff take part in decisions and facilitate the process of implementation, which is an organisational benefit, they gain satisfaction at the same time, which is an individual benefit that in turn motivates them (Fullan, 2018) to work harder, which is both an obviously organisational benefit and an individual benefit through the development of skill and the continuation of learning. Looking at the numerous benefits which staff participation in decision making provides, most organizations still find it difficult to allow a huge number of staff participate in decisions. It is based on this problem that this paper posed a question; Does academic staff participation in decision making and any relationship with job satisfaction in the University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria?

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to examine academic staff participation in decision making and job satisfaction in the University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research question

What is the relationship between academic staff participation in decision making and job satisfaction?

Statement of hypothesis

The hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between academic staff participation in decision making and job satisfaction.

Literature review

A number of studies of employees' participation in organisations have investigated several aspects of participation, such as organisational and individual performance, job satisfaction and the effectiveness of decisions. However, fewer studies of educational institutions, specifically higher education institutions, can be found, with fewer still focusing on the Nigeria context.

It is known from various authorities that there is a relationship between various variables in the work environment and job satisfaction. Many studies have been carried out to prove that both management style and job design have an effect on the level of perceived job satisfaction by the employee. Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (1957) notes that aspects of a job such as responsibility, the degree of freedom to act, scope to use and develop skills and abilities, interesting and challenging work opportunities for advancement, rewards and punishment coupled with the quality of supervision will affect the employee's level of job satisfaction. Studies show that employees who participate in decision making may feel more committed to execute them properly. Further, the successful process of making a decision, executing it and then seeing the positive consequences can help satisfy one's need for achievement, provide recognition and responsibility and enhance an employee's sense of self esteem. By participating in decision making, employees may better understand linkage between their performance and rewards they want most (Moorhead & Griffin, 1989). Studies also show that participation in decision making has a positive influence on high performance and employee job satisfaction.

Muindi (2011) examines the relationship between participation in decision making and job satisfaction among academic staff in public University of Nairobi. This study was conducted on the positivism approach to research. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was all non-management members of academic staff at the school of Business, University of Nairobi. A structured questionnaire was prepared and distributed to all selected respondents. The study comprised of two major variables, namely participation in decision making, which was the independent variable and job satisfaction which was the dependent variable. A five point scale was used to collect data and analysis was based on averages, percentage, correlation coefficient and linear regression. The findings indicate that a significantly strong positive correlation was found to exist between job satisfaction and participation in decision-making ($\rho=0.888$). The findings indicate also a positively strong correlation between participation in decision-making and job satisfaction in relation to general working conditions ($\rho=0.640$); pay and promotion potential ($\rho=0.703$); use of skills and abilities ($\rho=0.895$); job design ($\rho=0.750$); and job feedback ($\rho=0.632$). The findings

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indicate that the level of job satisfaction for workers at the SOB increases proportionately with an increase in their level of participation in decision-making.

Maloney (2013) studies the relationship between participation in decision making and job satisfaction among faculty at 12 colleges. The research findings indicate that there is a relationship between participation and faculty member job satisfaction and that there is no difference in terms of gender and working experience. Generally, participants indicate that their participation has not matched what they actually want; they desire a higher level of involvement. Bat-Erdene (2006) studied academic staff participation in decision making in Mongolian public universities and the relation between that participation and job satisfaction. He found that the actual participation of faculty members was less than what they desired and that their actual participation was related to job satisfaction; however, their desire to participate was not related to job satisfaction. The findings of both these studies emphasise the relationship between participation and job satisfaction.

A related study by Basil and Felix (2017) assessed Heads of Departments' effectiveness in providing academic leadership at the departmental level. I research question and 2 hypotheses were formulated to give direction to this investigation. Survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 110 Heads of Departments from 2 universities in Cross River State who were purposively constituted into the sample. Data were collected using "Academic Leadership Effectiveness Assessment Questionnaire (ALEAQ)" constructed by the researchers. Data obtained were subjected to statistical analysis using Descriptive Statistics (X and SD), Population t-test of single mean and Independent t-test statistical techniques. Results obtained indicated that HODs are most effective in providing academic leadership in the aspect of providing professional development, while they are least effective in strengthening leadership skills; HODs' effectiveness in providing academic leadership at the departmental level is significantly low; type of university does not significantly influence HODs' effectiveness in providing academic leadership at the departmental level. It was therefore recommended, amongst others that Heads of Departments should be given orientation at the time appointment and retreat organised for them from time to time to equip them with the necessary skill to provide academic leadership.

Methodology

The research design for this study is the correlational survey research design. The area of the study is the University of Calabar. The population of the study comprised 3,567 academic staff (Academic planning Unit, 2021). It has an area of 142 km² and lies between latitude 04 ° 15 'and 5 ° N and longitude 8 ° 25' E, the Local Government Area is limited by the exceptional Kwa River by the Calabar municipality Local Government Area in the North-East. The Calabar River and the Bakassi Local Government Area constrain its Southern shores.

The area is mostly occupied by the Efiks and the Quas. Nonetheless, due to its cosmopolitan status, there is a multiplication of people in the area from all parts of the state and Nigeria. On the other hand, the Quas have the basic piece of the Calabar hinterland where farmers, trackers, vendors, and smithies are found. As the Municipal Government's central command. The sample of the study is made up of 357 academic staff which is 10% of the entire population of academic staff from the

population of the study in the study area. This sample was gotten with the help of the accidental sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire titled: Participation in decision making and job satisfaction Questionnaire (PDMJSQ). The questionnaire was divided into three sections. Section A was on the demographic data of the respondents- Sex and Age. Section B is on five questions measuring the participation in decision making, while Section C is on the dependent variable-job satisfaction. The instrument's reliability index was 0.83 when checking the reliability of the instruments with the help of the Cronbach Alpha reliability method. The statistical tool for data analysis is the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation test statistic at .05 level of significance with the help of the Statistical package for Social Sciences version 20.

Result and discussion of the study

The independent variable in this study is participation in decision making while the dependent variable for this study is job satisfaction. Pearson's product moment correlation was used for data analysis. The result is presented according to the hypothesis of the study. The hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between academic staff participation in decision making and job satisfaction. The items used in measuring this hypothesis was derived from questionnaire items 1-5 of Section B and items 6-15 of section C.

The finding of the analysis in Table 1 revealed that academic staff participation in decision making produced a mean score of 7.09 with a standard deviation of 1.98 while job satisfaction produced a mean score of 9.05 with a standard deviation of 1.01. The result further revealed that the calculated r-ratio of .018 obtained with a p-value of .000 at 355 degrees of freedom met the condition required for significance at the .05 level. Based on this, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between academic staff participation in decision making and job satisfaction was rejected indicating that there is a significant relationship between academic staff participation in decision making and job satisfaction in the study area. The outcome of this study is in tandem with Maloney (2013) that there is a relationship between participation and faculty members job satisfaction and that there is no difference in terms of gender and working experience. Generally, participants indicate that their participation has not matched what they actually want; they desire a higher level of involvement. This finding also supports Bat-Erdene (2006) that academic staff participation in decision making is related to participation and job satisfaction.

TABLE 1

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis of the relationship between participation in decision making and job satisfaction of academic staff (N=357)

Variables:	x	S.D	r	P-value
Participation in decision making (x):	7.09	1.98		
			.018	.000
Job satisfaction (y):	9.05	1.01		

*significant at 0.05 level; df= 355

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Conclusion

Based on the finding of the study, it was concluded that there is a significant relationship between academic staff participation in decision making and job satisfaction in the study area.

Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study, it was recommended that employees should always be updated with what is happening in the University; giving them credit and praise when they do good work or put in extra effort; they should be supported for extra training; and be permitted to attend regular meetings to discuss personal staff development issues if need arises.

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