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Academic Staff Work Prioritization and External System Establishment as Correlates of Quality Service Delivery in Public Universities in Rivers State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
The study examined academic staff work prioritization and external system establishment as correlates of quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State. Two (2) research questions, and 2 hypotheses guided the study. The design for the study was correlational, population as the 3,176 academic staff in the 3 public universities in Rivers State and sample as 355 academic staff selected using the stratified random sampling technique with the Taro Yamene formula. The instruments of the study were the 24-item Academic Staff Work Prioritization and External Success System Establishment Scale (ASWPESSES) and the 12-item Quality Service Delivery Scale (QSDS), designed by the researchers in the modified 4-point Likert Scale model of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Agree (SA), with reliability indices of 0.86 and 0.88, obtained using Cronbach Alpha statistical model. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient was used in answering the research questions while z-ratio associated with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient was used in testing the hypotheses. The results of the study show that, there are very low correlations of academic staff work prioritization and external system establishment on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State and also established significant correlations of academic staff work prioritization and external success system establishment on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State. The Study concluded that, work prioritization and external success system establishment if duly observed can enhance quality service delivery in public universities, even though with some elements of negligence. Consequently, it is recommended that, clear job prioritization strategies and external success system establishment should be used to continuing ensure quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State.
Keywords: Academic Staff, Work prioritization, External Success System establishment, Correlates, Quality Service Delivery.

INTRODUCTION

Educational systems in Nigeria at basic, senior secondary and tertiary levels of education are responsible for the introduction of the younger, needing and desiring members of the society into society's worthwhile knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another. This singular process is referred to as education. While primary schools and junior secondary schools do same job at the basic level of education, the senior secondary schools take their turn at the senior secondary level of education while

universities, colleges of education, polytechnic, monotechnics and allied institutions handle same job at the tertiary level of education.

One important component of the educating process is the teaching personnel components. Teachers are responsible for the implementation of the curriculum of studies, the general administration of their classes, students and course as the case may be. Despite being involved in multi-tasking activities and which increase their work load, academic personnel in educational institutions are expected to deliver quality services to clients of the school system.

Quality service delivery is very vital and has direct implications for with societal achievement. It entails all round achievement of the goals and objectives of educational institutions through effective teaching, researching and performance of guidance and counselling services in schools. Quality service delivery is characterized by effective teaching, effective communication, the use of effective communication channels, high student's success rate, professional development, engaging learning, dedication expertise and provision of research grants. Other indicators include the provision of valuable care path and availability of research opportunities.

The foregoing indices of quality service delivery can only be achieved in school systems, when the work loads of academic personnel are properly managed. In order to this, experts in educational management suggest two ways of doing so. These are work prioritization and external success system establishment.

Based on these specifications, the preceding part of the review will be on work prioritization and external success system establishment thus;

Academic Staff Work Prioritization and Quality Service Delivery

In the university system, the academic staff are faced with academic, administrative and community development duties, arising from teaching, researching, guidance and counselling, community development programmes, conference and so many other administrative tasks. As a result, there is need for the academic staff to set priorities in other to meet the targets for goals achievement or attainment. Workload prioritization is considered very important in meeting institutional or organizational goals and objectives. Whatever one's line of work is, achieving balance and learning how to prioritize task is a dilemma that is part of almost everyone's routine. Prioritizing means dealing with task, items, or work based on their importance. In order to successfully prioritize, it is essential to list or rate task in order of importance. The more important a task is, the higher its priority. Some requirements are more important than others; therefore, requirements must be prioritized.

Based on the foregoing, it is expedient to note that the success or failure of prioritization effort's is largely based on how effectively the process is managed, including goal setting, enabling faculty and staff ownership of the process and its outcomes and ensuring effective communication. Prioritization is a vital cognitive process that involves allocating resources, such as time, energy, and attention, to tasks and goals based on their relative importance and urgency (Oakes, Botta, & Bahill, 2006). Prioritizing requirements will help to identify the high priority requirements for which one should create Technical Performance Measures (TPMs). In the realm of academic achievement, effective prioritization becomes an indispensable skill for academic staff, seeking to optimize their teaching and learning objectives and other duties assigned to them by the institutions to an extent. By implementing a systematic approach to prioritization, academic staff can manage their limited resources with exceptional precision. Time management is a key component of prioritization and it allows academic staff to allocate sufficient time to critical academic and other administrative activities. This includes teaching, research, attending conferences, counselling students, administrative duties and also engaging in meaningful assignments by the institution promptly. Prioritization ensures that, teachers devote their prime hours to high-priority tasks, which can significantly impact their goals achievement.

Goal setting as another facet of prioritization, empowers academic staff to set ambitious academic targets. By delineating clear objectives, academic staff can effectively prioritize tasks aligned with their goals. This approach minimizes distractions and helps maintain a focused mindset. This is done by breaking

down larger objectives into smaller and manageable steps which further amplifies the efficacy of prioritization, as academic staff allocate time and resources to each subtask based on its relative importance and deadline. Moreover, prioritization acts as a powerful antidote to procrastination, which is a pervasive challenge among students. By promptly identifying and prioritizing tasks, staff pre-empt the accumulation of overwhelming workloads. Dividing tasks into smaller, digestible portions and imposing self-imposed deadlines foster motivation and combats the temptation to delay essential activities. Furthermore, effective prioritization enables academic staff to strike a harmonious balance between their academic pursuits and extra-curricular commitments. By evaluating the significance and time requirements of various activities, students can allocate resources, judiciously. This equilibrium cultivates holistic development and prevents the neglect of non-academic areas which are crucial for personal growth.

In a nutshell, prioritization empowers academic staff to unlock their full academic potentials. By leveraging this cognitive skill, academic staff can optimize their time, set and achieve ambitious goals, conquer procrastinations, and achieve a harmonious balance between academic and personal endeavours. The remarkable impact of prioritization on academic achievement is indisputable, igniting a sense of awe and admiration for its transformative influence on academic staff goals actualization journeys. Workload prioritization helps in giving balance to the duties of academic staff. 'Balance' means prioritizing between 'work' (job, career, ambition, generally paid work or livelihood) and 'life' where 'work' means (job, career, ambition, basically paid work or livelihood) and 'life' means (family life, personal life, leisure life, pleasure life and social life). Thus, it is about balancing work and play. Work-life balance has several definitions. It is also dynamic in that, what is good today may not be good, tomorrow. This equilibrium is about mastering one's life domains in a way that does not compromise one's physical, mental, or emotional health and it affects people of all ages. Academic staff are not only responsible to the university, but also to the department, under which they are employed, the students which they serve as a surrogate parent, the academic staff also attend to their immediate family needs and other personal needs. Workload prioritization helps to give a work-life balance that enables academic staff in accomplishing personal and professional commitments to avoid clash or conflicts. Conflicts between work of an academic staff requirements cause work-life imbalance. There is evidence that today, workers prioritize work-life balance more than their predecessors. This equilibrium is reached too slowly.

On this, Hanayshan (2016), notes that, work-life balance and organizational loyalty have been studied extensively by Dave (2017); Berk and Gundogmus (2018). Work-life balance provide tools to combine work and leisure during discharge of duties, and make employees to be more loyal to their companies (Jeongkoo & Shane, 2002; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Pradhan *et al.*, 2016). In the opinion of the scholars and researchers, work-life balance is delicate, most people want work-life balance. Both sexes complain about balancing work and personal life as most workers lack time, money, or other resources to meet their professional and personal duties. Work/life balance is a challenge for all employees and organizations. Employees must manage external pressures, impress management, maintain professional connections and perform well in teams (Cho, 2018). This may be explained in the sense that work problems often affect personal life. More workers are prioritizing work life balance, due to changing family priorities and a desire to improve their quality of life. (Rehman, 2012) This move has boosted competition, but also allowed workers to choose their workplaces. Technology allows one to work remotely. Today, people value quality of life and choose more flexible workplaces.

The essence of work prioritization is for the purpose of time for actualizing set goals. Prioritization can be identified with time management as time analysis, planning, goal setting, prioritizing, scheduling, organizing and establishing new and improved time habits (Trueman & Hartley, 1996; Rai,1991; Davies, *et al.*, 2015). Academic staff prioritize their duties by considering various factors such as deadlines, importance and impact. There are a few common ways academic prioritize their tasks: Deadline-driven academic staff may prioritize tasks based on their due dates, ensuring that time-sensitive assignments are completed first. Academic also prioritize their workloads based on Importance and impact. In the

prioritization of this tasks, it is based on their significance and potential impact on their research, teaching, or students' progress. Academic staff consider tasks that require immediate attention or are critical to the smooth functioning of their departments or institutions.

Academic staff often prioritize tasks that align with their long-term research or teaching goals, focusing on activities that contribute to their larger objectives. They also prioritize to encourage collaboration and teamwork, prioritize tasks that involve collaborative efforts or require coordination with colleagues, as effective teamwork is crucial in academia. Personal workload and capacity; Academic staff also consider their own workload and capacity to handle tasks, ensuring that, they do not take on more than they can handle, effectively. It is important to note that, prioritization methods may vary among individuals and depend on their specific roles and responsibilities within academia.

Academic staff work prioritization includes increased efficiency, reduced stress, improved work-life balance and enhanced service delivery. Developing effective prioritization skills is an essential aspect of professional development for academic staff. Prioritization helps academic staff allocate their time, effectively, by focusing on high-priority tasks. This ensures that, important responsibilities are addressed in a timely manner. It also helps the academic staff by identifying and addressing high-priority tasks first, academic staff can enhance their overall productivity. This leads to the completion of essential activities, contributing to individual and institutional goals. Prioritizing work helps prevent feeling overwhelmed by a large number of tasks. This reduction in stress contributes to improved mental well-being and lowers the risk of burnout among academic staff. Often, academic staff have diverse responsibilities, including teaching, research and administrative tasks.

Prioritization ensures that, they focus on the most critical aspects of their role, aligning with the core mission of the institution, through Enhanced Focus on Core Responsibilities technique. Prioritizing work allows academic staff to dedicate sufficient time and attention to tasks, contributing to the overall quality of service delivery. This is especially important in teaching, where the quality of instruction and feedback directly impacts students' learning experiences. Balancing work and personal life are crucial for the well-being of academic staff. Prioritization enables individuals to manage their time effectively, creating opportunities for relaxation and personal pursuits Work prioritization encourages strategic thinking. Through strategic planning, academic staff can plan ahead, set goals and align their activities with broader institutional objectives, contributing to long-term success. In summary, work prioritization for academic staff is a valuable strategy for managing the complex and multifaceted responsibilities associated with teaching, research and administrative tasks. It not only benefits individual staff members, but also contributes to the overall success and effectiveness of educational institutions.

Academic staff work prioritization and quality service delivery in education is significant and interconnected. The way academic staff prioritize their tasks directly influences the overall effectiveness and excellence of the services provided by educational institutions. It helps in Efficient Time Management by focusing on high-priority tasks, staff can dedicate sufficient time and attention to essential activities, such as preparing quality lectures, conducting impactful research and providing timely feedback. When academic staff prioritize teaching-related tasks, such as lesson planning, creating engaging materials and providing timely feedback, it directly contributes to the quality of the learning experience for students.

A well-prepared and organized teaching fosters a positive and effective educational environment. For academic staff involved in research, prioritization allows them to focus on impactful projects and contribute meaningfully to their field. High-quality research output enhances the institution's reputation and contributes to the overall quality of academic services. Academic staff often have administrative responsibilities. Prioritizing these tasks, such as attending meetings, participating in committees and managing paperwork, contributes to the efficient functioning of the institution and supports the delivery of quality services. Work prioritization fosters a culture of continuous improvement. Academic staff, by regularly evaluating and adjusting their priorities, can identify areas for growth and development, leading to ongoing enhancements in the quality of their services.

In summary, when academic staff effectively prioritize their work, it positively impacts teaching, research, administrative processes and students support, ultimately contributing to the overall excellence of educational services provided by institutions.

Academic Staff External System Establishment and Quality Service Delivery

The academic staff external system establishment refers to the process of creating and organizing the faculty or teaching staff within an educational institution, such as a university or college. It involves defining the roles and responsibilities of academic staff members, setting up recruitment and selection procedures, determining the criteria for promotion and tenure, and establishing policies and guidelines for their professional development and evaluation (N. M. Abraham Personal Communication, June 16, 2023). The goal is to create a robust and effective academic workforce that can contribute to the institution's teaching, research, and service missions. The concept of academic staff external system establishment involves engaging external individuals or experts to contribute to the academic staff of an educational institution. This can include hiring adjunct professors, visiting scholars, industry professionals, or guest lecturers who bring specialized knowledge and experience to enhance the quality of education and research.

By involving external individuals in the institutions, academic staff can benefit from diverse perspectives, cutting-edge industry insights and real-world expertise. This can enrich the learning experiences for students and foster collaboration between academia and industry. Ojiako and Anyaogu (2014) define teaching as an art, which deliberately assists the learner to acquire desired knowledge, skills and attitude, through the application of a relevant curriculum and learned methodology. Teaching process must be innovative in approach. It must be adaptive, flexible and responsive to the current challenges and changes in the school environment. To remain relevant in the fast-changing realities around the globe, the teacher's skills, knowledge, techniques and competence must undergo constant update. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014) stipulates that, universities were established to produce high level manpower for the nation; inculcating proper values to its graduates, as well as making them to acquire both physical and intellectual skills, which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society.

The attainability of these objectives depends largely on the quality of the university lecturers (the academic staff). The academic staff form crucial instruments in the formulation and successful implementation of educational policies and programmes within the universities. The quality of the academic staff has tremendous implications on quality education service delivery and students' academic performance. Therefore, the academic staff requires current teaching skills and up-to-date in-depth knowledge of the subject matter in their areas of specialization. Quality service delivery, in the context of academic staff, refers to providing effective and efficient support and resources to ensure that faculty members can perform their roles optimally. This can include providing access to research facilities, libraries, teaching materials, administrative support, professional development opportunities and a conducive work environment.

When academic staff members are provided with opportunities for quality service delivery, they can focus on their teaching, research and service responsibilities, leading to enhanced productivity, improved students outcomes and a positive work culture. It is crucial for educational institutions to prioritize the provision of high-quality support for their academic staff to foster a thriving academic community and they will certainly be happy to provide more information. Academic staff external system establishment is a strategic approach that allows educational institutions to tap into external talents and expertise to supplement their core academic staff. This can be particularly valuable in fields where industry trends and advancements are rapidly evolving. By bringing in professionals from relevant industries, institutions can ensure that, their curriculum remains current and aligned with real-world practices. For instance, a business school may invite successful entrepreneurs or executives to teach courses on entrepreneurship or share their practical experiences with students. This not only provides students with valuable insights but also encourages networking opportunities and potential mentorship.

Similarly, guest lecturers or visiting scholars can bring fresh perspectives and research collaborations to academic departments. They may have specialized knowledge or unique research expertise that can enrich the academic environment and inspire faculty and students alike. Regarding quality service delivery, it involves providing academic staff members with the necessary resources, support, and infrastructure to excel in their roles. This can include access to research grants, state-of-the-art facilities, well-equipped laboratories, libraries with extensive collections and administrative support for tasks like grading, scheduling and curriculum development. In addition, professional development opportunities such as workshops, conferences and training programmes can empower academic staff to enhance their teaching methods, research skills, and pedagogical approaches. This continuous learning environment contributes to the overall growth and improvement of the institution. Furthermore, creating a positive work culture and supportive environment is crucial for quality service delivery. This involves fostering open communication, recognizing and valuing the contributions of academic staff, promoting work-life balance and providing avenues for collaboration and interdisciplinary research.

Achuonye (2008) notes that currently in the field of education, there is a drive to shift from a mode of unconscious adaptation to one of the conscious anticipations, from traditional method to innovative method. The types of innovative teaching skills needed by the academic staff, according to Lunenburg and Ornstein (2012), Achuonye (2008), Bassey (2009) and Rogers (1995) include: Communication skills, ICT skills, leadership skills, team-work skills, computer skills, library skills, research skills, human relation skills, among others. Nwangwu (2011) adds other skills such as: conceptual skills, thinking skills, creative skills and communication skills as innovative teaching skills needed by university teaching staff to impact knowledge to students. Innovative Teaching Skills (ITS) involve the acquisition and utilization of up-to-date professional skills by the academic staff in solving day-to-day problems encountered in the classroom or any learning environment. Akomolafe (2011) opines that, the university system has embraced series of variables in which the culture of innovation could be made manifest. These variables include, innovative teaching, innovative learning strategies, pedagogy, ICT learning and the use of ICT in the staff and students' administration, teaching and learning, evaluation and instructional technology. The emphasis of innovative teaching skills among university lecturers is on the need to be acquainted with current teaching skills and strategies of imparting relevant knowledge in the students.

Overall, the establishment of an academic staff external system and the provision of quality service delivery enhance the educational experiences for students and contribute to the institution's reputation and success. By leveraging external expertise and supporting academic staff, institutions can stay at the forefront of knowledge and deliver a high standard of education. Certainly! Here are some additional points related to academic staff external system establishment and quality service delivery in: Establishing collaborations and partnerships with other educational institutions, research organizations, and industry can further enhance the academic staff external system. This can include joint research projects, exchange programmes, and sharing of resources and expertise. Such collaborations can lead to innovative teaching methods, expanded research opportunities and a broader network for academic staff. Another external system strategy is Mentorship Programmes: Implementing mentorship programmes can be beneficial for both new and experienced academic staff members. Mentors can provide guidance, supports, and share their knowledge and experiences to help mentees navigate their academic careers. This can contribute to professional development and create a supportive environment for academic staff. They also help in performance evaluation and recognition. Implementing fair and transparent performance evaluation systems is essential for quality service delivery.

Regular evaluations can help identify areas of improvement, provide constructive feedback and recognize exceptional performance. Recognizing and rewarding academic staff for their contributions can boost morale, motivation and job satisfaction. Technology Integration: this can be done by process of Embracing technology in teaching and research can enhance the quality-of-service delivery. This can include using online learning platforms, virtual labs, data analysis tools, and collaborative software. Academic staff can also leverage technology for remote teaching, online conferences, and virtual research

collaborations, expanding their reach and opportunities.: Encouraging and providing opportunities for continuous professional development is crucial. This can involve offering workshops, seminars, and training programs on emerging trends, teaching methodologies, research techniques, and technological advancements. Academic staff should be supported in their pursuit of advanced degrees, certifications, and attending conferences to stay updated in their respective fields. Student Feedback and Engagement: Engaging students in the feedback process and incorporating their perspectives can contribute to quality service delivery. Regular surveys, focus groups, and open communication channels can help identify areas of improvement, address concerns, and tailor teaching approaches to meet student needs.

By considering these aspects, institutions can establish a robust academic staff external system and deliver high-quality services that meet the evolving demands of education and research. Certainly, there are a few more points to consider when establishing an academic staff external system and enhancing service delivery. These are Professional Development Funds: Providing dedicated funds for academic staff's professional development can be highly beneficial. These funds can be used for attending conferences, workshops, and training programs, as well as purchasing books, research materials, and software tools. By investing in their growth, institutions can foster a culture of continuous learning and keep academic staff up-to-date with the latest advancements in their fields. Achuonye (2008) and Bassey (2009), in their studies, agreed that, communication skills, ICT skills, leadership skills, teamwork skills, computer skills, library, human relation skills, research skills and time management are the innovative teaching skills suitable for academic staff of universities. However, there are various types of innovative teaching skills that can be acquired and utilized by the academic staff of universities to achieve quality service delivery in education. This implies that innovative teaching skills involve the acquisition and utilization of current professional skills by the academic staff to solve educational problems. It is a process of experimenting teaching with up-to-date skills.

Onyiorah (2021) opines that, offering research support services can significantly aid academic staff in their research endeavours. This can include assistance with grant applications, access to research facilities and equipment, and support for publishing and disseminating research findings. By providing the necessary resources and infrastructure, institutions can empower academic staff to conduct high-quality research and contribute to knowledge creation. Work-Life Balance: Recognizing the importance of work-life balance is crucial for the well-being and overall satisfaction of academic staff. Institutions can implement policies that promote flexibility in working hours, remote work options, and support for personal commitments. By prioritizing work-life balance, academic staff can maintain their productivity and engagement, leading to quality service delivery. Embracing diversity and promoting inclusivity within the academic staff is essential. Institutions can actively recruit and retain a diverse pool of academic staff members, representing different backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives. This diversity fosters creativity, innovation, and a more inclusive learning environment for students. Additionally, providing cultural sensitivity training and resources can help academic staff better support a diverse student population.

Encouraging collaboration between academic staff and students can enhance the learning experience. This can involve involving students in research projects, providing mentorship opportunities, and promoting student involvement in departmental decision-making processes. By involving students in the academic community, institutions can create a more engaging and student-centred learning environment. Establishing effective feedback and evaluation systems can help institutions monitor and improve the quality-of-service delivery. This can include regular performance evaluations, student feedback surveys, and peer evaluations. These mechanisms provide valuable insights into the strengths and areas for improvement of academic staff, allowing for targeted support and professional development opportunities. By considering these aspects, institutions can create a conducive environment for academic staff to thrive, resulting in enhanced service delivery and an enriched educational experience for students. Conclusively, academic staff external system establishment in university education can achieve improved

quality service delivery when academic staff of universities are adaptive, flexible and responsive to innovations in teaching skills.

Statement of the Problem

Academic staff work prioritization and external success system establishment are rated to be strong instrumentations for managing teaching personnel workload for the purpose of ensuring quality service delivery in educational institution. As a result, managers of academic personnel and academic personnel in institutions of higher education among them universities make efforts to prioritize academic staff work activities and make use of well-established external success systems. Despite these efforts, the quality of service delivery, especially in public universities seems and appears to be of low quality as exemplified in the perceived inability of institutions and their personnel to prioritize their works and make proper use of external success systems, leading to poor standard of school products, as research findings, personal observations and comments by both external and internal stakeholders have shown. These bothered the researchers as to whether work prioritization and establishment of external success systems do not have implications for quality service. It is the need to find empirical explanations to the observed scenario that made the researcher to embark on the study on academic staff work prioritization and external success system establishment as correlates of quality service delivery in public universities.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study examined academic staff work prioritization and external success system establishment as correlates of quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria

Specifically, the study sought to:

1) ascertain the correlation of academic staff work prioritization on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria
2) find out the correlation of academic staff external success system establishment on quality service delivery in in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1 What is the correlation of academic staff workload prioritization on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria?

2 What is the correlation of academic staff external success system establishment on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Ho1 There is no significant correlation of academic staff workload prioritization on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria

Ho2 There is no significant correlation of academic staff external success system establishment on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria

METHODOLOGY

The design for the study was correlative, the population as the 3176 academic staff in the 3 public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria and sample as 355 academic staff selected using the stratified random sampling technique with the Taro Yamene minimum sample formular. The instruments of the study were the 24-item Academic Staff Work Prioritization and External Success System Establishment Scale (ASWPSS) and the 12-item Quality Service Delivery Scale (QSDS), designed by the researchers in the modified 4 point Likert Scale model of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with reliability indices of 0.86 and 0.88, respectively and obtained using Cronbach Alpha statistical model. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient was used in answering the research questions while z-test associated with Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient was used in testing the hypotheses.

RESULTS

The results of the study came from the answers to the research questions and test of hypotheses. Thus;

Research Question 1: *What is the correlation of academic staff workload prioritization on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria?*

Table 4.1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient Analysis on the Correlation of Academic Staff Workload Prioritization and Quality Service Delivery in Public Universities in Rivers State, Nigeria

Variables	N	R	Decision
Academic Staff Workload Prioritization			
Quality Service Delivery	355	0.10	Very Low relationship

Legend
N: number of respondents
r: correlation value
scale of measurement
0.0 – 0.25: Very Low Correlation
0.26 – 0.50: Low Correlation
0.51 – 0.75: High Correlation
0.76 – 1.00: Very High Correlation

Data on Table 4.1 show the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient analysis on the correlation of academic staff workload prioritization on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria. With 355 respondents, the r-calculated value resulted in 0.10. When reference is made to the scale of measurement, the calculated r-value of 0.10 falls between 0.00 and 0.25(very low correlation). Based on the above observations, the result shows that, there is a very low correlation of academic staff workload prioritization on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: *What is the correlation of academic staff external success system establishment on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria?*

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis on the Correlation of Academic Staff Success System Establishment on Quality Service Delivery in Public Universities in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Variables	N	R	Decision
Academic Staff External Success System Establishment	355	0.15	Very Low correlation
Quality Service Delivery			

* The legend and scale of measurement for Table 1 apply.

Data on Table 2 show the Pearson Product Moment Correlation co-efficient analysis on the correlation of academic staff external success system establishment on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria. With 355 respondents, the r-calculated value resulted in 0.15. When reference is made to the scale of measurement, the calculated r-value of 0.15, falls between 0.00 and 0.25(very low correlation). Based on the above observations, the result shows that, there is a very low correlation of academic staff external success system establishment on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho1: There is no significant correlation of academic staff work prioritization on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria?

Table 3: Summary of z-ratio Analysis on the Correlation of Academic Staff Work Prioritization on Quality Service Delivery in Public Universities in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Variables	N	r.	Df	z-ratio	Sig.	Alpha value	Decision
Academic Staff Workload Prioritization	355	0.10	353	1.96	0.05	0.05	Significant
Quality Service Delivery							

Data on Table 3 show the summary of z-ratio analysis on the correlation of academic staff work prioritization on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria. With an already established number of 355 respondents and r. value of 0.10, the z-ratio value used in testing the hypothesis came out as 1.96, using 353 degrees of freedom, a significant value of 0.05 at 0.05 Alpha Value. At 0.05 alpha level, 0.05significant value and z-ratio value of 1.96, the significant value of 0.05 is equal to the Alpha value of 0.05. Hence, there a significant correlation of the independent variable (academic staff work prioritization) on the dependent variable (quality service delivery). Based on the forgoing observations, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative that, there is a significant correlation of academic staff work prioritization on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant correlation of academic staff external success system establishment on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Summary of z-ratio Analysis on the Correlation of Academic Staff External Success System Establishment and Quality Service Delivery in Public Universities in Rivers State, Nigeria

Variables	N	r	df	z-ratio	Sig.	Alpha value	Decision
Academic Staff External Success System Establishment	355	0.15	353	2.78	0.04	0.05	Significant
Quality Service Delivery							

Data on Table 4 show the summary of z-ratio analysis on the correlation of academic staff external success system establishment and quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria. With an already established number of 355 respondents and r. value of 0.15, the z-ratio value used in testing the hypothesis came out as 2.78, using 353 degrees of freedom, a significant value of 0.04 at 0.05 Alpha value. At 0.05 alpha level, 0.04 significant value, and z-ratio value of 2.78, the significant value of 0.04 is less than Alpha value of 0.05. Hence, there a significant correlation of the independent variable (academic staff external success system establishment) on the dependent variable (quality service delivery). Based on the forgoing observations, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative that, there is a significant correlation of academic staff external success system establishment on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS/IMPLICATIONS

Academic Staff Work Prioritization and **Quality Service Delivery in Public Universities in Rivers State, Nigeria**

The first finding of the study is that, there is a very low correlation of academic staff work prioritization on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria. This finding disagrees with Mort, Demehin, Marple, McCullough, & Meyer, (2013).Oakea, Botta and Bahull (2016). Hannayshan (2016), Trueman and Hartly (1996), Davies *et al* (2015), Sajeevanie (2020), Julsar and Dickson (2023) and Osuji *et al* (2022). These scholars and researchers have in their theoretical and empirical contributions

established and found out that, staff work prioritization have relationships with the quality-of-service delivery in organizations. A possible explanation for the finding may be in the fact that, the respondents of the study as academic personnel, have in the course of their work not give priorities to their work schedules. The works assigned to them, among them teaching, research and community service and probably may not appreciate the benefits of work prioritization in multifaceted professional organizations like schools and other social organizations.

Differently, the result from a corresponding hypothesis found out that, there is a significant correlation of academic staff work prioritization on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State. This finding agrees with the contributions of the scholars among them Mort, Demehin, Marple, McCullough, & Meyer, (2013)., Oakes, Botta and Bahull (2016), Hannayshan (206), Trueman and Hartly (1996), Davies *et al* (2015) Sajeevanie (2020), Julsar and Dickson (2023) and Osuji *et al* (2022) and other researchers cited in the preceding paragraph. This latter finding gives so much credence to work prioritization and the delivery of quality services in organizations. That the result differs from the answer obtained from research question does not mean that work prioritization is not a virtue in administration, rather, it may have been caused by the statistical instrument employed in the analysis of data. Based on these explanations, the findings imply that, organizational professionals who wish to contribute to the achievement of goals of their organizations should ensure proper prioritization of their work schedules.

Academic Staff External Success System Establishment and quality Service delivery in Public Universities in Rivers State, Nigeria

The second finding of the study is that, there is a very low correlation of academic staff external success system establishment on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria. Also, the corresponding finding from the test of hypothesis establishes that, there is significant correlation of academic staff external success system establishment on quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Contrary to the results of the findings, the following scholars supports and are of the opinion that, there is a correlation between the two variables: Ojiako and Anyaogu (2014), Lunenburg and Ornstein (2012), Achuonye (2008), Bassey (2009) and Rogers (1995) Akomolafe (2011), Bin (2007), Herminingsih and Kurniasih (2018), Elijah (2016), Chen et al. (2013), Kaegon and Nwaeke (2020) and Sabocohan and Supremo (2016). Through the findings of these scholars and researchers, it shows that, there is a significant correlation between the dependent variable (external success system establishment) and the independent variable (quality service delivery) in their empirical and theorical studies and reveal that, academic staff of universities accept innovative teaching skills as veritable tools to improve quality education delivery as innovative teaching skills enhance teacher productivity which is a major tool for quality in education. These findings poised that, organisations should recruit additional employees to equalise employee workload, among others. Through these medium, academic personnel can attend conferences in order to gain more professionalism in their various areas of specialization in other to deliver quality in the educational system.

Contrarily, external success system is significantly related with quality service delivery but not research and community service. Quality education in universities service delivery is achievable when university teaching staff are constantly trained, retrained and adaptable to innovative teaching skills.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that academic staff work prioritization and external success system establishment if duly observed and implemented can enhance quality service delivery in public universities in Rivers State even though with some elements of negligence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are aptly considered;

1. There is need for establishing a clear job prioritization strategy and focusing on the essential tasks, academic staff members can ensure that they allocate their time and energy effectively, maximizing their ability to deliver high quality services.
2. The university systems should include collaborations with other institutions, industry partnerships, and networking opportunities that can help distribute the workload or share resources. By leveraging external systems, academic staff members can tap into additional expertise, support, and resources, ultimately enhancing the quality of service they provide.

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