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Knowledge Management and University Lecturers' Job Performance in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Knowledge is a commodity which universities deal with. As such, they are concerned with its generation dissemination and management. The extent to which they handle these responsibilities determines their effectiveness in meeting the expectations of the society. This study investigated the relationship between knowledge management and university lecturers' job performance in Cross River State. To achieve the purpose, two hypotheses were formulated. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The sample for the study comprised two hundred (200) university lecturers selected through stratified simple random sampling technique from a total population of 1,313. 1,060 of the sampled population is from the University of Calabar while 253 is from Cross River State University of Technology. Data collection was carried out with the use of researchers' constructed instrument titled 'Knowledge Management and Lecturers' Job Performance Questionnaire' (K.M.L.J.P.Q). The reliability of (K.S.M.L.J.Q.) was established through a trial test using cronbach coefficient obtained ranged from 0.67 to 0.91. These figures are a confirmation that the instrument is reliable in achieving the objectives of this research study. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Results obtained revealed that a significant relationship existed between knowledge management in terms of sharing, mapping and lecturers' job performances. Based on the findings and discussion, conclusions were made. It was recommended that Heads of departments should encourage knowledge sharing by organizing strategies for lecturers to share knowledge among themselves.

Key Words: Knowledge Management, Sharing, Mapping, Job Performance, University Lecturers.

Introduction

The essence of higher education is to prepare its products for useful living in the society and make them fit for labour market anywhere in the world. To achieve this, lecturers transmit knowledge and as such need to be properly informed about the import of knowledge management. Knowledge management, according Gurteen (2010) is a business philosophy…it is an emerging set of principles, processes, organizational structures and technology applications that help people share and leverage their knowledge to meet their business objectives. Jobs performance on the pother hand is refereed to as the way and manner lecturers undertake teaching/learning and any other responsibility assigned to them in universities (Akuegwu, 2005).

To achieve organizational goals and objectives, the responsibility rests with the individual knowledge workers and the holistic Knowledge Management. Individual lecturers had acquired knowledge in their various fields of specialization before and after entering into the university organization. But as a result of innovations especially in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), there is need for lecturers to collaborate with their colleagues in the universities to share Knowledge for the purpose of knowledge management. This will in no small measure contribute to the enhancement of their performance in assigned responsibilities.

In the views of Newman (1991), knowledge management is the collection of processes that govern the creation, dissemination and utilization of knowledge. Bertels (1996) posits that knowledge management is the management of the organization towards the continuous renewal of organizational knowledge-base. This means the creation of supportive organizational members putting IT-instruments with emphasis in teamwork and diffusion of knowledge (as e.g. groupware). Thus, it is how knowledge is managed that determines how effective lecturers will be in their job performance. This is so because universities, constitute an aspect of knowledge economy. They extent for the sake of knowledge propagation and management so, lecturers' effectiveness in job performance will hinge on the extent of knowledge management. It is the knowledge acquired by lecturers that enable them perform creditably on their job.

Questions arising from the foregoing include; what effort is management at departmental levels making for exchange and dissemination of knowledge among lecturers that teach students? University organizations all over have realized that their most valuable asset is the knowledge embedded in staff skills, knowledge and experience they generate from possessing learning activities and conducting studies. This knowledge has

remained largely uncollected, unorganized and mostly untapped. As a result, job performance effectiveness that would have resulted if knowledge is properly managed in universities has been lacking; lecturers have been observed to perform their jobs lackadaisically with little or no tangible value imparted on it. This has been mostly responsible for university students' inability to make the best out of their studies, which largely makes them unable to cope with societal and labour market demands upon their graduation.

Robort (2009) submits that collaborating and networking between people and organization back and forth supports that enrichment and refreshment of information. The university organizations management has the ability to analyze the available knowledge into categories according to their needs and relate them to different areas among them. This enables the lecturers to break their teaching activities in such a way that students can progress from the known to the unknown, from the small aspects to the complex ones.

Individuals in educational system may have knowledge that can be of great importance to other members of the educational organization and the system itself. They may have gotten this knowledge through on-the-job experience. When this knowledge is not shared among individuals in the organization, it could be lost or taken to another place. To forestall this, there is need for Knowledge sharing and mapping in knowledge management. The emerging challenge is how to manage knowledge in terms of sharing and mapping for the purpose of enhancing or promoting teaching and learning. This study therefore, is determined to investigate the relationship between knowledge management and Lecturers Job Performance.

The problem

Education is the instrument par excellence. Knowledge is increasingly becoming complex as a result of high level of scientific and technological advancement. University education is the source of national development. Lecturers are vehicles through which knowledge is transmitted to students. No lecturer is a reservoir of knowledge. This is why knowledge sharing and knowledge mapping are very crucial to Knowledge Management. Knowledge Management involves knowledge creation that has made many lecturers wanting in their job performance. This is because they work in university environments that no longer challenge their knowledge creation ability due to lack of facilities or dilapidated facilities that no longer bear relevance to the present realities in the global scheme of things. Even at that, the introduction of information and communication technology has not brought about under-improvements. Most lecturers lack ICT basic skills, and where they have, the death of ICT facilities stall their capacities to make any head way in their job performance. This has resulted to the lecturers' inability to transform their leading/learning and other responsibilities to meet the ever changing realities of this competitive world. Thus, their job performance has produced little or no desired outcome. However, with the emphasis placed on research by the universities, through the upgrading of facilities based on the resources at their disposal, there is likely to be improvements in lecturers' job performance. Closely akin to this, is the institutional demands on departments to place knowledge sharing and mapping as top priorities. Despite these efforts, it is yet to be established in the area of this study how knowledge management can contribute or otherwise to lecturers' job performance. On this basis therefore, this study is geared towards providing answer to this question: what relationship does knowledge management in the perspectives of knowledge sharing and mapping have with lecturers' job performance?

Literature Review:

The literature review focuses on knowledge management and the sub variables-knowledge sharing and mapping. Wilson (2004) researched on the nonsense of knowledge management. The study examined critically the origins and basis of knowledge management, its components and its development as a field of consultancy practice. Problems in the distinction between knowledge and information were explored, as well as Polanyi's concept of tacit knowing. The concept was examined in the informal literature, the websites of consistency companies and in the presentation of business schools. The conclusion reached was that knowledge management is an umbrella team for a variety of organizational activities, none of which was concerned with the management of knowledge. These activities that were not concerned with the management of information were concerned with the management of work practices, in the expectation that changes in such areas as communication practice would enable information sharing. Knowledge must be managed effectively to ensure that the basic objectives for existence are attained to the greatest extent possible (Wiig 1996) Robort (2009) in their study observed that knowledge management will help individual to get their access to knowledge by making it easier for people to find knowledge when they need it, introducing knowledge sharing habits and procedures that will tame the information are load, providing avenues that will transfer knowledge from tacit to explicit ad spurring activities to enrich, capture, summarize and disseminate knowledge. This goes to large extent in improving the way lecturers perceive their jobs and perform creditably in them.

Dalkir (2005) in his study identified that the risk in knowledge sharing is that individuals are most commonly rewarded for what they know, not what they share. If knowledge is not shared, negative consequences

such as isolation and resistance to ideas occur which stultify job performance among lecturers. Shared knowledge offers different view points and possible solutions to problems which enables lecturers to attempt their job performance from different ways, a measure which ensures quality output. To promote knowledge sharing and remove knowledge sharing obstacle in universities, the organizational culture should encourage discovery and innovation. Gurteen (2010) observed that some people object to sharing as they feel that others will steal their ideas and reap the rewards rightly theirs. This is a fallacy. Knowledge sharing isn't about blindly sharing everything, giving away your ideas, being politically naïve, or being open about absolutely everything. You still need to exercise judgment. If you have a great idea, don't share it with a competitor-external or internal but on the other hand don't try to develop it on your own and don't sit on it for fear of it being stolen from you. Figure out how you can bring it to fruition by collaborating with other people. Grey (2008) reported that knowledge mapping is about making knowledge that is available within an organization transparent and is about providing the insights into its quality. Vestal (2002) found that knowledge mapping is a process by which organizations can identify and categorize knowledge assets within their organization-people, process, content, and technology. It allows an organization to fully leverage the existing expertise resident in the organization, as well as identify barriers and constraints to fulfilling strategic goals and objectives. It is constructing a roadmap to locate the information needed to make the best use of resources, independent of source or form.

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between knowledge sharing and lecturers' job performance
2. There is no significant relationship between knowledge mapping and lecturers' job performance.

Methodology:

This study adopted ex post facto research design since it focused on finding out the relationship between Knowledge Management and Lecturers' Job Performance. The study area is Cross River State, one of the states in South-South Geo-political Zone. Cross River State has 18 Local Government Areas and they have farming, trading and fishing as their major occupation. Calabar is the political and economic capital of Cross River State. The total study population is 1,313 respondents drawn from the universities of Calabar and Cross River University of Technology (CRUTECH). The study sample consists of 200 lecturers selected through stratified random sampling technique.

A researchers-designed instrument was used for data collection titled 'Knowledge management and Lecturers Job Performance Questionnaire' (K.M.L.J.P.Q). Section A of this instrument contained 6 biodata/ demographic information while section B contained 18 four-point Likert-type items. 6 of these items measured each of the three sub-variables namely; knowledge sharing, knowledge mapping and job performance. the instrument was face-validated by experts in measurement and evaluation and items found unsuitable were re-arranged and reframed according to their suggestions. The reliability of the instrument was established through a trial test using cronbach coefficient Alpha, which gave coefficients ranging from 0.67 to 0.91-figures which confirmed that the instrument was reliable for use in achieving the research objectives.

The researcher personally administered the instruments to the 200 respondents with a 100% return rate. This was possible because the researchers used research assistants recruited for the purpose of data collection. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis was used for data analysis. The testing was done at 0.05level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis One

This hypothesis postulated that there is no significant relationship between knowledge sharing and lecturers' job performance. The independent variable is knowledge sharing while dependent variable is lecturers' job performance. Pearson product moment correlation analysis was used to test the hypothesis. Responses of lecturers to the questionnaire items covering knowledge sharing and Lecturers' Job Performance were computed. The result is presented in table one.

The result in table one shows that the calculated r-value of 0.62 is greater than the critical r-value of .138 at .05 level of significance with 198 degree of freedom. With the result of this analysis, the null hypothesis that stated that there is no significant relationship between knowledge sharing and lecturers' job performance was rejected. This implies that knowledge sharing has a significant relationship with lecturers' job performance.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between mapping and lecturers' job performance. The independent variable is knowledge mapping while the dependent variable is lecturers' job performance. The appropriate

statistical analysis technique adopted to test this hypothesis is Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis. The response on knowledge mapping and lecturers' job performance were computed. The result is presented in table two.

The result in Table two shows that the calculated r-value of 0.54 is greater than the critical-value of .138 at 0.05 level of significance with 198 degrees of freedom. With the result of this analysis, the null hypothesis that stated that there is no significant relationship between knowledge mapping and lecturers' job performance was rejected. This implies that knowledge mapping has a significant relationship with Lecturers' Job Performance.

Discussion of Findings

The result of hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant relationship between knowledge sharing and lecturers' job performance. The null hypothesis was rejected. In the light of this finding, it implies that if knowledge is well managed in terms of sharing, it will affect Lecturers' Job Performance positively. The findings is in agreement with the view of Gurteen (2010) that stated that knowledge management helps people share and leverage their knowledge to meet their organizational objectives. Wiig (1996) submitted that knowledge must be managed effectively to ensure that the basic objectives for existence are attained to the greatest extent possible. If knowledge is not shared, negative consequences such as isolation and resistance to ideas occur. Shared knowledge offers different view points and possible solutions to problems. To promote knowledge sharing and remove knowledge sharing obstacles, the organization culture should encourage discovery and innovation (Dalkir 2005). Through this measure of sharing they acquire knowledge of the research output of individual lecturers and as such, can initiate interaction among lecturers for discussing research ideas and making proposals there from. The knowledge obtained is applied by individual lecturers to their research needs which give them the enablement to possess detailed description of research activities (Allameh & Moghtadiae, 2010). This enhance their abilities to produce the best results in their jobs. Managerial variables in terms of knowledge sharing and mapping are seen as strategies that can help lecturers to be encouraged, increase knowledge, skills, ideas and use them to improve performance (Uchendu, 2011).

The result of hypothesis two revealed that there is a significant relationship between knowledge mapping and lecturers' job performance in terms of teaching and research. This necessitated the rejection of the null hypothesis and the retention of the alternate hypothesis. This result suggests that knowledge mapping skill should be used as a strategy to manage knowledge. The result agrees with Grey (2008) that observed that knowledge mapping is about making knowledge that is available within an organization transparent and is about providing the insight into its quality. Vestal (2002) stated that in many organizations, there is a lack of transparency of organization wide knowledge. Valuable knowledge is often not used because people do not know it exits, even if they know the knowledge exists, they may not know where. These issues lead to the knowledge mapping. Sullivan (2010) found that knowledge mapping involves identifying, building and making visible a knowledge store that may exist either exclusively in some form or alternatively in people's heads. A knowledge map can also be a pointer to both tacit knowledge and explicit information that identified the value and relationship among knowledge stores, people and social dynamics.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn. Knowledge management in terms of knowledge sharing and mapping has a significant relationship with University Lecturers' Job Performance in Cross River State. It is therefore clear that the state of lecturers job performance in universities in Cross River State is a function of how knowledge is managed in these institutions.

Recommendations:

Heads of Departments should encourage knowledge sharing by organizing strategies for lecturers to share knowledge among themselves.

1. Heads of department should promote collaborative teaching and supervise its effectiveness.
2. Heads of Department should cultivate a good practice of accurate record keeping as this will enhance organizational knowledge mapping.
3. This will go a long way to ensure that knowledge is not concentrated on one person. Through this measure junior lecturers can tap from the wealth of experiences of the senior ones. This ensures steady growth and development professionally of the former and enable them to improve their performance on the job.
4. Through accurate record keeping, knowledge areas can be classified and categorized in such a way that they can be found handy when there is need. This will enhance effective utilization of knowledge, which can catapult lecturers' job performance to enviable heights.

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Table 1:
Pearson's product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between knowledge sharing and lecturers' job performance

N = 200

Variables	**Σx Σy**	**$\Sigma x^{2-} \Sigma y^2$**	**Σxy**	**r-cal**
Knowledge sharing	3436	5462	63462	0.62
Lecturers' job performance	3216	4482		

P<0.05; df= 0.198; critical r= .138

Table 2
Pearson product moment correlation analysis of the relationship between knowledge mapping and lecturers' job performance

N=200

Variables	**Σx Σy**	**$\Sigma x^{2-} \Sigma y^2$**	**Σxy**	**r-cal**
Knowledge Mapping	3642	5368	68492	0.54
	3216	4272		

P<0.05; df=0.198; critical r=.138