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INFLUENCE OF MANAGERIAL SKILLS OF MIDDLE-LEVEL MANAGERS ON ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, IN NIGERIAN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigated the influence of the managerial skills of middle-level managers on organizational effectiveness in Colleges of Education in South Western Nigeria. This was prompted by the observation of the researcher on the lack of administrative training of most deans and heads of department in Nigerian Colleges of Education. The population of study consisted of deans, heads of department, and academic staff members of nine Colleges of Education, while the sample consisted of 461 academic staff members randomly sampled from the Colleges. The instrument used was the questionnaire tagged Managerial Skills, Staff Morale and Work Effectiveness Questionnaire (MSSMAWEQ). Descriptive statistics, simple regression analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics were used to test the hypotheses. The study revealed that middle-level managers demonstrated requisite managerial skills in the Colleges of Education. It was also found that the managerial skills of middle-level managers had a very low influence on academic staff research/publications effectiveness and on community service effectiveness. Further still it was established that there was no significant relationship between managerial skills of middle-level managers and students academic performance. The paper therefore advised these group of managers to use their technical skills to improve the quality of classroom lecture delivery, by institutional staff, through students' exposure to research findings in their chosen fields of study; employ motivational skills to encourage academic staff to carry out researches into issues that will positively impact upon their host communities and add value to the Nigerian society.

Keywords: Managerial skills, Effectiveness, Research publications, Community service, managers

INTRODUCTION

Every organization exists to accomplish a purpose in the larger society and this is usually stated in the form of objectives or goals. Owing to the growing complexity of organizations as a result of their size, coverage, technology and corporate social responsibilities; organizations now strive to enhance their effectiveness though focused attention on managerial effectiveness aimed at helping managers to get the best out of themselves and their teams. Again, organizations are structured in ways that make people fill certain intentionally designed roles, to ensure that activities fit together to enhance smooth, effective and efficient performances of group tasks. Hence formal relationships are established following the organizations line of authority depicted by the structure of organizations. Although educational institutions are regarded as formal organizations, its management, especially tertiary institutions, differs slightly from other organizations. This is partly because specialists (i.e. professor, chief and principal lecturers) are found in various departments who may be professionally higher in rank than their Faculty, School or departmental heads; but to whom work may have to be assigned and tasks delegated. This complexity requires tact by Faculty, School and Departmental Heads who are expected to show respect for superiors and demonstrate appropriate managerial skills for them to

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create an environment in which academic staff and other subordinates can best perform. The Faculty, School and Departmental Heads are required to demonstrate effective communication skills by sharing information with academic staff, use appropriate decision-making techniques and problem solving skills to resolve disagreement, resistance and opposition of staff in such institutions. They are also required to effectively use motivational skills to encourage academic staff to perform other complementary tasks of: collation of results, registration of students and to regularly attend Faculty, School and Departmental meetings in the bid to accomplish stated educational goals. The objective of this study therefore is to determine the demonstration of managerial skills by Deans and Heads of Department, and its consequent effect on the effectiveness of Colleges of Education in South Western Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leaders at the helm of affairs in any organization are charged with the responsibility of mobilizing appropriate human and material resources available, for the purpose of achieving the organizational goals. Consequently, the effectiveness of organizations is partly determined by the quality of leadership.

Researchers like Peretomode (2003) and Edem (1998) have identified factors that underlay success of school administrators. Some have highlighted the importance of personality traits or the psychological make-up of individuals; while other studies have attributed administrator's success to the factors within the environment to which they have been exposed. Yalokwu (2000) has emphasized the effects of the possession of some special skills and family background as the major factors in the molding of the successful school administrator. Olayonu (1998), investigated the relationship among principals' personality types, their communication skills, and academic achievement of secondary school students in Nigeria. The study sampled seven hundred and fifty-four secondary school principals. Multiple regression analysis, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and the t-test statistical tools were employed to analyze the data. The result revealed that secondary school principals' personality type and their communication skills were significantly related to and could predict student's achievement. In his own contribution, Ibrahim (2004) observed that participatory decision-making is often viewed as intrinsically good, and that it possess overwhelming positive effects on institutional functioning, although it requires tact, trust, skills, empathy, patience and coordination to make it work in any organization.

Again Sometip (1984) carried out a study on the perceived importance of managerial skills of educational administrators in public schools and post-secondary educational institutions. Factor analysis and multiple regression analysis were used to process the data. He identified four managerial skills of educational administrators- job management skills, employee orientation skills, organizational skills and program advancement skills. He concluded that educational staff administrators perceived that both management skills and employee orientation skills were more important to their position. Harman (1995) studied factors influencing principal's administrative effectiveness in Niger State Post Primary Schools. Data collected were analyzed using regression analysis and t-test statistical technique. The study revealed that communication and motivational skills have significant influence on principals' administrative effectiveness in schools.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Middle-level managers are the bridge between top management (the Provost, Registrar, and so on) and staff members, and between the staff and students. This level of managers, regarded as intermediate, constitute the highest decision-making organ on academic matters in Colleges of Education in Nigeria (i.e. the Academic Board), and their failure to effectively carry along and interact with subordinates, as well as relating appropriately with superiors can have negative effects on organizational performance. This study therefore seeks to investigate the influence of managerial skills of middle-level managers on organizational effectiveness in Colleges of Education in South Western Nigeria.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The specific purpose of the study is to:

i) Determine the extent to which middle-level managers demonstrate managerial skills in handling institutional matters

ii) Determine the extent to which managerial skills of middle-level managers influence academic staff research/publications and community service effectiveness, as well as students' academic performances in Colleges of Education in South Western Nigeria.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study will broaden knowledge and improve the managerial skills of deans and heads of academic departments, as they handle situations in their institutions. Again the study has implications for educational administrators in the area of promoting staff productivity in research/publications and community service effectiveness. The study also has implications for professional organizations involved in management, who need to develop skills measurement system for educational managers to acquire effective management skills necessary for the performance of their tasks.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

This research work attempts to provide answers to the following null hypotheses:

H_{01}: Middle-level managers in Colleges of education in South Western Nigeria do not exhibit requisite managerial skills.

H_{02}: Managerial skills of middle-level managers does not significantly influence academic staff research /publications effectiveness.

H_{03}: Managerial skills of middle-level managers does not significantly influence academic staff community service effectiveness.

H_{04}: There is no significant relationship between the managerial skills of middle-level managers and students academic performances in Colleges of Education in South Western Nigeria.

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METHODOLOGY

The design employed was the descriptive survey research based on correlation design and carried out ex-post facto. The study population for this research consisted of deans, heads of department and academic staff members of all colleges of education in Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used to select nine (9) out of the ten (10) College of Education in South-Western Nigeria. Stratification was done on the basis of schools, with sample proportionate to size, and then random sampling technique was used to select 461 academic staff members from the nine colleges of education. The basic instrument used in the collection of data was the 83 item Managerial Skills, Staff Morale and Work Effectiveness Questionnaire; while a proforma on students performance was adapted from the research work of Afolabi (2004). The layout of the questionnaire showed its division into sections A, B, C, D and E, with section A requiring personal information. Section B contained questions relating to the deans and heads of department' managerial skills. Section C contained questions on the satisfaction and positive feelings of staff on their job; while section D contained statement to be ranked in the order of importance for developing managerial skills. Section E measured academic staff research/publications and community service effectiveness. Descriptive statistics was used to show the level of deans and heads of department' demonstration of managerial skills, while simple regression analysis was used to test hypotheses two and three. Hypothesis four was analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistical tool. All the hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS

The result of the study are herein presented:

Hypothesis 1: Middle-level managers in Colleges of Education in South-WesternNigeria, do not exhibit requisite managerial skills.

Table 1: Middle-level managers' demonstration of communication, motivational, decision-making and problem solving skills.

Skills Performance	No response 0	Never 1	Rarely 2	Sometimes 3	Always 4	Average 5
Communication	0.46	1.20	7.76	39.37	51.19	84.85
Motivational	0.52	1.07	8.89	36.56	53.11	85.25
Decision-making	1.29	2.24	10.51	43.09	42.90	81.04
Problem-solving	1.14	2.34	9.99	39.63	46.87	82.18

The result in table 1 indicates that middle-level managers in Colleges of education.
In South-Western Nigeria demonstrate requisite communication, motivational, decision-making and problem-solving skills in the performance of their duties.

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Table 2:Middle-level manager's demonstration of technical, conceptual and interpersonal skills.

Institutions	Technical skills	Conceptual skills	Interpersonal skills	Total
Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Otto-Ijanikin	29.5[1]	28.5[3]	29.1[2]	87.1
Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo	26.4[3]	27.2[1]	26.5[2]	80.1
Federal College of Education, Abeokuta	27.6[1]	26.3[2]	26.3[2]	80.2
Federal College of Education (Technical), Akoka	28.5[3]	29.1[1]	29.0[2]	86.6
Federal College of Education, Oyo	26.5[1]	23.2[3]	23.5[2]	73.2
Lagos State College of Primary Education, Epe	27.3[1]	26.4[2]	26.1[3]	79.8
Osun State College of Education, Ila-Orangun	28.7[3]	29.5[1]	29.0[2]	87.2
Osun State College of Education, Ilesha	29.4[1]	28.8[2]	28.0[3]	86.2
Oyo State College of education, Oyo	28.3[3]	28.8[1]	28.7[2]	85.8

Evidences from the research in table 2 shows that middle-level managers demonstrate appropriate technical, conceptual and interpersonal skills.

Hypothesis 2: Managerial skills of middle-level managers do not significantly Influence academic staff research/publications effectiveness.

Table 3: Result of regression analysis of managerial skills on academic staff research/ publications effectiveness

Source	Df	Ss	Ms	R	F	Sig. F
Regression	1	943.44	946.44			
				.107	.316	3.84
Residual	459	81717.73	178.03			

$R^2 = .01145$

The result in table 3 indicates that managerial skills of middle-level managers had a very low influence on academic staff research/publications effectiveness in colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria.

Hypothesis 3: Managerial skills of middle-level managers do not significantly influence academic staff community service effectiveness.

Table 4: Result of regression analysis of managerial skills on academic staff community service effectiveness

Source	Df	Ss	Ms	R	F	Sig. F
Regression	1	657.44	657.44			
				.089	3.98	3.84
Residual	459	82006.73	178.66			

$R^2 = .00795$

The result in table 4 implies that managerial skills of middle-level managers had a very low influence on academic staff community service effectiveness.

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Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between the managerial skills of middle-level managers and students academic performances in colleges of education in South Western Nigeria.

Table 5: Correlation analysis of managerial skills and students academic performances.

Variables	No of cases	X	SD	Df	Cal. R	Critical value	Decision
Managerial Skills	461	99.909	13.405				
				459	.143	.254	H_0 accepted
Students Academic Performance	71.133	12.677					

The result in table 5 showed that there is no significant relationship between the managerial skills of middle-level managers and students' academic performance.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The result in table 1 showed that middle-level managers in Colleges of Education in South Western Nigeria, demonstrated requisite managerial skills. The table showed that motivational skills was the most demonstrated (85.25%), depicting a picture of deans and heads of department who encourage staff towards goal attainment through the varying motivational tools. This is closely followed by the demonstration of communication skills (84.85%), which is also followed by the problem-solving skills (82.18%). The decision-making skill was the least demonstrated (81.04%) and this may be because such managers prefer to take decisions with minimal contributions from staff.

Again, while considering the technical, conceptual and interpersonal skills, the technical skills was the most demonstrated as it ranked first in five colleges. This depict a picture of deans and heads of department who often demonstrate expertise in teaching, who have a clear understanding of actions, consequences and results of specific classroom behaviors which are capable of facilitating the accomplishment of the goals of their institutions. In addition these managers use appropriate procedures and techniques in the performance of specific tasks like appointing people into committees, approving students results, allocating courses to staff and coordinating schools' and departmental meetings. The demonstration of technical skills is closely followed by that of conceptual skills which ranked first of the skills in four colleges; while interpersonal skills was the least demonstrated, revealing that the human relations of deans and heads of department is poor.

Furthermore, the results showed that the managerial skills of middle-level managers had a very low influence on academic staff research/publications effectiveness. It was evident from the responses of respondents that academic staff research/ publications effectiveness was better enhanced by the desire to scale promotion hurdles, assistance obtained in typing and producing conference papers, as well as financial assistance obtained towards attending conferences, seminars and workshops. This agrees with Creamer's (1998) findings that institutional policies and practices contribute, but do not determine whether a faculty member initiates and sustains a substantial record of scholarly publishing.

The results also showed that managerial skills of middle-level managers had a very low influence on academic staff community service effectiveness, because contributions to community service is only required for promotion to principal and chief lecturer cadres. In addition, academic staff commitments to assigned tasks, and their desire to make a mark in their host communities, influence their contributions to community service. This agrees with the findings of Afolabi (2004) and Opadokun (2004) that the low impact of managerial skills on academic staff contributions to community service

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revealed that little emphasis is placed on lecture's participation in community service, especially at the lower cadre.

Evidences from this research also showed that there was no significant relationship between the managerial skills of middle-level managers and students' academic performance. This may be because managerial skills of middle-level managers do not have direct effect or implications on students' academic performance, but on academic staff morale, which is then brought to bear on students, in the way academic staff teaches and the enthusiasm demonstrated while teaching. This agrees with the findings of Opadokun (2004) who opined that staff recruitment procedures (an element in managerial skills) do not have significant relationship with students' academic achievement.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results obtained from this study revealed that:

i) Middle-level managers in colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria demonstrate requisite managerial skills; but the decision-making skills and the interpersonal skills were the least demonstrated of the old and new typologies of managerial skills respectively.

ii) Managerial skills of middle-level managers had a very low influence on academic staff research/publications and on community service effectiveness.

iii) There was no significant relationship between the managerial skills of middle-level managers and students' academic performances in colleges of education in South-Western Nigeria.

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are suggested:

a. Professional organizations like the Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM), National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) need to develop on line skills measurement systems for educational managers to acquire effective management skills, on appointment as deans and heads of department.

b. Middle-level managers in colleges of education need to employ their technical and interpersonal skills to encourage academic staff improve on the quality of classroom teaching/learning by exposing students to research findings in their chosen fields.

c. They need to employ their interpersonal and motivational skills to encourage the more senior lecturers to mentor younger ones and helping them to acquire competencies in writing and assessing publications, in the bid to improve on their research and publication effectiveness.

d. They should commission research works that will positively impact upon their host communities and add value to her people.

e. Institutional managers need to celebrate outstanding research/publication works of staff, to encourage and motivate other staff to develop interest in research and publication of journal articles.

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