

# Predicting Strategic Planning on Job Effectiveness of Academic Heads of Tertiary Institutions in North Central, Nigeria

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**Abstracts:** - The study focused on Predicting Strategic Planning on Job Effectiveness of Academic Heads of Tertiary Institutions in North Central. Two research questions and hypotheses were adopted for the study and the adopted the descriptive survey design. Data were collected from a sample of 372 academic head of departments (HODs) from six tertiary institutions in North Central, Nigeria using a structured researchers' developed instrument titled "Strategic Planning and Job Effectiveness Questionnaires (SPJEQ). Data collected were analyzed using simple regression analysis. The findings revealed that mission statement and core values can highly predict job performance in the study area. Also most institutions do not see the need for adequately accepting and working toward the attainment of the mission, vision statement and core values of the organization which in-turn promotes excellence in job performance by academic heads. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that factors related to strategic planning should be well articulated to management and staff of the tertiary institution. Also, the vision, mission statement and core value of the organization should be clearly spelt out in the organization.

**Keywords:** Predicting, Strategic Planning, Job Effectiveness, Academic Heads, Tertiary Institutions.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Society depends on institutions of learning to produce well adjusted individuals who can fit properly into the environment. Tertiary institutions exist for creating, using and managing knowledge from their environment and adapting to knowledge from outside environment to meet teaching and learning challenges. Quality education does not just happen; it is planned for and achieved if the plan is implemented. Thus, every University is made up of departmental heads that provide leadership by ensuring the smooth functioning of their departments through the discharge of responsibilities bordering on teaching/learning, research and other activities necessary for the realization of the departmental objectives (Lucas, 2004). The heads of departments are expected to coordinate and generate knowledge through research through mentoring of subordinates and management for the benefit of the department and providing quality teaching among others.

The duty of an academic head depends on the institution that the administrator works. The main performance effectiveness of academic heads of tertiary institutions is to ensure the efficient performance of his

department in the institution. The heads act as a connecting link between the management and the employees. They provide motivation to the work force and make them realize the goals of the institution. Academic heads of department is one of the key elements associated with a high level of workplace productivity and efficiency. It is very difficult to run an organization without a good head of such department. It is the administrator, who makes the rules and regulations, core values, mission and vision statement and applies these rules in an institution. Sometimes, it is thought that the role of an academic head is not important in the institution and neglects their presence. But without presence of an academic head (administrator) an institution can never work in a sound way.

Berry (1997) rightly informed that strategic planning is a tool for finding the best future for your organization and the best path to reach that destination. Quite often, an organization's strategic planners already know much of what will go into a strategic plan. However, development of the strategic plan greatly helps to clarify the organization's plans and ensure that key leaders are all on the same script but far more important than the strategic plan document is the strategic planning process itself. The strategic planning process begins with an assessment of the current economic situation. Strategic planning is an organizational management activity that is used to set priorities and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working towards common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes/results, assess and adjust the organizations directions in response to changing environment. Brenaman (2002) described administrative functions of the heads of institutions to include: preparing teaching schedules, ensuring teaching effectiveness of staff, managing graduate assistants and other departmental staff, performing personnel decision-making, revising the curriculum and managing the budget.

According to Lucas (2004), institutional goals seem no longer realizable due to challenges faced by heads of institutions such as poor funding, inadequate number of trained manpower and poor policy implementation. The success or failure of the department is therefore the responsibility of the academic heads. Thus, the mandate of the university can only be achieved through the effective

performance of the heads of the departments. It is against this background that this study is aimed at determining the relationship between strategic planning and performance effectiveness of academic heads in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria.

#### *Statement of the problem*

The state of performance effectiveness among heads of department in tertiary institutions in North central, Nigeria has been a source of concern to government, stakeholders, lecturers and even administrative staffs of most institutions. Personal observation and interaction with most lecturers and administrative staff of tertiary institutions revealed that most heads of department lack skills on how to develop and sustain appropriate structures for management, consultation, decision-making and communication with staff and students, show luster attitude to fulfillment of the institution's responsibilities concerning students in respect of their admission, instruction progress and examination. Observation has equally shown that most heads of department of tertiary institutions are found wanting in exploring new opportunities for knowledge transfer activity in order to secure additional income streams and new areas of teaching and/or research, poor management of staff, and unfair workload allocation processes. In the course of their job performance most academic most heads do not ensure all staff has access to the necessary sport to enable them to contribute fully and develop their skills and experience. Given the above scenario about heads of department operational activities, it would be very difficult for the institution to realize its mission and vision while maintaining its core. The problem of this study put in a question is; what is the relationship between strategic planning and performance effectiveness of academic heads in tertiary institutions in North Central, Nigeria that would help in achievement of objectives?

#### *Objectives of the study*

The purpose of this study was to carry a predictive study of strategic planning and performance effectiveness of academic heads of tertiary institutions in North Central, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the relationship between realization of mission statement and performance effectiveness of heads.
2. Find out the relationship between realization of core values and performance effectiveness of academic heads.

#### *Research Questions*

The following research questions were framed for the study

1. To what extent does realization of mission statement predict performance effectiveness of Heads of departments?

2. How does realization of core values predict performance effectiveness of academic Heads of department?

#### *Statement of hypotheses*

The following research questions were framed for the study

1. There is no significant predictive of realization of mission statement On performance effectiveness of Heads of Departments.
2. There is no significant prediction of realization of core values on performance effectiveness of academic Heads of department.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Strategic planning focuses on the vision statement, core values, organizational goals, mission statement and feedback. These variables should guide the actions, spell out its overall goal, provide a path and guide decision making (Hill & Jones, 2008). Some institutions take values as their major priority which emphasis on directing the process of organizational development and growth. They do relate to how organizations deal with their belief about staff and jobs. According to Andrew (2010), tertiary institutions develop feedback mechanism that uses the conditions of one component to regulate the function of the other. It is done to either increase or decrease change. The tertiary institutions' policy as enshrined in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) stressed on effective role performance of the Heads of department in all the institutions. But, it does appear that, the Nigerian educational system is drifting on its successful implementation. The fact is if educational planners or policy makers had carried out adequate strategic planning which equally embraces successful implementation strategy, Nigerian tertiary institutions would have been among the best tertiary institutions in Africa and in the world.

Strategic planning is a management tool that helps an organization to perform effectively, it is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and decide what an institution is, what it does and when it is focused on the future (Mac-Namara, 2008). Strategy is all about being different. It means deliberately choosing different set of activities to deliver a unique mix of value and effectiveness (Michael, 2008). As such Gory (2004) defined strategy as a roadmap and an overall approach and plan, while strategic plan is simply a document that summarizes why an organization exists what it will accomplish and how it will do it. Strategic planning is a process often termed Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis. Strengths are identified variables that the system should capitalize upon, weakness are those variables that action plans have to overcome, opportunity is a variable that exist outside the system that have not been capitalized upon that exist within the system that should be combated. The strategic analysis involves scanning the internal environment to

determine its strengths, weakness and constraints, and its external environment to determine its opportunities and threat (Anijaobi-Idem, 2001).

Many tertiary institutions in Nigeria now find themselves in circumstances where old methods of planning and management are no longer effective in guaranteeing a steady future. That strategic planning is about developing a good match between institutions' activities and the demands from the environment in which it operates. It focuses on the institutions mission, objectives, strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats. In essence, strategic planning is aimed at ensuring internal efficiency of an organization or institution (Nte, 2007).

Strategic planning is an exercise of foresight. It is a continuous rolling process of both planning and implementation of plans. It involves reviewing the institutions mission and setting quantified targets in the context of the internal and external environment of the institutions (Gupta, 2001). Strategic planning serves as multi-purpose, multi-dimensional and nebulous plan in improving and achieving heads of institutions administrative effectiveness. Its implementation would be of great value in the institutions in ensuring that there is effective mobilization of the available human and non-human resources to achieve institutional goals. These can only be enhanced through the various roles performed by the heads of department.

In a study of United States, Japanese and European businesses, motivation and inspiration of employees strongly features as the second most important objective for mission statements (Barkus, 2004). Mission statements are deemed relevant to the extent that they deliver higher levels of motivation and inspiration to employees. Some authors like Barkus (2004) have studied and have attempted to established independent outcomes satisfaction, behaviours, motivation, commitment, performance, and inspiration etc. as impacts that mission and vision statement might have on employer (Forbes & Seeca, 2006) the vast majority however have modeled a set of dependent relationships that should ultimately lead improved performance.

Bransfrod, Brown and Cooking (2000) conducted a survey study, on the relevance of mission statement to organization effectiveness using 189 administrative staff of Managos enterprise in Washington DC and found out that a well-defined mission statement is comparable to a guiding star on a dark night; it illuminates the direction that a company want to travel. This has the benefit a company's objective to its staff so that they understand the goals they are trying to achieve. According to them, mission statement help guide daily work objectives and provide a long-term view about where a company is headed. In a similar study by Fells (2000) using 21 managers in Walt Disney private company. The study revealed that effectives mission statement help shape a company's philosophy towards its customer and clients. No matter what products or services a company offers, it needs

someone to buy those products and mission statement can express how it will difference differentiate itself from competitors. According to him, mission statements delineate who a company is targeting as a customer, and how it plans to meet that customer's needs.

Studies by Bolman and Deal (2005) with 54 workers of San Francisco on reframing organizations mission statement refute the findings of Bransford, Brown and Cocking (2000). Their studies revealed that effective mission statements require time and effort and a real focus on what a company wants to achieve. Ineffective statements may lack specificity and provide no direction for employees to follow. The stated mission statements often include a company's moral or social values and how it wants the public to view its operations. But if a company's mission statement is too grand and ambitious, it can harm its employee's ability to meet stated goals. However, according to Carroll and Gillen (2006), when properly crafted, a mission statement encapsulates an enterprise's core values and beliefs. In addition to expressing a firm's goals and objectives, an effective mission statement also states the operational and service standards for employees to follow to achieve those goals and objectives, whether in manufacturing, customer service, or any other element of the company's operation. Some companies fashion their slogans, mottos, and other advertising material on their mission statements. While mission statements can have several advantages, there are drawbacks when they're poorly crafted or do not reflect a company's actual operations.

Realization of school core values and performance effectiveness of academic heads

Academic heads must respond to these concerns where they exist by increasing their own capacity and by challenging the district culture to focus more on support and collaborative working relationships with high schools (Bottoms and Schmidt-Davis, 2010). At the same time, the education office needs to know their principles are up to the challenge. In many low performing schools, principals may be expected to fail, resulting in a high annual attrition rate. This occurs because a district has neither a plan to support and develop the principals it has, nor a plan to identify, recruit, develop and support future principals. Every school should ensure a pipeline of strong school leaders by developing a carefully crafted succession plan that includes preparing aspiring principals in collaboration with a university partner or another entity and provides future leaders with opportunities to engage in progressively challenging learning experiences. When the education office knows a highly capable person in leading a school, it is more likely to support that principal rather than look for a replacement at the first sign of trouble. When principals know they are trusted, they are more open to expressing their needs and concerns and will be more confident, innovative, collaborative, and likely to create a highly engaging, high-performing school culture (Muller, 2004).

Moreover, the Ministry of Education should help school leaders develop a school culture based on the belief that students can succeed at high levels when they have a sense of belonging and support, can relate their learning activities to their goals and are supported to make greater effort to succeed (Muller, 2004). “The prime responsibility of all school leaders is to sustain learning. Leaders of learning put learning at the center of everything they do: student learning first, then everyone else’s learning in support of it” (Blankstein, 2004).

In a study of Carrol and Gillen (2013) conducted a study with 121 administrative offers institutional. They found out that core values help to define and shape the culture or vision you want to cultivate for your company. According to their study, core values are very important in determining how people view what you bring to institution. There are two main reasons why creating a list of company core values is a critical component to developing any institutional core value. For example, based on what your values are, potential employees will know immediately whether or not they would be a good fit. This value can be applied to anyone we come into contact with throughout our work day. Honesty helps us to build a solid relationship between people, not to mention trust. We want to be able to trust our employees, and we want our customers to trust us.

Understanding the importance of core values study by Hales (2012) using 103 administrator of Texas University found out that core values act as roots for most tertiary institutions, laying the foundation as it were. In an ever changing world where the word ‘pivot’ has become synonymous with most startup companies, it has become of even greater importance that these core values are established as early in the growth cycle as possible. Without this, companies and people tend to draft. Their choices are then governed by external factors rather than an internal compass. Core values are not a result of an afternoon brainstorming session (Kotter, 2003). Clarity and simplicity are paramount when discovering your core values. They have to be simple messages that resonate with who are and the people you want to work with. Unfortunately many companies setup these core values but pay nothing but lip service to them. These are often

only the result of an intellectual pursuit paying heed to what would look ‘good’ rather than being representative of them. There is no deadline as to when you need to establish these values (March & Simon, 2001). The important factor is that you make a concerted effort towards developing them over time. The key here is that you clearly define them since they will act as guiding principles. They will determine your hiring decisions, produce decisions and just about every critical decision that needs to be made (Mintzberg, 2007).

As mentioned earlier, (Mintzberg, 2007). Observed that it is paramount that your core values become the basis of how you operate as a business. This requires us to integrate them into our regular activities such as performance reviews, employee recognition and internal communication. When evaluating the performance of an employee it is critical to see whether they are demonstrating the company’s core values alongside hitting tangible targets. When employees display these core values at work, they should be “recognized” as an example of how to live by these values. Lastly, all internal communication should have your core values as the underlying principle (Morgan, 2004).

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was a predictive study of strategic planning and performance effectiveness of academic heads of tertiary institutions in North Central, Nigeria The study adopted the descriptive survey design since it emphasized on sampling opinion and administration of questionnaire to the HODs in the study area. The thirty items on a four point Likert scale type which ranged from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree was employed for data collection. The questionnaires were administered to three hundred and eight (380) academic heads of department in six tertiary institutions in North Central Nigeria. The snow ball sampling (discriminate snowball sampling) was used for data collection and the data was analysed with inferential statistics (Simple Regression Analysis).

IV. RESULTS

The result of the study is presented research question by research question as presented below:

Table 1: Summary of simple regression analysis of realization of mission statement on performance effectiveness of Heads of Departments

R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate				
.126 <sup>a</sup>	.016	.013	4.53445				
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value.		
Regression	125.213	1	125.213	6.090	.014 <sup>b</sup>		
Residual	7710.468	375	20.561				
Total	7835.682	376					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	p-value.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	15.050	.503		29.950	.000	14.062	16.039
Mission statement	.063	.026	.126	2.468	.014	.013	.114

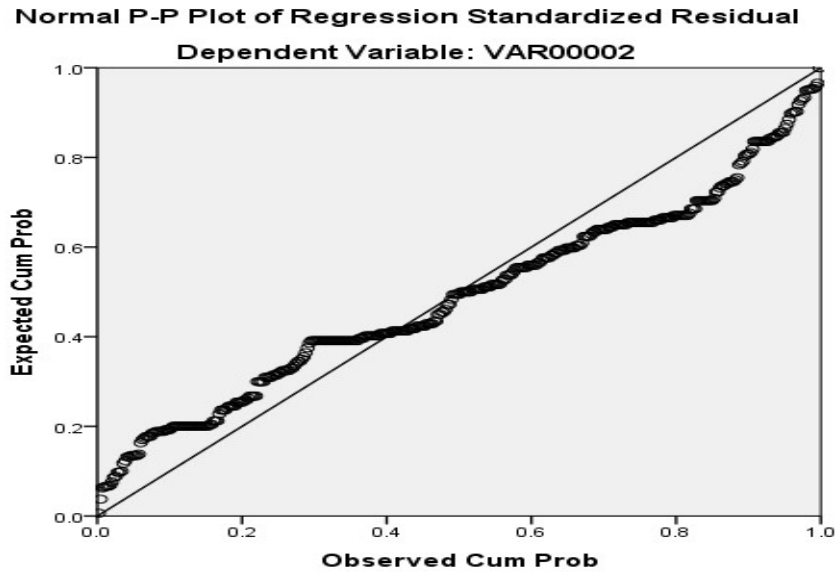
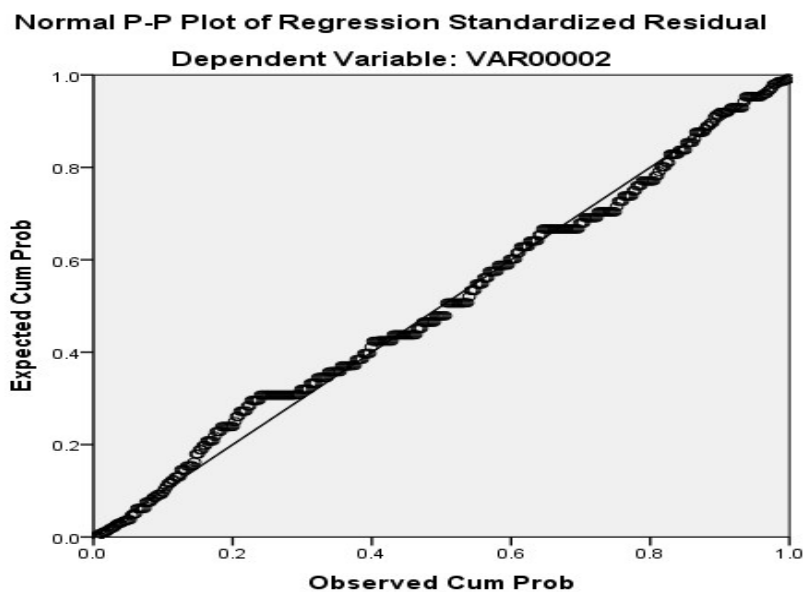


Table 2: Results of simple regression analysis of realization of core values on performance effectiveness of academic Heads of department

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate			
	.358 <sup>a</sup>	.128	.126	3.21640			
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p-value		
Regression	570.858	1	570.858	55.181	.000 <sup>b</sup>		
Residual	3879.450	375	10.345				
Total	4450.308	376					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p-value	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Job effectiveness	11.625	.523		22.244	.000	10.598	12.653
Core value	.222	.030	.358	7.428	.000	.163	.280



## V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The finding revealed that mission statement has a significant prediction on job performance of academic heads of tertiary institutions. The result conform with Fells (2000) whose finding revealed that effective mission statement help shape a company's philosophy towards its customer and clients. In the same vein, Bolman and Deal (2005) study revealed that effective mission statements require time and effort and a real focus on what a company wants to achieve. Ineffective statements may lack specificity and provide no direction for employees to follow. Also, Carroll and Gillen (2006), when properly crafted, a mission statement encapsulates an enterprise's core values and beliefs. In addition to expressing a firm's goals and objectives, an effective mission statement also states the operational and service standards for employees to follow to achieve those goals and objectives, whether in manufacturing, customer service, or any other element of the company's operation.

Realization of school core values has a significant prediction on performance effectiveness of academic heads. Thus, Carrol and Gillen (2013) found out that core values help to define and shape the culture or vision you want to cultivate for your company. According to their study, core values are very important in determining how people view what you bring to institution. Again, Mintzberg, (2007) observed that it is paramount that your core values become the basis of how you operate as a business. This requires us to integrate them into our regular activities such as performance reviews, employee recognition and internal communication.

## VI. SUMMARY

It is clearly evident that from the finding of the study academic head of most tertiary institution in North Central, Nigeria lacks adequate performance effectiveness of the duties. This is evident in poor student enrolment in school, undue delay in processing student records of graduation from most institutions; poor attitude of work among some lectures which has led to series of misunderstanding between subordinate and their superiors. This state of affair raise concern about the quality of academic heads and their job effectiveness which are attributed to poor understanding of the mission and vision statement of the organizational aims and objectives so as to foster performance effectiveness among academic heads of departments.

## VII. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the analysis discussed, the following recommendations are made so as help academic heads plan strategically to enhance performance effectiveness.

1. Factors related to strategic planning should be well articulated to management and staff of the tertiary institution.
2. It is also recommended that the vision, mission statement and core value of the organization should be clearly spelt out in the organization.

3. Organization managers should endeavor to improve personal strategic planning, set deadlines for important goals and stick to them. Deadlines force you to work harder and more effectiveness as the deadlines approaches.

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