

Relationship among Absenteeism, Lateness to Work, Turnover and Psychological Withdrawal Behaviour of Academic Staff and Administrative Effectiveness of Heads of Department of Universities in Edo State

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Abstract: The study examined the relationship among academic staff absenteeism, lateness, turnover and psychological withdrawal behaviours and administrative effectiveness of heads of academic departments of the universities in Edo State. One hypothesis was formulated and tested in the study. The study adopted the combination of survey method and correlational research design. The academic staff of all the three public universities and four private universities in Edo State were selected for the study. A sample of 246 respondents representing approximately 10 percent of the population was drawn using the multi-stage sampling technique. The Cronbach reliability was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The hypothesis was tested using the multiple linear regression analysis. The results of the study showed that an inverse significant relationship exists among academic staff withdrawal behaviours (absenteeism, lateness to work, staff turnover and psychological withdrawal behaviour) and administrative effectiveness of the Heads of Departments in the Universities in Edo State. The study consequently recommended among others that: the university authorities should incorporate staff records on withdrawal behaviours in annual personnel appraisal to raise staff consciousness on them.

Keywords: Absenteeism, Lateness, Psychological Withdrawal behaviours

I. INTRODUCTION

The Head of Department occupies a unique and strategic position in working towards ensuring efficient attainment of the goals of every Nigerian University. The conventional goals of the universities, according to National Policy on Education, are to teach for the purpose of imparting knowledge and developing skills, conduct research and provide community service, among other things (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). Education entails teaching, learning and development of the learner. The teacher occupies a pivotal position in playing these roles. It follows then that effective supervision of the teacher is key to education at every level required for development of every society.

The National Universities Commission (NUC) which supervises every Nigerian University ensures that their administrative structures are designed and operated as required to facilitate efficient attainment of the stated goals.

The position of a head of department forms a part of this structure which is hierarchical in nature. There are many administrative units or departments, academic or non-academic, administered by their heads in the universities. Conventionally, heads of academic departments in faculties are those usually referred to as heads of departments. They supervise staff and students in their departments and are answerable to the Vice-Chancellor through the Dean in performing their functions. Apart from this vertical relationship, the administrative structure also provides for horizontal relationships as they interact with fellow heads of departments and heads of some other units as required by their functions.

The role of the head of department is particularly strategic because the three major conventional roles of the universities stated above are basically played by the academic staff under the supervision of the head of department. It is by these same basic roles that the academic staff is annually appraised as they reflect service delivery of the universities. The incumbent in the office is a lecturer also playing the normal role of a lecturer. The nature of his/her office demands that the way he/she plays the roles should demonstrate the required leadership role.

Understanding of administrative effectiveness of heads of department requires awareness of their functions. Omoike (2007) and Shahmandi, Long, Ishmail, Samah and Othman (2016) discussed the roles or functions of a head of department on which his/her administrative effectiveness can be assessed. They can be summarized as administration of instructional programmes, staff administration, administration of students, and administration of facilities. They also include administration of finance, administration of offices and administration of external relation. There may be some other roles although related to the ones stated above, that might be assigned to the head of a department from time to time. The reason for that observation is that, from time to time, a university may specify and emphasize some roles to meet specific and emerging challenges consistent with its conventional roles. It may also be added that the enabling law

of each university states its goals which are usually consistent with the general goals of universities.

Administrative effectiveness has been explained above as competency of the head of department in performing the functions of his/her office. It therefore refers to competency in performing the functions explained above. This means work outcomes or the extent to which the results of the works are up to expectations. Different researchers on administrative effectiveness adopt different parameters to measure it but all in line with the functions of the head of department outlined above. Harris, Jamleson and Russ (1998) and Walvoord (2000) for instance, adopted high regard for the department in the university, emphasis on teaching and learning, consistent increases in students' performance, persistent rising expectations of staff and students week to week and year to year, and decline in staff stress. They also include staff identifying with dynamic successes recorded, a caring environment established by the head of department, learners actively playing part in running the departments, planned and replanned motivation of students, adequate openness to new ideas, effective utilization of resources, the head of department seen as a role model and frequently informing staff and students of happenings in the university.

Others are providing a detailed and acceptable course outline and description, sufficient record keeping and updating, adequate and frequent staff praise and reward, preventing unwanted interruptions and development and efficient personnel management. Administrative effectiveness of head of department, like every other form of management or leadership, requires team work and effective participation of subordinates. Anti-work behaviour like low commitment to work, indiscipline and withdrawal behaviour of subordinate could therefore have implications for administrative effectiveness.

Withdrawal behaviour (WB) means physically non-available to perform one's duties and performance below expectation on the job due to psychological factors (Falkenburg & Schyn, 2007). The major types of withdrawal behaviours are absenteeism, lateness (tardiness) and turnover which are known as physical withdrawal behaviour, and presenteeism and burnout known as psychological withdrawal behaviour. This is in line with the work of Terry and Gupta (1978) who referred to withdrawal behaviour as employee disengagement from job and the organisation while maintaining work role and organisational membership. By the definition already given above the period of disengagement may be brief (lateness), a full day (absenteeism) and permanent (turnover). The question of permission to be away may be relevant. Otherwise, leave, sabbatical leave, leaves of absence, etc, would come under withdrawal behaviour.

The other types, according to Kaplan, Bradley, Lackman and Haynes(2009) are presenteeism and burnout which are psychological withdrawal behaviours. There is no always watertight compartmentalization among these major forms of withdrawal behaviours. The nature or peculiarity of a

study may dictate working with variables that may cut across some types. On the basis of this, Erdemli (2015) for instance, described psychological withdrawal behaviour to refer to items within presenteeism and some other psychological factors in his study of teachers' withdrawal behaviour in Turkey.

Absenteeism refers to non-availability at duty post for a day work. It also means leaving one's duty post before closing time and time scheduled for an assignment, particularly when the assignment is not completed (Erdemli, 2015). There can be excused or planned absenteeism, avoidable and unavoidable absenteeism. Period of absence can also be taken into consideration.

Absenteeism of academic staff is the first independent variable of this study. It has some peculiarities when compared to conversational absenteeism. An academic staff of the universities studied does not have to be in the university every work period. Yet, he/she exhibits absenteeism when he/she is not available for the assigned duties within and outside the university.

Academic staff absenteeism has implication for the dependent variable, administrative effectiveness of the head of department. Absenteeism is a counter work behaviour. It means it reduces productivity of the academic staff. This could also affect administrative effectiveness of the Head of Department who supervises the academic staff, particularly as the members of the department need team work for its success. The areas of the Head of Department's administrative effectiveness that may be affected are administration of instructional programmes, academic staff, administrative staff, students, facilities, finance, office and external relations.

Lateness means failure to report for duties at the scheduled time or time-line. It may be for commencement of a day work or after break. Different forms of lateness identified by Blau (1994) are unavoidable lateness, stable periodic lateness and increasing chronic lateness. Academic staff lateness is the second independent variable of this study. Lateness as it relates to academic staff is different from the conventional lateness as failure to meet time line for general work resumption in the university. Rather, it mean failure to meet time line in a particular academic staff assigned duties within and outside the university. As explained in relation to academic staff absenteeism, academic staff, lateness as a counter behaviour could have negative effect on aspects of the Head of Departments administrative effectiveness specified above.

Turnover means an employee leaving the organisation before the scheduled time of retirement. Intention to leave may also be regarded as a part of turnover. Turnover may be voluntary or involuntary. Voluntary turnover may be leaving for preferred job or due to a new opportunity, decision to relocate to another place, family demand, job satisfaction, further study, and desire to change profession, health and security risk in a particular job or

environment. Although death and incapacitation or serious health challenge also lead to the employee ceasing to be a member of the organisation, disengagements due to these reasons do not fall under turnover. Persistent and chronic absenteeism or lateness may end up in turnover. Like other forms of withdrawal behaviour, turnover may have negative impact on the organisation. This may be in the areas of reduced productivity, loss of experienced and skilled job holders, increased cost of replacement of staff who have left and negative image for the organisation. Unlike other forms of withdrawal behaviour, turnover outside intention to leave may have positive impact on the organisation. This happens when ineffective and troublesome workers or workers with low commitment and organisational citizenship leave and are replaced with those with better ones. Turnover particularly in a situation of declining demand may lead to a reduction of wage bills, which could be beneficial to the organizations. When however, there is high unemployment rate, voluntary turnover may be low as many people would not like to plunge themselves into the unemployment market.

Academic staff turnover is the third independent variable of this study. It refers to academic staff physical turnover and intention to leave. In a situation of high level of unemployment as contained in the National Bureau of Statistics (2016), the two types of turnover would be expected to be low. Where they are high in the university, they could, as counter work behaviour, have adverse effects on the head of department's administrative effectiveness, the dependent variable, team work in the Department and the university, and service delivery in the university.

Psychological withdrawal behaviour is another form of withdrawal behaviour that is distinct. Erdemli (2015) the dimensional feature of psychological withdrawal behaviours include: presenteeism, spending work time on personal matters, chatting with co-workers about non-work topics, employee silence, thought of leaving current job and showing minimum effort at work. The five withdrawal behaviours discussed above are the conventional forms. Researchers do not usually study all of them together. Rather they select the ones that are relevant to their particular studies. They usually do not have to rigidly adopt these five conventional types as they cannot be classified in water-tight compartment. This may lead to carving out, as it were, variables in withdrawal behaviour suitable for a particular research. For example, Erdemli (2015) adopted psychological withdrawal behaviour as a variable in his study of Teachers Withdrawal Behaviour.

Psychological withdrawal behaviour is the fourth independent variable in this study. It is not a conventional withdrawal behaviour. Edemili (2015) adopted psychological withdrawal behaviour in the study of Teachers Withdrawal Behaviour in Turkey. It contained psychological factors in withdrawal behaviour that could relate to Nigerian Universities.

As an anti-work behaviour, psychological withdrawal behaviour could have negative influence on

administrative effectiveness of the head of department, productivity of the academic staff, teamwork in the department and service delivery of the university. A combination of the four independent variables indicated above form the fifth independent variable. This is termed academic staff withdrawal behaviours. This variable is capable of depicting the inter-relationship among the other withdrawal behaviours for study. The combination of four independent variables could have influence on administrative effectiveness of the heads of department, the independent variable, the productivity of the academic staff, team work in the department and efficient goals attainment of the university.

In this study, the selected forms of withdrawal behaviour were the independent variables. Experience of these variables by the academic staff and its relationship with administrative effectiveness of heads of department, the dependent variable, was studied. The withdrawal behaviours selected for the study are absenteeism, lateness, turnover, and psychological withdrawal behaviour and a combination of the four.

The association between academic staff withdrawal behaviours and administrative effectiveness has been carried out in studies. Aniefiok and Uduak (2017) examined the administrative challenges of academic Heads of Department in universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study also identified staff withdrawal behaviours as a challenge affecting administrative effectiveness by the Heads of Departments to overcome the challenges. A descriptive survey design was utilized for the study. Four research questions guided the study. The target population involved all the academic Heads of Department of the University of Calabar (102) from 11 faculties and Cross River University of Technology (27) from 8 faculties. The data were collected from a sample of 129 Heads of department from University of Calabar (102) and Cross River University of Technology (27) using a questionnaire developed by the researchers and titled "Administrative Challenges of Academic Heads of Department Questionnaires (ACAHDQ). The data collected were analyzed with the aid of descriptive statistics (frequency and simple percentages). The result showed that staff absenteeism predicted lateness and emotional withdrawal behaviours affected administrative effectiveness in universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. Aseye (2016) examined the causes and effects of withdrawal behaviours on administrative effectiveness in Christ the King Apostolic University College (CAUC) Kwadaso, Ghana. Information about purpose, method, data analysis and result of the study have already been reported in this chapter. The study found that withdrawal behaviours had negative effects on administrative effectiveness in the University.

Ndukwere, Ikechukwu and Onele (2017) studied leadership, politics and effective administration of State Universities in Nigeria. Information about purpose, method and results of the study were already presented under the sub-heading, studies on psychological withdrawal behaviours and

administrative effectiveness, in this chapter. Although the primary focus of the study was not withdrawal behaviour, it found, among others that withdrawal behaviours were among the factors having negative influence on bottle-necks of administrative effectiveness in the Universities studied. Beehr and Gupta (1978) studied the structure of withdrawal behaviours. The purpose, method, and data analysis were already reported under the sub-topic, Psychological Withdrawal Behaviour, in this chapter. The study found that among the withdrawal behaviours, when one was increasing, the others were also increasing.

The main thrust of the study is to examine the relationship among absenteeism, lateness to work, turnover and psychological withdrawal behaviour and administrative effectiveness of Heads of Departments in Edo State.

Statement of the Problem

In recent times, fundamental challenges have been identified in Nigerian Universities, which reflect their weak capacity for service delivery and efficient goals attainment. The challenges identified by some researchers stated in this thesis are low rating of the Nigerian Universities among the world universities, low managerial efficiency or administrative effectiveness and withdrawal behaviours. Also stated are challenges of corruption, unsafe schools, sexual harassment, students' restiveness, aggressive student's unionism and frequent strikes. The above problems, coupled with the identified challenges of heavy workload and low organisational commitment, could be an explanation for depict able negative practices reported in some of the universities. These are unwarranted delay in graduation of some students, phenomenon of missing result, graduation with low grade, stress and frustration. These lead to some students wrongly seeking solace in cultism, prostitution and suicide.

Efforts have been made by various relevant bodies to provide solutions to these problems. These are the Nigerian state institutions at various levels, the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the universities themselves. They have continuously made laws and policies which are enforced or implemented to provide solutions to the challenges. Despite researches conducted and geared towards improved understanding of the various facets of the problems to facilitate providing solutions to them, the problems persist.

A careful look into the enumerated problems would reveal that they are dominantly in the domain of or related to withdrawal behaviours and administrative effectiveness. These two areas should therefore not be ignored. Some questions may therefore be raised. They relate to if the employee, particularly the academic staff, exhibit physical counter work behaviours like absenteeism, lateness and turnover which make them fail to do their work well. They also relate to if such anti-work behaviours are in the domain of psychological withdrawal behaviours which cannot easily be perceived but, like other withdrawal behaviours, could negatively affect administrative effectiveness of the head of

department, leading to leaving much university work undone and serious problems of the university. There is therefore a need for researchers to beam adequate search light on them in an effort to save the universities from total collapse. The study therefore set out to attempt to provide this required missing link. It is to find out if there is a relationship between academic staff withdrawal behaviour and administrative effectiveness of heads of department of a section of Nigerian Universities.

The National Policy on Education, Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013), stated the goals of Nigerian Universities as teaching, research and community service. The academic staff basically plays these three roles. The roles form the criteria by which they are basically assessed annually. This means, it is their roles that fundamentally determine the extent of service delivery and goals attainment of the universities. In playing these fundamental roles, the academic staffs are supervised by the heads of department. So, the administrative effectiveness of heads of department is key to solving the problems and goals attainment of the universities. This therefore justifies the need for a research which attempts to find out the relationship between academic staff withdrawal behaviours and administrative effectiveness of selected Nigerian universities.

There are also gaps in research in the area. Uchena (2013) reported that there had been a relative delayed research attention paid to withdrawal behaviours as anti-work behaviours or counter work behaviours in Nigeria up to the period of his study. This, according to him, had raised a question on applicability of research conducted on other environments to Nigeria. As researches on Nigeria in the area started the need to cover various organisations like the universities and categories of their staff became pressing. This research set out to meet an aspect of this need as it relates to Nigerian Universities which is a gap in knowledge.

This study set out therefore to fill the above gaps in knowledge. In the research, each of the stated academic staff withdrawal behaviours (absenteeism, lateness, turnover and psychological withdrawal behaviour) is an independent variable while administrative effectiveness of heads of department is the dependent variable. Therefore, the main purpose of the study is to examine the relationship among absenteeism, lateness to work, turnover and psychological withdrawal behaviour and administrative effectiveness of Heads of Departments in the universities in Edo State.

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis was tested in this study:

1. There is no significant relationship among academic staff absenteeism, lateness to work, staff turnover and psychological withdrawal behaviour and administrative effectiveness of the Heads of Departments in the Universities in Edo State.

II. METHOD

The correlational research design was adopted in this study to examine the relationship among absenteeism, lateness to work, turnover and psychological withdrawal behaviour of academic staff and administration effectiveness of head of departments in Edo state. From the total population of the academic staff of the universities of 3,268, a sample size of 346 representing approximately 10percent of the total population was found suitable and drawn. The multi-stage stratified simple random sampling procedure was employed during sample selection. The questionnaire for this study has three sections. Section A contains the demographic characteristics of respondents. Section B contains the instrument for measuring absenteeism, measuring lateness, measuring turnover and measuring Psychological withdrawal behaviour of academic staff. Section C, the final section, contains items for measuring administrative effectiveness of Heads of Departments. The instruments in Sections B-C were designed and structured in line with the four point likert type scale of Strongly Agree – 4, Agree -3, Disagree -2 and Strongly Disagree -1. To determine the internal consistency of the instrument, the Cronbach alpha reliability method was

used. It yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.78 which showed the instrument is reliable.

To administer the instrument, three research assistants were employed from each of the three universities. The three research assistants were post-graduate students with a minimum of first degree who had sufficient knowledge of the university. They were trained on relevant parts of method of study and how to administer and retrieve copies of questionnaire. A period of three weeks was set aside to carry out the administration and retrieval of filled questionnaire. The multiple linear regression analysis was used to analyse the relationship between the variables.

III. RESULTS

The results from the test of hypothesis is presented in this section

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship among academic staff absenteeism, lateness to work, turnover, psychological, withdrawal behaviours and administrative effectiveness of the Heads of Departments in the Universities in Edo State.

Table1: Summary result of the multiple linear regression analysis

$$R = .893$$

$$R\text{-square } (R^2) = .797$$

$$\text{Adjusted R-square} = .792$$

$$F_{(0.05)} = 140.950^*$$

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-val.	p-val.	Remark
	β	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	.496	.069		7.164	.000	Significant
Staff Absenteeism (SA)	-.147	.022	.257	-6.774*	.000	Significant
Staff Lateness (SL)	-.084	.023	.138	-3.619*	.000	Significant
Staff Turnover (ST)	-.150	.019	.252	-7.741*	.000	Significant
Staff Psychological Withdrawal Behaviour (SPWB)	-.260	.018	.484	-14.283*	.000	Significant

Dependent variable: Administrative effectiveness (AE)

*t-values and f-value are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$)

The data in Table 1 showed that the r-value (R) of .893 showed that the strength and direction of the correlates (SA, SL, ST and SPWB) are strongly and positively related with administrative effectiveness (AE). The r-square (R^2) and adjusted r-square (R^2) are .797 and .792 respectively. These coefficients - 0.797 and 0.792 are the goodness of fit of the model that show that 79.2% to 79.7% of variations in administrative effectiveness of the Heads of Departments can be attributed changes in the absenteeism, lateness, turnover and psychological withdrawal behaviours of staff in the universities in Edo State.

The F-value of 140.950 which test for joint effect of the correlates is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship among academic staff absenteeism, lateness to work, turnover, psychological, withdrawal behaviours and administrative effectiveness of the Heads of Departments in the Universities in Edo State. Furthermore, the t-values for absenteeism (-6.774), lateness (3.619), turnover (-7.741) and psychological withdrawal behaviour (-14.283) are all statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). The negative sign indicates that all the withdrawal behaviours are negatively

correlated with administrative effectiveness of the Heads of Departments in the Universities in Edo State.

IV. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The major findings are summarized as follows:

- All the withdrawal behaviours- staff Absenteeism, Lateness, Turnover and Psychological Withdrawal Behaviour are inversely correlated with administrative effectiveness of the Heads of Departments in the Universities in Edo State
- 79.2 to 79.7percent variations in administrative effectiveness of the Heads of Departments can be attributed to changes in the absenteeism, lateness, turnover and psychological withdrawal behaviour of staff in the universities in Edo State
- Null hypotheses was rejected as the result shows that there is a significant relationship among academic staff absenteeism, lateness to work, turnover, psychological, withdrawal behaviours and administrative effectiveness of the Heads of Departments in the Universities in Edo State.

V. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The result showed that academic staff withdrawal behaviours (absenteeism, lateness to work, staff turnover and psychological withdrawal behaviour) in the Universities in Edo State correlated. In line with the Theory of Organisational Commitment, low withdrawal behaviours of academic staff of the universities studied could suggest high level of commitment of academics. A corresponding high administrative effectiveness of heads of departments was established. This is also in line with an aspect of the adopted theory on reciprocity. Where the organizational and environmental factors of the universities are up to the expectations of the job holders, they would reciprocate with a good level of organisational commitment. This, in turn, would lead to a good level of administrative effectiveness of heads of department.

As explained in the Theory of Organisational Commitment, Smith *et al* (2016) emphasised the concept of social exchange which relates to reciprocity. The explanation already draws attention to the fact that the rate or intensity of the various withdrawal behaviours do not have to be the same. This is so even in their relationship with administrative effectiveness of heads of departments. As found in this study, turnover experience was the least while experience with psychological withdrawal behaviour was the highest. Collectively, the withdrawal behaviours had inverse relationship with the administrative effectiveness of the heads of department of the universities studied. The result further agrees with that of Aniefiok et al (2017). The result corroborates that of Erdemli (2015). The finding of this study is in line with that of Aseye (2016). The finding on this hypothesis supports that of Ndukwere et al (2017).

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were informed by the findings of this study.

1. The university authorities should incorporate staff records on withdrawal behaviours in annual personnel appraisal to raise staff consciousness on them.
2. The university authorities should check structural, technical and procedural defects which could encourage withdrawal behaviours of academic staff.

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