

Performance Management and Service Delivery in Tertiary Institution in South East Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This work evaluates the relationship between performance management and service delivery in tertiary institutions in South East Nigeria. Effective service delivery in tertiary institution is paramount for achieving academic excellence, student satisfaction, and institutional reputation. The research investigates how effective feedback mechanism, employee reward and recognition enhances service delivery in tertiary institutions in South East Nigeria. The study adopted the Goal Setting theory. A total 5452 staff (academic and non-academic) of tertiary institutions in South East Nigeria (Federal Polytechnic Oko, Anambra State, and Enugu State University of science and technology) participated in the study, with a sample size of 373. The questionnaire was used to solicit information from the respondents. Two research questions was formulated to guide the study. This is a descriptive survey design and data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean). The findings shows, that feedback mechanism has significant effect on service delivery in tertiary institutions in South East Nigeria. The results also shows that, Rewards and recognition encourages staff to strive for excellence in their work. It is recommended that, there should be constant and participatory feedback to the employees to boost work productivity. Again, there is need to adopt a communication channels where staff, students and management can send their feedback weather positive or negative. Also, good reward system should be encouraged.

Keyword: performance management, service delivery

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

The success of any organization is dependent on the quality and structures of its workforce. Since employees are the soul of any organization, their worth cannot be overstated. Organizations cannot achieve its stated objectives or goals without the employees. Therefore, employees are always yearning for an encouragement that will drive them to work in the most efficient and effective way in the interest of the organization.

In Nigeria, most of the performance appraisal exercise programs are not well designed and focused. Most organizations tend to view appraisal exercise as a punitive measure. This makes it loses its objective and focus (Agbodike and Ugwu 2021). Obikeze, Obiemeka & Abonyi in Agbodike and Ugwu (2021), stated that when people work in an organization, it is expected that, there should be a way of measuring or evaluating their jobs in order to know whether they are actually performing the job for which they were hired and paid. Sequel to this, performance management is an umbrella term for activities that ensure organisational goals are effectively achieved. It connects organisational goals to employees' aspirations, ensuring alignment between individual efforts and organizational objectives (Uchenna, and Okolie, 2025). Performance management is a planned approach to increasing productivity by improving both individual and team capabilities (Baron & Armstrong, in Uchenna, and Okolie, 2025). Performance management is a way of providing a favorable working environment whereby employees are highly motivated to execute tasks in their best abilities. In addition to this,

performance management commence when the work systems are clearly defined and job specification is properly communicated and it ends when an employee leaves the organization. The Primary reason of managing employee performance is giving a reward to employees who meet the criteria of satisfactory performance, good behavior and to promote productivity of those employees who do not perform thus promoting their morale to positively and satisfactorily make a radical shift towards their overall performance. Employees who perform poorly are subject to a development program to improve their performance.

Nigerian Tertiary institutions often struggle with starting and maintaining sustainable performance while enhancing staff productivity. To overcome this, management must implement effective strategies and reward systems to motivate employees in the institution. Performance management exists as an intricate concept which addresses performance problems throughout the entire organisational structure, ranging from individual employees to groups to departments to the whole organization in other to ensure service delivery in the organization. Therefore, Nigerian tertiary institutions are structured to provide services. The services includes; academic services and community services. The academic staff and the non-academic staff are saddled with the responsibilities in the institutions to provide these services. Ogunode (2025) defines academic staff as an individual employed in a higher institution to provide the services of teaching, research and community services while the non-academic staff or administrative staff are senior non-academic or senior administrative staff who occupy different positions and play different roles in the institution like they handles the day-to-day administration and operations of the institution. This role is indispensable for raising living standards for citizens and drive innovation as well as to provide value for money. They also provide services like fostering employment opportunities, ensuring economic stability, and enhancing societal well-being.

Statement of the problem

Performance management is necessary if any organization is to succeed in this constantly changing world. Performance management in the public sector strives to oversee, guide, manage and review the work done by public servants.

Performance management and service delivery in tertiary institutions in South East Nigeria, including ESUT, and Federal Polytechnic Oko, are stuck by issues like the need for enhanced training for public managers, institutional restructuring, political interference, inadequate feedback and the use of technology. These challenges apparently has resulted to inadequate assessment of employee performance which is characterized by lack of clear goals and objectives, inadequate performance metrics, inefficient communication and feedback mechanism, poor service delivery, decreased productivity, low morale, neglect of duties, limited accountability and transparency in decision making process, poor reward system, lateness to work and early departure.

To address these seemingly challenges, there is a need for a comprehensive review and reform of performance management in Tertiary institution, with a focus of improving service delivery. It is in the light of the above therefore, that it becomes imperative to determine the effects of performance management and service delivery in tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria, using Enugu State University of Science and Technology(ESUT), and Federal Polytechnic Oko, Anambra State, Nigeria as a case study, (2018-2024).

Objectives of the study

The broad objectives of this study is to determine the effects of performance management and service delivery in tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria, using Enugu State University of Science and Technology(ESUT), and Federal Polytechnic Oko, Anambra State, (2018-2024).

Specific objectives of this study are:

1. To determine the extent to which effective feedback system enhances service delivery in tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria.
2. To access the extent to which reward and recognition enhances service delivery in tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between effective feedback system and service delivery in tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria.
2. How does employee rewards and recognition contributes to service delivery in tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria.

Significance of the study

Understanding performance management principles helps students in their own career development.

The results of this study informed various stakeholders such as the management, policy makers and employees of public sector organizations concerning the essence of performance management in enhancing service delivery.

Also, the study will provide a foundation for future research on performance management and public sector service delivery in the educational sector, particularly in Nigeria.

Scope/ delimitation of the Study

This study was limited to establishing the effect of performance management and service delivery in tertiary institution in south east Nigeria. The study focused on how feedback system, and employee reward and recognition enhances service delivery. This study covers the timeframe between 2018 -2024.

METHODS

Design of the study

The survey research design was adopted for the study.

Area of the study

This study was conducted in tertiary institutions in South East Nigeria.

Population of the study

The population consists of staff (Academic and Non-Academic) of Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT) and Federal Polytechnic Oko, Anambra State Nigeria with a total number five thousand four hundred and fifty two (5452) respondents.

Sample and sampling techniques

The Stratified sampling technique was used where the population was divided into groups and sub-groups to ensure representation and the sample size is 373.

Instrument for data collection

The researcher made use of the structured questionnaires to elicit information from the respondents. The structured questionnaire was prepared in form of statements and the researcher arranged them using a likert scale format ranging from lowest to highest, strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), undecided (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5).

Validation of instrument

Content and the face validity of research instrument was used for the study. To ensure this, the researcher conducted a literature review to understand the concepts and its components. Also, the drafted questionnaire was given to the supervisor and some senior lecturers to validate the instrument content. Using the face validity

method, the researcher ensures that the language is simple, the items are relevant to the research questions, and have experts in the field to review the instrument to ensure it appears valid.

Reliability of the instrument

A test- re-test method was adopted. To ensure this, the researcher administered the instrument on two different occasion and two different set of responses were obtained and co-related using Pearson- Product moment correlation analysis was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance.

Method of data analysis

The study involves both research questions and hypotheses. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics, frequency counts, simple percentage, and mean scores to answer the research questions while the Pearson- Product moment correlation analysis was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance.

Decision rule

From the above, response receiving a mean score rating 3.0 and above is regarded as accepted while any mean score rating below 3.0 is regarded as rejected.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: how does effective feedback system affect service delivery in tertiary institutions in South East Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean scores of respondents’ responses on the how effective feedback system affect service delivery in tertiary institutions in South East Nigeria.?

N=373

S/N	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Σ Fx	Mean (X)	Decision
1	Feedback system provides specific information to help improve employee’s performance.	121(484)	190(570)	35(70)	10(10)	1134	3.0	Agree
2	Effective feedback system align the behaviour of employees towards attaining their performance in the organization.	180(720)	95(285)	41(82)	40(40)	1127	3.1	Agree
3	Performance feedback has been found to affect other organisational variables such as intrinsic motivation, fairness, efficacy, and organisational commitment.	149(596)	112(336)	40(80)	55(55)	1067	3.0	Agree

Table 1: the above represents the mean scores of respondents’ responses for research question one, which is on the how does feedback mechanism affect service delivery in Federal Polytechnic Oko, Anambra State, Nigeria? Three tentative statements were put forward to elicit responses from respondents with regard to the stated objective.

The respondents are in agreement with the three tentative statement which states that feedback mechanism provides specific information to help improve employees and organizational performance, It strengthens relationships between the managers and employees, Effective feedback management is able to align the behaviour of employees towards attaining their performance goals and that of the organisation, Performance

feedback has been found to affect other organisational variables such as intrinsic motivation, fairness, efficacy, and organisational commitment.

Research Question 2: How does employee rewards and recognition contributes to service delivery in tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean scores of respondents’ responses on how employee rewards and recognition contributes to service delivery in tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria.

N=373

S/N	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Σ Fx	Mean (X)	Decision
1	Rewards and recognition encourages staff to strive for excellence in their work.	142(568)	200(600)	35(70)	10(10)	1248	3.3	Agree
2	it motivates employees to be more productive	180(720)	100(300)	41(82)	40(40)	1142	3.1	Agree
3.	It improves job satisfaction	200(800)	165(495)	35(70)	43(43)	1408	4.0	Agree
4.	It fosters a positive work culture	149(596)	112(336)	40(80)	55(55)	1067	3.0	Agree

Table 2: the above represents the mean scores of respondents’ responses for research question two, which is on the how employee rewards and recognition contributes to service delivery in tertiary institutions in south east Nigeria? Four tentative statements were put forward to solicit responses from respondents with regard to the stated objective.

All the respondents are in agreement with the four statement which states that rewards and recognition encourages staff to strive for excellence in their work, it motivates employees to be more productive, it improves job satisfaction and it fosters a positive work culture with the mean score of 3.3, 3.1, 4.0 and 3.0.

Summary of major findings

1. Effective feedback system align the behaviour of employees towards attaining their goals and that of the organization in other words, it provides information to employees about the quality, level of their performance, their strengths and weakness and areas of improvement.
2. A well-designed reward and recognition mechanism in the organization can boost employee morale and motivation, thereby encouraging them to strive for excellence in offering service to the institution.

DISCUSSION

Table one: show that effective feedback system has significant effect on service delivery in tertiary institution in south East, Nigeria. Feedback system has been found to affect other organisational variables such as motivation, fairness, efficacy, and organisational commitment and Feedback can provide information about the correctness, accuracy, and adequacy of work behaviours. The findings are congruent with the works of Egwu and Chukwemeka (2024) which revealed that feedback is typically described as a direct interaction between an employee and supervisor, where information about the employee's performance is shared. Also, Emmanuel C. Okoye and Chijioke I. (2021) asserted that feedback system is a tool that raises a red flag when an organization is going off track, as the information which serves as a watchdog is gotten from that same organizational system.

Table two shows there is a relationship between employee rewards and recognition and service delivery in Tertiary Institution in South East, Nigeria. This indicates that employee rewards and recognition boost employee morale in putting in their skills and competence in actualizing the stated objectives of the organization. The finding are in agreement with the work of Armstrong, 2013, which stated that, rewards and recognition of employees are tools that may be used to attract, retain, motivate and satisfy employees to give in their best in the

organization. It is also in line with the work of Nwafor, A, Chijioke .I and Umetiti C (2023) which stated that Reward arouses and sustains goal-directed behavior among employees of an organization.

Implication of findings

The findings of this study have implications to the general public, the government, tertiary institutions both public and private, employees, and students. Each understands their role in ensuring service delivery in the tertiary institutions. This suggests that all hands must be on deck to ensure service delivery in the organization. Based on the findings of the study, if the results are fully effected there will be effective management of employee performance and in return enhances service delivery in tertiary institutions.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Regular performance appraisals and feedback sessions for staff should be implemented.
2. Communication channels between staff, students and management should be enhanced.
3. Establish channels for students to provide feedback on services
4. Adoption of technology and digital platforms for training employees of the organization.
5. Good work should be encouraged and reward according.

Limitations of the study

The major limitation of the study is the inability of employees of the organization to reveal certain information about the organization. However this was solved through making them aware that the work is purely for academic purposes.

Suggestions for further research

In the light of the findings of the present study, the following areas were suggested for further research.

1. The present study was restricted to Tertiary Institutions in South East, Nigeria. Further studies can improve on this by using South West Nigeria.
2. The relationship between communication systems and service delivery in Tertiary Institutions in South East, Nigeria.
3. Examine the Influence of employee engagement in enhancing service delivery in Federal universities.

CONCLUSION

There is no organization that can survive without performance management metrics, either public or private. Therefore, effective performance management in tertiary institutions significantly enhances service delivery. By aligning staff goals with institutional objectives, fostering accountability and promoting continuous improvement, these institutions can boost operational efficiency and achieve academic excellence. Therefore, effective feedback mechanism in tertiary institutions, acts as a vital tool to understand employee's needs and adapt to institutional operations accordingly, fostering greater accountability and responsiveness. Continuous commitment to to employee rewards and recognition in any organization affects the performance capacity of the employees thereby ensuring service delivery.

Compliance to ethical standard: the entire population of study filled out a consent form to declare their free will and interest in participating.

Conflict of interest: all authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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