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PARTICIPATIVE DECISION-MAKING AND STAFF PRODUCTIVITY IN UNIVERSITY OF ILORIN, ILORIN, KWARA STATE.

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Abstract

This study focuses on Participative decision-making and staff productivity in University of Ilorin. The study looked at the level of staff involvement in decision-making on issues such as; academic programme, student personnel services and school organizational policy in University of Ilorin, Nigeria. Relevant literatures were also reviewed. This study adopted the descriptive survey method of research. A questionnaire tagged "Participative Decision-making And Staff Productivity Questionnaire" (PDMSPQ) was administered to a sample of 100 staff in University of Ilorin, selected through stratified random sampling technique from 10 Faculties out of the 15 Faculties obtained through random sampling technique. Four research questions were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive statistics of percentage was used to answer the questions. The results revealed that the degree of employee participation in decision-making is very low in University of Ilorin and that Staff involvement in decisions relating to Academic programme, Students personnel services, organizational policy greatly influences their performance. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the university of Ilorin Management should henceforth improve the degree of staff participation in decision making generally, this would enhance staff productivity and the attainment of the broad university goals

Keywords: Decision-making, staff, participation, and productivity.

Introduction

Decision-making has been observed to be the heart of every administrative process and leadership in Educational institutions. Educational administrators such as the Headmasters, Heads of Department, Principals, Deans, Provosts, Rectors and Vice chancellors must frequently make decisions regarding the appropriate steps to take in towards achieving the institutional objectives and in general the educational objectives as contained in the National policy on education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004). For instance, Universities operate an open system in decision making; inputs are received in form of materials, equipment, machineries, men, money and other resources from the environment. To effectively manage the input and output processes of the University, the administrator must be active in making wise decisions.

Educational organizations are professionalized organizations in which the staff demands a large measure of control over institutional decision processes. Therefore, in response to this demand, the administrator should employ the participatory approach in the process of making decision. Alabi (2000), opined that, when an administrator involves his subordinates in decision-making processes, organization is healthy, staff are motivated and they feel better as part of the organization and they work towards achieving the goals and objectives of the organization. Therefore, to achieve the objective of university education, decision-making process should

involve not only the school administrator but other categories of people within the school such as Dean of faculties, Director of various units, Head of departments, lecturers and students.

Educational institutions are today faced with many challenges in both teaching and administration. These challenges have consistently hampered the realization of the institutional objectives. The challenges include among others; insufficient classroom facilities, laboratories, staff Offices and students' hostel accommodation. Seasonal admission processes is also an emerging challenge that is peculiar to every university in Nigeria today (each university with its own peculiarity). The challenges require unified effort from the school head and the staff for quality and effectiveness in administration.

Participative decision making, otherwise known as participatory management, encourages the involvement of stakeholders at all levels of an organization in the analysis of problems, development of strategies, and implementation of solutions. Employees are invited to share in the decision-making process of the organization by participating in activities such as setting goals, determining work schedules, and making suggestions. It involves management treating the ideas and suggestions of employees with consideration and respect. Participation gives staff the avenue to share ideas, express opinion on possible ways that will drive the organization forward. Mullins (2005) is of the opinion that people believed that staff participation in decision-making leads to higher performance which is necessary for survival in an increasingly competitive world. Also, Mitchell (1996) reiterated that boredom and frustration at work is often the result of an employee's lack of involvement in decision-making processes with the organization's goals and a feeling that their ideas are not wanted or listened to.

Employee tends to become more productive when they are involved in decision-making that affect their work contribution. Although the level of participation differ from one organization/situation to another. For instance, in University of Ilorin there are various committees set up as a way of involving the staff in the decision-making process of the management. Members of the committee consist of both the academic and non-academic staff. These committees meet periodically to deliberate and make valuable suggestions to the management e.g; the dress code committee, student disciplinary committee, examinations committee etc. Faculties and departments also hold regular meetings where the subordinates and super-ordinates discuss and share ideas on possible ways to move the institution forward. Despite this evidence of participation, opinions may still differ as to the extent to which ideas suggested are implemented by the management and the effect of this participation on staff productivity.

The importance of staff participation in decision-making has been extremely well documented in industrialized, and in many developing countries. However, it should be noted that employee participation, in contemporary organizations remains a vital factor. In the course of revealing the reasons behind this, many studies have been carried out. Even if the objectives differ according to the nature of the organization, perhaps the main purpose is essentially one of seeking greater employee integration (Baker, D., Bridges, D., Hunter, R., Johnson, G., Krupa, J., Murphy, J. and Sorenson, K. 2002). Chen and Tjosuold (2006) stated that participation in decisions may not only give promises of a better integration of the workforce, but also of higher efficiency. It is the interest of this study to examine the relationship between participatory decision-making and staff productivity in university of Ilorin.

Statement of the Problem

The environmental and contextual changes present a number of competitive challenges to organizations. In organizations like the educational organizations with a better educated workforce that is no longer inclined to be seen and not heard called for a management style that favors teamwork and empowerment. For instance, educational organizations like the Universities are professionalized organizations in which the staff demands a large measure of control over institutional decision processes. Today, there is a greater emphasis on participatory management.

Although, many researches on management and leadership styles have exposed employee's desire for involvement in decision making in their various organizations and that employees are at the same time important elements of the accomplishment of the organizational goal. The reason basically rests on the fact that employee operators and are in a better position to know the problems they encounter in implementing the policies and how best to solve them. For instance, Oyedeji (2012), opined that, Educational Managers feel that the decision making process is their sole prerogative and as such should be protected. Also, top management likes to remain aloof from employee as to build an all- important air around them.

In the light of the above, this study therefore is set to investigate the level of staff involvement in Decision-Making in Educational organizations as well as make recommendations based on the findings.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study is to investigate the extent of staff involvement in Decision-Making in Educational Organizations. Specifically, the study aimed at identifying:

- i. The extent of staff involvement in decision-making processes in the University of Ilorin.
- ii. Whether staff participation in decision-making on Academic programme contribute productivity In University of Ilorin.
- iii. Whether staff participation in decision-making on Students personnel services lead to staff effectiveness in the University of Ilorin.
- iv. Whether staff involvement in decision-making on the school organizational policy influences staff productivity in University of Ilorin.

Research Questions

In addressing the problem of this study, the following research questions were formulated:

- i. To what extent is staff involved in decision-making in University of Ilorin?
- ii. Does staff participation in decisions on Academic programmes contribute to staff productivity?
- iii. Does staff involvement in decisions on Students personnel services leads to staff effectiveness in University of Ilorin?
- iv. Does staff involvement in decisions on the school organizational policy influence staff productivity?

Scope of the Study

This study is about Participative decision-making in Educational organizations; however University of Ilorin is taken as the case study. This study will examine the extent of staff participation in decision- making and its effects on their productivity. The study comprised of two major variables, namely; participative decision- making which was the independent variable and staff productivity as the dependent variable.

Research Design

This study adopted the descriptive survey method. It sought respondents' opinions concerning the relationship between participative decision making and staff productivity in university of Ilorin, kwara state Nigeria.

Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The target population comprised of all academic and non-academic staff in the fifteen existing faculties in University of Ilorin. It excluded Deans and Heads of Departments who substantially are members of the university management board. Out of the 15 existing faculties (Art; Agriculture, Basic medical science, Clinical science, Education, Environmental science, Engineering, Life sciences, Management science, Physical science, Pharmacy, Social science, Law, Veterinary medicine and Communication and Information science), 10 were selected using random sampling technique. A sample size of 100 staff (academic and non-academic) was chosen for the conduct of this study through stratified random sampling technique comprising 10 staff from each of the

10 faculties (Art, Agriculture, Life science, Education, Management science, Physical science, Social science, Communication and Information science, Law and Engineering).

The Research Instrument

The instrument used to collect data for the study was a structured questionnaire, titled "Participative Decision Making and Staff Productivity Questionnaire (PDMSPQ). The questionnaire consists of two sections, section A contained items eliciting personal data of the respondents such as educational qualification, academic department, experience, gender and marital status while section B deals with items seeking information on the effect of Participative decision-making on Staff productivity. The research instrument was validated adequately for both face and content. Also the instrument was subjected to a test re-test reliability procedure to ascertain its reliability. With reliability coefficient of 0.78 and 0.82 respectively, the instrument was accepted to be reliable for the study.

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected and the discussion of the results obtained. Four research questions are discussed as follows in this chapter. Descriptive statistics of percentage were used to answer all the research questions.

Answering Research Questions

Research Question One: To what extent is Staff involved in decision-making in University of Ilorin?

Table 1: Extent of Staff Involvement in Decision-making in University of Ilorin

S/N	Item	A	D
1	All members of staff are given the opportunity to express their views on all issues in the management of the University	21 (21%)	79 (79%)
2	The extent of staff participation in decision-making is not adequate in University of Ilorin	68 (68%)	32 (32%)
3	There are enough media for participation like consultation, regular meetings, collective bargaining, consultative council in University of Ilorin	56 (56%)	44 (44%)
4	Management staff consult with the low level staff before making final decisions	20 (20%)	80 (80%)
	Overall Average	203 (40.6%)	297 (59.4%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 1 show that 21% of the respondents agreed that all members of staff are given the opportunity to express their views on all issues in the management of the University while the remaining respondents disagreed with the statement. Also, 56% of the respondents agreed there are enough media for participation like consultation, regular meetings, collective bargaining, and consultative council in University while 44% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Moreso, 38% minority of the respondent was of the opinion that Staff should only participate in decision making on trivial issues like changing of duties and never on serious ones. In summary, majority of the respondents (40.6%) supported the view while (59.4%) did not. This implies that the extent of staff participation in decision making in University of Ilorin is low. In other words, it implies that Staff are not adequately involved in decision-making of the school.

Research Question Two: Does staff participation in decisions on Academic programmes contribute to staff productivity in University of Ilorin?

Table 2: Influence of Staff Participation in Decisions on Academic Programmes on staff Productivity

S/N	Item	A	D
1	Involvement in decisions on the conduct of orientation programmes for students influences staff performance	44 (44%)	56 (56%)
2	Participation in students personnel services has nothing to do with	22 (22%)	78 (78%)

	staff attitude to work		
3	Involving staff in decisions on the allocation of students to hostels will guarantee their effectiveness	39 (39%)	61 (61%)
4	Participation of staff in decisions on students' welfare will ensure their commitment	92 (92%)	9 (9%)
5.	Active participation of staff in supervision of students have positive effect on their productivity	89 (89%)	11 (28.4%)
	Overall Average	286 (57.2%)	214 (42.8%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 2 shows that 44% of the respondents agreed that involvement in decisions on the conduct of orientation programmes for students influences staff performance while the remaining respondents disagreed with the statement. Also, 39% of the respondents agreed that involving staff in decisions on the allocation of students to hostels will guarantee their effectiveness while 61% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Moreso, 89% majority of the respondent was of the opinion that Active participation of staff in supervision of students has positive effect on their productivity. In summary, majority of the respondents (57.2%) supported the view that staff participation in decisions on academic programmes contributes to their effectiveness while (42.8%) did not. This implies that staff participation in decisions on Academic programmes is above average in contributing to their productivity

Research Question Three: Does involvement in decisions on Students personnel services leads to the effectiveness of staff in University of Ilorin?

Table 3: Staff involvement in Decision-Making on Students' Personnel Services and staff effectiveness

S/N	Item	A	D
1	Recognizing lecturers as the custodians of instruction and involving them in decisions on academic programmes of the school will enhance their productivity	96 (96%)	4 (4%)
2	Effectiveness of staff can be achieved if they are involved in decision-making on cost of different programmes of the school	46 (46%)	54 (54%)
3	High level of involvement in school academics programme does not affect staff attitude to work	24 (24%)	76 (76%)
4	Consultation of staff on the selection of laboratory and library facilities will boost their morale (performance)	87 (87%)	13 (13%)
5.	Involvement of staff in designing the assessment procedure of Students academic progress may not affect their performance	32 (32%)	68 (68%)
	Overall Average	285 (57%)	215 (43%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 3 shows that 96% of the respondents agreed that recognizing lecturers as the custodians of instruction and involving them in decisions on academic programmes of the school will enhance their productivity while the remaining respondents disagreed with the statement. Also, 24% of the respondents agreed that high level of involvement in school academics programme does not affect staff attitude to work while 76% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Moreso, 32% minority of the respondent was of the opinion that involvement of staff in designing the assessment procedure of Students academic progress may not affect their performance. In summary, majority of the respondents (57%) supported the view staff participation in decision-making on students' personnel services have on their performance while (43%) did not. This implies that participation in decisions on Students personnel services is above average and to a positive extent in influencing the effectiveness of staff.

Research Question Four: Does staff involvement in decisions on the school organizational policy influence staff productivity?

Table 4: Staff Involvement in Decision on the School Organisational Policy and staff productivity

S/N	Item	A	D
1	Staff involvement in the formulation of rules and regulations of the school enhances their commitment	96 (96%)	4 (4%)
2	Consultation of staff on the development and training scheme will boost their performance	84 (84%)	13 (13%)
3	When staff suggestions count in the formulation of school policy, they intensify their effort towards the realization of the school goals	91 (91%)	9 (9%)
4	Staff participation in decisions on disciplinary actions taken on erring students does not make them productive	42 (42%)	58 (58%)
5.	When staff are integrated in decision-making process on school management policy, their satisfaction and productivity will increase	92 (92%)	8 (8%)
	Overall Average	405 (81%)	95 (19%)

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 4 shows that 96% of the respondents agreed that staff involvement in the formulation of rules and regulations of the school enhances their commitment while the remaining respondents disagreed with the statement. Also, 91% of the respondents agreed that when staff suggestions count in the formulation of school policy, they intensify their effort towards the realization of the school goals while 9% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Moreso, 92% majority of the respondents was of the opinion that when staff are integrated in decision-making process on school management policy, their satisfaction and productivity will increase. In summary, majority of the respondents (81%) supported the view that Staff involvement in decisions on the school organizational policy influences their productivity while (19%) did not. This implies that staff involvement in decisions on the school organizational policy influences their productivity.

Summary

This research is on Participative decision-making and staff productivity in Educational Organizations. University of Ilorin was used as a case study. The independent variable is Participative decision-making while staff productivity is the dependent variable. The objective of the study was to investigate the extent of staff involvement in decision-making in University of Ilorin and also to identify the effect of staff participation in respect to three school areas, like Academic programmes, Students personnel services and Organizational policy on their productivity. Descriptive survey method was adopted for this research. Four research questions were formulated to guide the study.

The sample for the study consisted of all academic and non-academic staff in the 15 existing Faculties in University of Ilorin. However, it excluded Deans and Heads of Departments because they are considered to be members of the University Management board. Out of the 15 Faculties, 10 were selected through the random sampling technique. A sample size of 100 staff (academic and non-academic) was obtained through stratified random sampling technique comprising 10 staff from each of the 10 Faculties selected.

The instrument used to collect data was a questionnaire tagged "Participative Decision-making and Staff Productivity Questionnaire (PDMSPQ) and the research questions were answered using descriptive statistics of percentage.

The findings of the study revealed that:

1. The extent of staff participation in decision-making is low in University of Ilorin.
2. Staff involvement in decisions on Academic programme will enhance their productivity at an average degree.
3. Participation of staff in decisions on Students personnel services will enhance staff productivity
4. Involvement of staff in decisions relating to organizational policy greatly influences their performance.

Conclusion

Decision-making is an integral part of management of any organization as it pervades all other functions such as organizing, planning, controlling, supervising, directing etc. The essence of decision-making cannot be over-emphasized in Educational organizations. It is also important for Educational managers to share their decision-making power with employees, secondly to delegate decision-making authority to subordinates when it is necessary, and finally, to accept employees as valuable partners in making decisions in order to realize the goals of their institutions.

From the findings of this study, Participative decision-making has been identified as a key factor in facilitating cooperation between Management and employees. Participative decision-making enhances workers motivation, morals and commitment to the organization. This could in turn enhance organizational effectiveness. This is justified by the observation made by Agba and Ushine (2010) that when employees are committed to work it leads to increase in productivity. Involvement of staff in decisions on school policies will bring about the effective implementation of the policies.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Management of the University of Ilorin should henceforth improve the degree of staff participation in decision making. This is because; if staff participates adequately in decision-making, it will enhance their commitment to work in the university, thus maximize their performance.
- ii. Management decisions on academic program should include pre and post discussion and consultations with staff. They should also consider their reservation on issues regarding academic programme matters and change any decision that is not popular among staff, this would enhance the level of trust among staff and in the long run lead to staff effectiveness.
- iii. The importance of staffs' advice and suggestions in the growth of the Educational organizations cannot be overemphasized. Hence, university staff should therefore be allowed to participate fully in management decision-making on school organizational policy. The benefits of such participation include higher output, better quality of work, higher job satisfaction, greater commitment to goals, better acceptance of change, less absence, reduced stress and turnover and greater self-esteem.

It is hoped that the implementation of these recommendations would guarantee a better staff management relation and this will lead to an increased staff job performance or productivity.

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