

**RELATIONSHIP AMONG MENTORING, STUDY LEAVE AND ICT TRAINING
PROGRAMMES AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF LECTURERS IN UNIVERSITIES IN ABIA
STATE, NIGERIA**

By

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship among mentoring, study leave and ICT training programmes and job performance of lecturers in universities in Abia State, Nigeria. The study used a correlation survey design. Three specific objectives were realized for the study. A total of 168 lecturers representing 10% of the 1668 lecturers were proportionately drawn from the five universities in the state to constitute the sample size. Two instruments titled “Capacity Building Programmes Questionnaire (CBPQ) and Lecturers’ Job Performance Questionnaire (LJPQ) were developed by the researcher and used for data collection. Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to answer the research questions and to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed that mentoring to a significant positive moderate extent relates with job performance of lecturers. Study leave to a significant positive high extent relates with job performance of lecturer. ICT training to a significant positive low extent relates with job performance of lecturers. The study concluded that mentoring, study leave and ICT training programmes relates positively with lecturers’ job performance. It was thus recommended among others that there is need for university managements to make mentoring programmes compulsory for all academic staff, sponsor study leave for lecturers to undergo doctoral degree/post-doctoral degree programmes.

Keywords: Mentoring, Study Leave, ICT training and Job performance.

Introduction

Universities are setup to fulfill the primary purpose of training and educating manpower to provide technical, professional and other socio-economic services for the nation development. This can only be attained when the University lecturers are adequately trained and retrained in capacity building programmes. Lecturers as instructors and facilitators in teaching and learning should be dynamic in methods, knowledge, approaches and information so as to cope with the modern challenges of their job (Anebi, 2016). Lecturers are inherent factors in university education. They play a major role in shaping the younger and upcoming generations through quality education. It is therefore necessary that they gain the entire information and the necessary qualities of education by means of trainings and instructions which utilize the development of an individual mentally, morally and physically which ultimately will help in building their capacities.

Mentoring is referred to as the relationship that exist between two people with the primary purpose of enhancing personal and professional development (Nzoka, 2015). It is a relationship that is centered on a mutual ground for development that is directed towards career objectives and goals. The individuals involved are usually referred to as the “mentee” and the “mentor”. The mentor is usually more experienced and exposed colleague while the mentee is a less experienced colleague. The process of mentoring has to do with sharing perspectives, coaching and transferring wisdom and knowledge to the mentee. Mentoring among lecturers in the university is beneficial to both the mentor and the mentee in terms of job performance. It helps in learning of new and better ways to do things, improve leadership skills, communication skills, career advancement, and so on (Anebi, 2015).

Study leave refers to a period for which an employer has released an employee from his duties to enable him/her pursue training or course (Nzoka, 2015). A lecturer could take up study leave to go for a doctoral degree/post-doctoral Degree. When universities in Abia State allow their lecturers take study leave, they will be better equipped to take up their responsibilities in the school, hence, their performance in the job is improved (Machika, 2014).

It is sad to say that some University lecturers in Abia State have no ICT skill. They can neither browse through the net nor type. This negatively affects their job performance. ICT training should be constantly organized for lecturers to help improve their job since most of the information we have today in the world is contained in the net.

These programmes should be adequately provided in Universities to make sure that the lecturers perform up to standard and as well affect students’ performance positively. Universities are setup to achieve a statutory function of training and educating higher manpower to provide technical, professional as well as socio-economic services for the nation development. It is based on this that the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) in its policy on education stated that, higher or advanced education creates room for producing and preparing young graduates, for instance, doctors, engineers, surveyors, architects, lecturers, lawyers, accountants, and a whole lot of others, as manpower needs in industry, government as well as other professions. The universities are required as a mandate to produce graduates that are highly skilled and qualified for manpower requirements in all the areas a country’s economy to improve effective implementation of a country’s development agenda and programmes. In the course of carrying out this task of capacity building, the higher Universities in Nigeria are always confronted with different challenges such as inadequate facilities, certificate racketeering, poor funding, examination malpractice, cultism and unencouraging attitude of students towards learning. These of course has a negative effect on the performance of these lecturers.

Thus, job performance according to Peleyeju and Ojebiyi. (2016), comprises of various types of traits which influence organizational (university) effectiveness. Onukwube, et al (2010) view job performance as a means to reach a goal or set of goals within a job, role, or organization but not the actual consequences of the acts performed within a job. Lecturers’ job performance can be assessed through knowledge of the subject matter, good communication skills, good teacher-student relationship, teaching skills, effectiveness in carrying out quality research, organisation of seminars for students, ability to judge rightly, innovation and creativity, etc.

University lecturers are faced with the responsibility of achieving a major function of training and educating high level manpower to provide technical, professional as well as socio-economic services for national development (Peretomode & Chukwuma, 2012). This can only be attained when they are trained and retrained in capacity building programmes. According to Onuoha et al (2016), capacity building programmes will provide opportunity for lecturers to improve their ICT skills, learn new

methods and techniques in teaching, be efficient in curriculum development, make proper decisions as well as judge rightly. In addition, training and retraining of lecturers in capacity building programmes will help them update on modern instructional devices and inspire them to become better lecturers in the modern world.

Several related empirical studies such as; Akpan and Etor (2012) studied the problems facing human capacity development in Higher institutions and the possible methods for improvement in Cross River State, Nigeria. Peretomode and Chukwuma (2012) in their study examined the relationship between lecturers' productivity and manpower development in higher institutions in the Delta State of Nigeria. Nzoka (2015) studied institutional factors influencing lecturers' productivity at Kenya Methodist University (KeMU). Geoffrey (2010) investigated public universities' teaching staff performance with special interest on the context of motivation with a case study of Makerere University in Uganda. The above situation seems not to be the status-quo in Nigeria with particular reference to Abia State. Their performance appear less satisfactory than the required standards and the outcome has been predictable as there are increasing concerns over erratic coverage of course content and term projects, missing marks and delayed examination results, poor assessment of students, inefficient lecturer-student interaction, decline in academic performance and reduced levels of research and publications and as a result, academic standards and performance among students have been adversely affected and are still the daily complaints among university stakeholders.

This seems to have posed a threat on the quality of education offered by the institution and service delivery. Parents and guardians seem to be doubting the validity of university education in Nigeria. The problem therefore is: how does mentoring, study leave and ICT training relates to job performance of lecturers across Universities in Abia State? Specifically, the study aimed to achieve the following, to:

1. determine the extent mentoring relates with lecturers' job performance in Abia State Universities;
2. determine the extent study leave relates with lecturers' job performance in Abia State Universities; and
3. ascertain the extent ICT training relates with lecturers' job performance in Abia State Universities.

Methodology

The study made use of a correlational survey design. The sample size for the study was 168 lecturers in the five Universities in Abia State. This represented 10% of 1,668 which is the population of lecturers in Universities in Abia State. The use of 10% sample size was justified by Anekwe (2008) who asserted that 10% sample size is appropriate for a population of few thousands. The sample was drawn using proportionate stratified random sampling technique because the universities have different population sizes. The sample was based on sampling fraction of 0.1007 as shown on Table 1. The proportion of the samples drawn from each university were in the order 96, 62, 5, 3 and 2 for MOUAU, ABSU, Gregory University, Rhema University and Clifford University respectively. This made a total sample size of the 168 lecturers in Universities in Abia State.

Sampling Table for Universities of the Study

Universities	No. of lecturers	Sample Selected
MOUAU	959	96
ABSU	617	62
Gregory University	46	5
Rhema University	29	3
Clifford University	17	2
Total	1668	168

Sources (Registry Unit of the different Universities, 2018)

Two sets of researcher structured questionnaires were used to collect data to answer the research questions posed for the study as well as to analyse the hypotheses. The first questionnaire was titled “Capacity Building Programmes Questionnaire” (CBPQ). The CBPQ was built using 4 point scale of Very High Extent (VHE) =4, High extent (HE) =3, Low extent (LE) =2 and Very low extent (VLE) =1 with a benchmark of 2.50 for decision making. The second questionnaire was titled Lecturers’ Job Performance Questionnaire (LJPQ). Lecturers’ Job Performance Questionnaire (LJPQ) was constructed using a 4-point scale of Very High (VH) =4, High (H) = 3, Low (L) =2 and Very Low (V L) =1 with the bench mark mean score of 2.50.

A total number of 168 copies of the questionnaires were administered to the 168 sampled lecturers in all the Universities in Abia State. This was done by the researcher with the help of two research assistants who were properly briefed to help in administering and collecting the questionnaires from the respondents. The copies of questionnaires were collected on the spot after responses from the subjects to ensure high return rate. However, questionnaires that could not be completed by the respondents were collected on subsequent visit. By so doing, all the questionnaires were collected eventually which gave 100% return rate.

The data collected through the administration of the instruments were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) to answer the research questions and test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was meant to establish the relationship of the variables. The extent or strength of relationship of the variables was decided or interpreted using Creswell (2008) correlation coefficient scale thus: $\pm.70-1.00$ = High relationship, $\pm.30-.69$ = Moderate relationship and $\pm.00-.29$ = Low relationship. Creswell asserted that correlation coefficients can range from -1.00 to +1.00 with positive numbers used to identify a positive relationship and negative numbers being used to identify a negative relationship while no linear association is indicated with a correlation coefficient of 0.00.

Results and Discussions

Research Question 1

To what extent does mentoring relate to job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State?

Hypothesis 1

H0₁: The extent to which mentoring relate to job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State is not significant.

Table 2: Correlation matrix of mentoring and job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State.

		Mentoring	Performance
Mentoring	Pearson Correlation	1	0.58*
	P-value		0.04
	N	168	168
Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.58*	1
	P-value	0.04	
	N	168	168
	R ²	0.3364 (33.64%)	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed),

The result of analysis on Table 2 indicates a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.58 which is positive and within the coefficient limit of ± 0.30 and 0.69. This indicates that mentoring relates positively to job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State to a moderate extent. The coefficient of determination (R²) 0.3364 indicated that about 33.64% of the variations observed in lecturers job performance were attributed to mentoring. The Table also shows a p-value of 0.04 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that the extent to which mentoring relate to job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State is not significant was rejected at 5% alpha level. This means that mentoring significantly relates to job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State to a moderate extent.

Research Question 2

To what extent does study leave relates with job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State?

Hypothesis 2

H0₂: The extent to which study leave relate to job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State is not significant.

Table 3: Correlation matrix of study leave and job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State

		Study leave	Performance
Study leave	Pearson Correlation	1	0.72*
	P-value		0.00
	N	168	168
Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.72*	1
	P-value	0.00	
	N	168	168
	R ²	0.5169 (52.0%)	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The result of analysis on Table 3 showed a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.72 which is positive and within the coefficient limit of ± 0.70 and 1.00 and a coefficient of determination (R²) 0.5169 which indicated that about 52.0% of the variations observed in lecturers job performance were attributed to study leave. This implies that study leave relates positively to job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State to a high extent. The Table also shows a p-value of 0.00 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that the extent to which study leave relate to job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State is not significant was rejected at 5% alpha level. This means that study leave significantly relates to job performance of lecturers of Universities in Abia State to a high extent.

Research Question 3

To what extent does ICT training relates with job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State?

Hypothesis 3

H0₃: The extent to which ICT training relate to job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State is not significant.

Data for answering research question 3 and testing hypothesis 3 are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Correlation matrix of ICT training and job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State

		ICT training	Performance
ICT training	Pearson Correlation	1	0.24*
	P-value		.002

	N	168	168
Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.24*	1
	P-value	.002	
	N	168	168
	R ²	0.5662 (56.6%)	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The result of analysis on Table 4 revealed a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.24 which is positive and within the coefficient limit of ± 0.00 and 0.29 and a coefficient of determination (R^2) 0.5662 indicated that about 56.6% of the variations observed in lecturers job performance were attributed to ICT training. This implies that ICT training relates positively to job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State to a low extent. The Table also shows a p-value of .002 which is less than the alpha value of .05. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that the extent to which ICT training relate to job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State is not significant was rejected at 5% alpha level. This means that ICT training significantly relates to job performance of lecturers of Universities in Abia State to a low extent.

Discussion of Findings

1. Extent of relationship between mentoring and lecturer's job performance

The findings of the study in Table 2 revealed that mentoring was significant and positively relates with job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State to a moderate extent. This implies that any increase in mentoring will lead to a corresponding increase in job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State but at an average level. This finding is plausible in that mentoring primarily aim at improving employee competence as to ensure transfer of quality knowledge, skills and required attitudes of trainees, as well as improved performance on the job in the various work situations. The finding is in tandem with Nwokocha (2015) who found that mentoring enable the mentee to gain valuable advice, improve communication skill, develop knowledge, build network, advance in career and learn new perspectives. Similarly, Ene (2016) noted that mentoring among lecturers in the university is beneficial to both the mentor and the mentee in terms of job performance.

2. Extent of relationship between study leave and lecturer's job performance

The result of the study in Table 4.2 showed that study leave was significant and positively relates with job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State to a high extent. This implies that any increase in study leave activities will observably lead to a corresponding increase in the job performance of university lecturers in Abia state. The findings agreed with Adebayo (2011) that study leave as a capacity building programme enables lecturer's to be better equipped to take up their responsibility in the school, hence, their performance in the job is improved. Igbongidi (2011) saw capacity building as coordinated efforts to upgrade, improve procedures and strengthen organizations through investment on the people, institutions and countries to achieve development objectives

3. Extent of relationship between ICT training and lecturer's job performance

The findings of the study in Table 4.3 revealed that ICT training was significant and positively relates with job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State to a low extent. This means that any improvement on the competence of the lecturers through ICT training will lead to an equitable increase in job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State. This finding is plausible in that ICT training helps to improve job performance of lecturers since most of the information in the world today is contained in the net. In agreement with the findings, Adebayo (2011) found that ICT enable employees in organizations contain savings on inputs, greater flexibility, general cost reductions and enhancements in product quantity, quality and speed of work achievement.

Conclusions

The study provided empirical evidence of extent of relationship between mentoring, study leave and ICT training programmes and job performance of lecturers in Universities in Abia State, Nigeria. Mentoring had significant positive moderate relationship with job performance of lecturers. Therefore, mentor and mentee relationship are critical for providing enabling environment for university lecturers to improve in the job performance. There was a significant positive high relationship between study leave and job performance of university lecturers in Abia State. Therefore, study leave is an essential motivation and capacity building process for university lecturers. Study leave presents an opportunity for lecturer to be exposed, cross breed ideas, change learning environment, network, freshen up and change perspectives which ultimately enhances job performance. Again, there was a significant positive low relationship between ICT training and job performance of university lecturers in Abia State. Therefore, ICT training is inevitable in enhancing lecturers' job performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study therefore recommends the following;

1. University managements in Abia State should make mentoring programmes compulsory for all academic staff. This affords University lecturers the opportunity to improve their competence as well as ensure transfer of quality knowledge, skills and required attitude.
2. All stakeholders in education such as Ministries of Education, TETfund, World Bank, Federal and state governments should sponsor and encourage study leave for young lecturers. This will enable lecturers to be better equipped to take up their responsibility in the school; hence, their performance in the job is improved.
3. University management should make lecturers be exposed to ICT skills. This will enable them to face the challenges of contemporary education and meet up with the international best practices. Again, competence in ICT will assist lecturers in sharing knowledge, networking and research publications among others.

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