Teamwork: A Panacea for University Effectiveness

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Abstract

The study examined teamwork and university effectiveness in south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria. Three research questions and three null hypotheses were generated to guide the conduct of the study. Literature was reviewed for expert opinions relating to teamwork and organizational effectiveness. An instrument that contains the variables under investigation was used to collect the data from the respondents. The population of Study was 520 persons drawn from 3 public and 3 private universities in south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria. In this regard, 118 persons were drawn from the public universities while 90 persons were drawn from the private universities. The responses of the respondents were scored on a 1-4 Likert scaling pattern. The z-test was used in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings of the study include: that university where members have focus on the goals can succeed in achieving the purpose of their existence, university staff who have strong belief in university objectives can help the administration in achieving the its set goals. There is a significant difference between the mean rating of the public and private university lecturers on how shared vision, participation in university activity, constructive communication can lead to university effectiveness. Recommendation include that the university should make more effort to encourage teamwork among the university staff, finally, the university should ensure that there is free flow of communication among the team members.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

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INTRODUCTION

In the recent time, management of educational organization in which the university is inclusive is a thing of concern to many educational managers and as well as other administrators. Discussions abound on issues such as quality of education, total quality management, quality assurance and quality education delivery. The question that may be asked by stakeholders is the strategy that may be adopted by the school administrator to achieve organizational effectiveness. Babson (2005) sees effectiveness as the ability of the organization to achieve its set goals. Ajeke (2008) was in support of Babson (200) when he asserts that effectiveness has to do with the extent to which organizations are able to meet the target or goals set for them by the society. One of the strategies that may be adopted by educational administrator is the application of teamwork strategy. Ejimaji (2010) sees teamwork as the activities of individual workers an organization brought together in order to achieve the overall goals of the organization. Aboloye (2011), describe teamwork as the process of working in a team in pursuance of group or organizational goals Furthermore, there is also a concern on how the university system has been able to adopt information and communication technology to meet the challenges of this era of globalization, and its ability to ensure effective university administration. The effectiveness of the university system is also hinged on its ability to achieve its goals, and as well as the implementation of its policies and programmes in an efficient and most desirable manner. In this regard effectiveness could be described as the extent to which the university system is able to achieve its objectives within a reasonable time and with a minimum expenditure of money.

Ukeje, Okorie, and Nwagbara in Owhonda (2014), in educational organization, effectiveness refers to the extent to which students are achieving their set goals, staff morale is high and that the students drop out is low. Owhonda (2014), states that effectiveness in public utilities is the extent to which services are rendered promptly and satisfactorily while in business organizations it is the extent to which profit is maximized.

From this point of view, it could be seen that the concept of effectiveness uphold that an organization is effective if the organization is able to meet its set goals. However, these suggest that the variety of meanings attached to the term effectiveness in the various aspects of human endeavours.

Our focus on this paper is the university organization, both the public and private universities in the south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria. Suffice it to state that if members work in teams and by having a shared vision, communicate constructively among themselves and actively participate in university activities, it would certainly be possible to run effective university programme where goals and objectives are achievable.

However, from the foregoing, it is merely assumed that teamwork will work in the university, until it is empirically proven otherwise, this study is therefore, is aimed at determining how the application of teamwork among the members of the university system can enhance the achievement of university effectiveness.

The application of teamwork in organization be it educational organization or business organization is necessary for organizational goal attainment. Many organizations such as construction industry, church organization and other business organization has adopted and implemented teamwork as their work strategy. However, the proponents of teamwork argued that constructive communication, shared vision and participation in decision will lead to organizational effectiveness; while on the contrary, many also argued that teamwork may not be a good strategy for organizational effectiveness particularly the university system. Therefore, the thrust of this paper is whether or not the adoption and application of teamwork in the university organization can result to university effectiveness.

The main purpose of the study is to examine teamwork and university effectiveness in south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria with a view to determining how:

- Shared vision among the members of the university can enhance university effectiveness;
- To ascertain how constructive communication among the members of university community could enhance the attainment of university effectiveness; and
- To determine how participation in university activities by members could lead to the attainment of university effectiveness.

Research Questions

The following research questions were asked and answered to guide the study:

- How can shared vision by members of the university system lead to the attainment of university effectiveness in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria;
- How can constructive communication among members of the university community result to the attainment of university effectiveness in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria;
- How can participation in university activities by members of university community lead to university effectiveness in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated to pilot the study:

- There is no significant difference between the lecturers of Public and private universities in their mean opinion on how shared vision by university members can lead to University effectiveness in south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria.
- There is no significant difference between the lecturers of Public and private universities in their mean opinion on how constructive communication among the members of the university can lead to university effectiveness in south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria.
- There is no significant difference between the lecturers of Public and private universities in their mean opinion on how participation by members of the university can lead to university effectiveness in south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria.

Theoretical framework

The theory that propels the searchlight for this study is the system theory. Kerlinger in Ukeje, Okorie and Nwagbara (1992) sees theory in a more general term and states that a theory is a set of interrelated constructs (concepts) and propositions that presents a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting phenomena. Okai (2013) sees a theory as an entity that has different parts with an interdependent relationship which work towards a common goal. As a corollary, Orlu-Makele (2013), states that within the past decades, a new and powerful thinking has emerged whose central thesis focuses on the enormously complex interdependences that exist between sets of variables and processes required to identify predicable relationships among these variables in almost every entity in the environment. This has produced a mode of thought that is not only interdisciplinary in nature, but also both conceptually rich and ultimately practical. For instance, the general system notion of an organized whole or system occurring in an environment is fundamental in both the Physical social science. According to Ukeje et al. (1992, p. 103), in a broad outline, proponents of systems theory conceived a system as an entity that is composed of:

- A number of parts;
- The relationship of both these parts; and
- The attributes of both the parts and the relationships

Ukeje et al (1992), thus a system may be defined as an assemblage of a set of constituents or elements in active organized interaction as a bounded entity so as to achieve a common goal of purpose which transcends that of the constituents in isolation. The theory holds that an organization in which the university system is inclusive is an integrated system of interdependent structures and functions. It is an organized system that is constituted of persons, who must know what the others are doing, and each must have a shared vision, participate in the activities of the organization and must know the programmes and policies of the organization through constructive communication, and each must be sufficiently

disciplined to obey and implement the policy of the organization. This is to ensure that goals of the organization are being achieved

METHODS

Research Design

The design for the study was the descriptive survey. The variables that are associated with teamwork are collected, analyzed and explained as they occur. Efforts are made to test, the null hypotheses on some variables of teamwork as they have implication for university effectiveness and their results inferred on the population of the study.

Population

The population of the study was 520 lecturers of universities (both public and private universities in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. The participants in the study were lecturer II, Lecturer I, and senior lecturers, associate professors and professors drawn from university of Port Harcourt, Imo state university Owerri, Federal University of Agriculture Umuturu, Madonna University Okija, Igbenedion University, Benin, Edo State, and Novena University Amai, Delta State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Sample of the study was 208 persons consisting of lecturers drawn from the six universities, (3 public and 3 private universities) thereby making 40 percent of the total population. The technique that was used for this study was a simple random sampling technique. This is to ensure that every participant has the opportunity of being selected.

Instrumentation

The instrument that was used in soliciting responses from the respondents is a questionnaire titled teamwork and university effectiveness scale (TUES), the instrument was divided into two sections (A and B). Section 'A' deals with personal data, section 'B' which was subdivided into other sections elicit information on the variables under investigation, and it was structured on a 4 point Likert scale.

Method of Data Analysis

The responses of the respondents were scored on a 1-4 scale as shown under:

- Strongly Disagree (SD)
- Disagree (D)
- Agree (A)
- Strongly Agree (SA)

For answering the research questions, mean scores, weighted mean scores and aggregate mean scores were used while z- test statistics was used in testing the hypotheses.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: How can shared vision by members of university lead to the achievement of university effectiveness?

Table 4.1 Shared Visions by University Staff (Lecturer)

Items	Public university	Private university			
	$\overline{X1}$	$\overline{X2}$	$\overline{X1}\,\overline{X2}$	Rank	Remark
University where staff have a focus on the goals can succeed in achieving the purpose of their existence.	3.02	3.61	3.32	1st	`Agree
University staff who share the same vision are motivated to work for the growth of the university.	2.72	3.23	3.11	4th	Agree
University staff who have the same focus for university success s are inspired to work harder.	3.02	3.16	3.09	5th	Agree
University staff who have a strong belief for university objectives and goals can help the administration in achieving the goals of the university.	2.72	3.14	2.93	7th	Agree
University staff who share the same visions show more commitment in the implementation of university programmes.	3.02	3.22	3.12	3rd	Agree
University staff who have vision of university programmes can condition their approaches to work for greater productivity.	3.00	3.38	3.19	2nd	Agree
University staff who share similar thought can see it as their fundamental responsibility to ensure the success of their department.	3.02	3.14	3.08	6th	Agree

(Mean set =3.12)

Table 4.1 examined the ways in which shared vision by academic staff of the university system can enhance or lead to university effectiveness. The table reveals high mean score of 3.61 and 3.02 for both public and private university respectively for university staff that have focus on the goals can succeed in achieving the purpose of their existence. In fact, in terms of university staff who share the same vision are motivated to work for the growth of the university the public university had a mean score of 2.72 while the private university scored 3.23. Both the public and private university scored 3.02 and 3.16 respectively for staff who have the same focus for university success are inspired to work harder. In the area of university staff who have a strong belief for university success can assist the administration in achieving the goals of the university the public university had a mean score of 2.72 while the private university scored a mean of 3.14 . For university where staff who share the same vision show more commitment in the implementation of university program the public university had a mean score of 3.02 while the private university had a mean score of 3.22. For university staff who has the same vision of university programme can condition their approaches to work for greater productivity the public university scored 3.00 while the private university scored 3.38. Similarly, high mean score of 3.02 and 3.14 were recorded for the two categories of universities respectively.

In the light of the foregoing, it could be seen that the means on shared vision by university lecturers for university effectiveness were high; this could be seen in the seven indicators. Therefore, it would be reasonable to conclude that shared vision among university staff can enhance university effectiveness.

Research Question 2:

How can constructive communication among university lecturers enhance the attainment of university effectiveness?

Table 4.2: Constructive communication among university lecturers

Items	Public university $\overline{X}1$	Private university $\overline{X}2$	$\overline{X1}\,\overline{X2}$	Rank	Remark
Communication among university members makes the interchange of organizational expectation possible	3.16	3.28	3.22	2nd	Agree
The sharing of information among university members makes it possible for work to be done without expression of surprises	3.02	2.83	3.22	2nd	Agree
Trustful familiarity which school members gain while working in team is a strong determinant of university success	3.02	2.83	3.03	3rd	Agree
University members who communicate freely learn the behaviours of other group members of which help to create oneness in the university.	3.14	2.92	3.03	3rd	Agree
Free flow of information in university work challenge group members to search for better solution to problem	2.84	2.98	2.91	5th	Agree
Team members who can express their ideas through a variety means can make meaningful contribution to group activities in the university.	2.98	2.83	2.91	5th	Agree
Flexibility in team communication makes it possible for suggestions for organizational growth in the university.	1.98	3.16	2.57	6th	Agree
Constructive communication among university members in group keeps them together for higher productivity.	3.58	3.37	3.51	1st	Agree

(Mean set = 4.14)

Table 4.2 used a list of eight activities to examine the ways constructive communication among university lecturers can lead to the achievement of university effectiveness. Communication among university members makes the interchange of organizational expression possible. It was high in public and private university; this could be seen in the mean scores of 3.16 and 3.28 for the two categories of universities respectively. In terms of sharing of information among university members makes it possible for work to be done without expression of surprise, the public university scored 3.02 while the private university scored 2.83. In terms of trustful familiarity which university members gain while working in team is a strong determinant of university success, it would be recalled that both public and private university recorded 3.02 and 2.83 respectively.

Similarly, the public university registered a high mean score of 3.14 while the private university registered a mean score of 2.92 for university members who communicate freely also learn the behavior of other group members which in turn help to create oneness in the university.

On the issue of whether the free flow of information in the University work can challenge group, members to search for better solution, the public university registered a mean score of 2.98 while the private university registered 2.84. In terms of team members who can express their ideas through a variety means can make meaningful contribution to group activities. The public university has a mean score of 2.98 while the private university has a mean score of 2.83. However, in terms of flexibility in teams communication, public university has a low mean score of 1.98 while the private university had a high mean score of 3.16. In the last indicator both public and private university had high mean scores of 3.58 and 3.37 respectively.

Therefore, considering the magnitude of the high mean scores in the table it is also reasonable to conclude that constructive communication among university members can also enhance university effectiveness. In this regard, the answer to research question 2 is that constructive communication by university members can lead to the achievement of university effectiveness.

Research Question 3: In what ways can participation in university activities by members of university community lead to university effectiveness?

Table 4.5: Participation among university members for university effectiveness

Items	University	University			
	$\overline{X1}$	$\overline{X2}$	$\overline{X1}\,\overline{X2}$	Rank	Remark
University members who take part in group activities contribute to the making of educational development	3.00	3.61	3.31	6th	Agree
Department members that allow all members to contribute to the making of departmental decisions can achieve most of their set targets.	3.30	3.30	3.30	7th	Agree
Departmental goals are easily achieved where departmental members are allowed active participation in departmental affairs	2.70	3.60	3.15	9th	Agree
Universities whose activities are not focused on few members are known for the achievement of their targeted goals.	3.72	3.22	3.47	4th	Agree
Departmental members who are allowed active participation in group activities focus their attention on the achievement of the goals of the department.	3.46	2.99	3.23	8th	Agree
Department members who actively participate in the activities of the department activities can identify obvious group distractions that help them to work and contain the distraction.	3.85	3.30	3.61	1st	Agree
General participation of departmental members in the affairs of the departmental provides comic relief to members when they get board.	3.42	3.62	3.52	2nd	Agree
Department members who establish meaningful relationship with themselves and jointly work to ensure effective implementation of universities programme.	3.71	3.30	3.51	3rd	Agree
Active involvement in departmental programmes of action helps university members to judiciously utilize their talents to achieve departmental goals.	3.12	3.01	3.07	10th	Agree
Work teams that allow general participation by group members tap from their knowledge of administrative theories that help in running effective university.	2.68	2.30	2.49	11th	Disagree
General participation by all members of the department work group help in sharing skills that assist in the effective conduct of the university activities.	3.58	3.24	3.41	5th	Agree

(Mean set =3.27)

Table 4.3 examined the ways in which participation in University activities can enhance university effectiveness. The table reveals that both public and private university had a high mean occurrence in all the eleven indicators. In this regard, it would be recalled that the public university has a mean score of 3.00 and the private university scored 3.61 that members who take part in group activities will in turn contribute to make educational decision. In another indictor such as educational groups that allow all members to contribute to the make education decision can achieve most of their set targets, the public university recorded a mean score of 3.30 while the private university also had a mean score of 3.30. In terms of university goal that are easily achieved where organizational members who are allowed active participation in organizational affairs, the public university had a mean score of 2.70 while the private university has 3.60. In terms of organization whose activities are not focused on few members are known for the achievement of their target goals, the public university recorded a mean score of 3.72 while the private university scored 3,22. Similarly, in another group of indicators, such as school members who are allowed active participation in group activities focus their attention on the achievement of the goals of the university the public university scored 3.46 while the private university scored 3.22. Furthermore the from the data analysis, departmental members who actively participate in university activities can identify obvious group distraction that help them to work and contain the distractions, both public and private university recorded 3.85, and 3.30 respectively. The table further reveals that the public university recorded a mean score of 3.42 while the private university scored 3.62 in the area of general participation of university member in the affairs of university can provide comic relief to members when they get bored. In terms of university members who establish meaningful relationship with themselves and jointly

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work to ensure effective implementation of university programmes the public university has a mean score of 3.71 while the private university has a mean score of 3.30. Both public and private university recorded a mean score of 3.12 and 3.01 respectively in the area of active involvement in university programmes for action and it helps university members to judiciously utilize their talents to achieve university goals.

Similarly, high mean score of 2.68 for public university and a low mean score of 2.30 was recorded for private university for work team that allow general participation by group members to tap from their knowledge of administrative theories that help in running the university effectively. However, both type of university recorded a high mean score of 3.58 and 3.24 respectively for general participation by all members of university workgroup that help in sharing skills that assist in the effective conduct of their university activities.

From the foregoing examination of table 4.3 the answers to research question 3 is that participation in university activities among university members contribute to the achievement of university effectiveness. Furthermore, university whose members actively participate in university activities can quickly identify some obvious group distractions that can actually help them work and contain the distraction.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of public and private university on how shared vision by members of the university can lead to the achievement of university effectiveness.

Table 4.4: Test of Difference between public and private university on how shared vision by members of the university can enhance university effectiveness

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	STD Deviation	Df	Z-Cal	Z-tab	Remark
Public Universities	118	28.899	4.793	206	2.735	1.96	Significant
Private Universities	90	27.504	3.112				

A critical look at table 4.4 shows that the respondents of public universities had a mean score of 28.899 and a standard deviation of 4.793 while the respondents of private universities had a mean score of 27.504 and a standard deviation of 3.112. At the degree of freedom of 206, the z- calculated value was 2.735 while the z- table value was 1.96; since the z- calculated value of 2.735 was greater than the table value of 1.96, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. As a result the implication is that there is a significant difference between the mean rating of the public and private universities on how shared vision by members of the universities can enhance universities effectiveness.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of public and private universities on how participation in university activities can enhance the attainment of university effectiveness in south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria.

Table 4.5: Test of difference between public and private University on how participation in university activities can enhance university effectiveness

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	STD Deviation	Df.	Z-Cal.	Z-tab.	Remark
Public Universities	118	22.37	2.713	206	2.524	1.96	Significant
Private Universities	90	21.11	2.121				

Table 4.5: Shows the mean ratings of public universities of 22.37 and 21.11 for private universities of 206, the Z-calculated value which is 2.524 is greater than the Z-table value of 1.96 hence the null hypothesis is rejected. As a result, the implication is that a significant difference exists between the public and private universities on how participation in University activities can enhance university effectiveness.

Hypothesis Three

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of lecturers of public and private universities on how constructive communication can enhance the attainment of university effectiveness in south-South geo-political zone of Nigeria.

Table 4.6: Test of difference between public and private university on how constructive communication among the members of the university can enhance the attainment of university effectiveness

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	STD Deviation	Df.	Z-Cal.	Z-tab.	Remark
Public Universities	118	27.231	89.227	206	2.719	1.96	Significant
Private Universities	90	25.172	69.729				

Table 4.6 shows the mean ratings of public universities and that of private universities. A critical look at the table shows the mean ratings of public universities of 27.231 and 25.172 for private university. The Z-calculated value which is 2.719 is greater than the Z- table value of 1.96; hence the null hypothesis is rejected. As a result, the implication is that a significant difference exists between public and private university on how constructive communication by members of the university can enhance the attainment of university effectiveness.

Summary of Findings

Based on the foregoing analysis of data   interpretation, the findings of the study are summarized:

- University where members have focus on the goals can succeed in achieving the purpose of their existence.
- University staff that have strong belief for university objectives and goals can help the administration in achieving the goals of the university.
- University staff who share similar thoughts can see it as their fundamental responsibility to ensure the success of their department.
- Communication among university members makes the interchange of organizational expectation possible.
- Free flow of information on university work challenge group members to search for better solution to problem.
- Team members who can express their ideas through a variety means can make meaningful contribution to group activities in the university.
- Departmental members that allowed to contribute to the making of departmental decisions can achieve most of their set targets.
- Departmental goals are easily achieved where departmental members are allowed active participation in departmental affairs.
- General participation by all members of the department work group help in sharing skills that assist in the effective conduct of the university activities.
- Active involvement in department programme of activities help university members to judiciously utilize their talents to achieve departmental goals.
- Departmental members who establish meaningful relationship with themselves, and jointly work to ensure effective implementation of university programme contribute to school goal attainment.
- There is a significant difference between the mean ratings of the lecturers of public and private universities on how shared vision by group members can enhance university effectiveness in South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria.
- Significant difference exist between the public and private universities lecturers on how participation in university activities can enhance university effectiveness.

- Significant differences exist between the public and private university lecturers on how constructive communication by members of the university can enhance university effectiveness.

Recommendations

- The university should make more efforts to encourage teamwork in the university, the university management should make more efforts to encourage teamwork by organizing regular workshops on teamwork; this is to ensure that members appreciate the benefits of teamwork.
- There should be free flow of information in the university especially among the team members, this is to ensure that they have access to information, and in turn they will contribute meaningfully to the university activities.

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