

Staff Development Practices, Attitude to Work and Work Performance among Academic Staff in Tertiary Institutions in Ghana

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Abstract: *This study investigated staff development practices attitude to work and work performance among academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ghana. The variable under staff development practices used was institutional commitment to staff development and work performance. One hypothesis was formulated which accommodate the study's major variable. The survey inferential design was adopted for the study. The instruments used were academic staff development practice and attitude to work questionnaire and work performance questionnaire which covered the independent and dependent variables. After a pilot test, the instrument was administered to 540 academic staff and students randomly sampled from these universities and two polytechnics. The data collected were statistically analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) at 0.05 level of significance. The study major finding was that there was a significant relationship between institutional commitment to staff development and academic staff work performance. Therefore it was observed that academic staff work performance and attitude to work is determined by the level of institutional commitment to academic staff development. Based on the above findings, it was suggested that institutional commitment to staff development must be tenaciously encouraged in order to get the best from the academic staff work performance.*

Key Words: *Staff-development, practices, attitude, work performance, tertiary institutions.*

I. Introduction

The educational system at the tertiary level is seen as a tool by which a national identity and civil society are built through shared value and commitment to a common goal (Akuegwu, 2005).

It plays a key role in social and cultural development (Cripps, 2001). Apart from this, the scientific development, and technological breakthrough cannot take place. However, education and at this level is not likely to live up to these expectations without dedicated, commitment, diligent, efficient and well informed academic staff whose attitude to work can be compared with the world best practices.

The late President of Ghana, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah saw this vision (the vision of making the academic staff in Ghanaian tertiary institutions to be well equipped) that is to be well informed through staff development to enable them carry out their legitimate functions of teaching, researching and community development, immediately Ghana attained independence in 1957 (Duodu, 1985). Consequently, as soon as he assumed office as president of Ghana, he embarked on and supported massively the staff development practices by awarding scholarship to some deserving academic staff for development studies in Great Britain, Canada, Russia so that they would be well equipped to perform their legitimate functions. Such benefited academic staff were asked to sign bond so that at the end of the studies they would return to render their services to the nation.

This kind gesture not only extended to academic staff but also the teachers in the Teacher's Training Colleges. The most fascination thing was that, even now Ghanaians who were academic staff and teachers benefited.

As a result of the economic crunch that hit Ghana about 1979, the subsequent administration could not support oversea staff development rather supported staff development studies in Ghana after the nation had established her own post graduate institution.

The staff development yielded good dividends as a result of the academic staff immense contributions made to teaching, researching community development like the University of Ghana, Legon; Kwame Nkoumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi; Cape Coast University, Cape Cost; University of Education, Winneba; Accra Polytechnic, Accra and Koforidua Polytechnic, Koforidua; tremendous marks made in academic achievements in Ghana as a result have been attracted by other African countries to send their wards to such tertiary institutions in Ghana despite the high cost of tuition fees.

II. Statement of the Problem

Staff development practices are essential aspects of tertiary institutions well-being. It is so because it is what determines the quality of the staff from such institutions and the graduates they produce.

While recognizing the importance of staff development practices, subsequent to scholarship extended to academic staff who benefit from it, it is disheartening to state that some of those academic staff refused to return to Ghana disobeying the bond they signed with Ghana Government but rather took appointment somewhere else in oversea countries. Or on the other way round, as those academic staff got to the foreign countries, they decided not to embark on staff development programme rather decided to find work to do. From the above observation, shall it be admitted that staff development took place at all in the oversea countries. It is on the basis of the issues raised, the problem of this study is stated thus: would staff development practices in Ghanaian tertiary institutions influence academic staff attitude to work and work performance?

III. Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to ascertain the influence of staff development practices, attitude to work and work performance among academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ghana. Specifically, this study examined institutional commitment to staff development and academic staff work performance and their attitude to work in the tertiary institutions in Ghana.

Hypothesis

Staff development practices in the aspect of institutional commitment to staff development has no relationship between academic staff attitude to work and work performance.

IV. Research Design

The research design adopted for this study is ex-post facto design. Isangedighi, Joshua, Asim and Ekuri (2004) assert that ex-post facto research design is a systematic empirical inquiry in which the researcher does not have direct control of independent variables because their manifestation have already occurred or manipulated. Inferences about relations among variables are made without direct intervention from concomitant variation of independent and dependent variables. The design, ex-post facto is suitable for this study because of the nature and magnitude of relationship among variables being investigated. It is economical for measuring several variables and their inter-relationship simultaneously. Moreso, the researcher has no direct control over the independent variables since they have already occurred in the population.

V. Area of the Study

The area of the study was Ghana. It is one of the countries in West Africa or a country in the sub-Saharan region of Africa. It is located on West Africa's Gulf of Guinea only a few degrees North of the Equator. It has a population of 22million (retrieved on 8-8-2009) from http://www.xixiu.ac.relevant/conference/privateuniversities/directorvmethodi_stuniversitvcolleae/index.htm. It extends 458km (285mi) NNE-SSN and 297km (185mi) ESE-WWW. Bordered on the East by Republic of Togo, on the south by the Atlantic Ocean (Gulf of Guinea), on the West by Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire) and on the NW and N by Upper Volta (Burkina Faso). Total boundary length is 2,617 km (1,626mi) (Encyclopedia of the Nations of Africa, 1971). It has ten (10) Regions and also Districts in all the Regions. Its capital city is Accra.

Population of the Study

The population understudy consisted of 4,019 academic staff in the sampled tertiary institutions - University of Ghana; University of Cape Coast, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Accra Polytechnic and Koforidua Polytechnic.

Sample and Sample Technique

A sample of (540) five hundred and forty academic staff was drawn from five (5) Universities and (10) ten polytechnics using simple random sampling technique.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was the Academic Staff Development Practices and Attitude to Work Questionnaire (ASDPATWQ). There were 2 sets of questionnaires (ASDPATWQ) and (ASWPQ) with six (6) sections. The first part of the questionnaire which was ASDPATWQ was meant for the academic staff which consisted of section A for demographic variables of the academic staff. Sections B and C for development practices, section D was meant for attitude to work of the academic staff, section E was meant for participation of development programmes of the academic staff, section F was meant for institutional commitment for development programmes and section G was meant for academic staff work performance questionnaire

(ASWPQ) was meant for the students Section A dealt with demographic variables which sought for information on name of institution, sex, age, marital status, academic qualification and lecturing experience.

Section B contained twenty-four items 4-point Likert type questionnaire in which subjects were expected to react to each of the items on academic staff development practices and attitude to work. Section C contained eight items 4-point Likert-type questionnaire aimed at respondents (academic staff) evaluating themselves on their work performance and section D contained twenty-two items 4 - Point Likert-type questionnaire aimed at respondents (students) evaluating their academic staff work performance. Section D contained twenty-two 4-point Likert type questionnaire aimed at respondents (students) evaluating their academic staff attitude to work. Section E contained four items 4-point Likert type questionnaire aimed at respondents (academic staff) evaluating their participation in development programmes. Section F contained four items 4-point likert type questionnaire aimed at respondents (academic staff) responding to each item without any bias mind. Section F contained twenty items 4-point likert-type questionnaire aimed at respondents (students) evaluating their academic staff work performance. The reliability of the instrument was established using test and re-test method involving (50) academic staff and students. The estimate ranged from 0.77 to 1.04 which suggest that the reliability estimate for each of the variables confirmed the internal consistency hence suggest that the instrument was found to be adequately reliable for use in this study.

VI. Data Collection

Out of the 600 questionnaire administered to 3 sampled universities and 2 polytechnics 540 were collected back representing 90% while 60 representing 10% were not recovered.

VII. Result

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (R) Analysis of the Relationship Between Institutional Commitment of Staff Development and their Work Performance (=540)

Variable	$\sum x$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum xy$	r - value
Institution Commitment	28928	66485		
Lecturing Y ₁	6772	13462	173675	0.58*
Results Y ₂	6674	13375	167544	0.59*
Advisory Y ₃	6966	14582	188546	0.55*
Research Y ₄	6782	14853	189854	0.54*
Examination Administration Y ₅	7044	16386	167866	0.63*

* Significant at .05 level, critical r = .085 df = 538

The result of the analysis shown in Table 1 reveals that the calculated r- value for lecturing (0.58); results (0.59); advisory role (0.55); research (0.54) and examination administration (0.63) are each higher than the critical r-value of .085 at .05 level of significance with 538 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This result means that institutional commitment to staff development has a significant relationship with their work performance.

VIII. Discussion of Findings

The finding of this study indicated that institutional commitment of staff development has a significant relationship with their work performance. The finding is in line with the view of Fullan (1992) who observed that institutional commitment helps to propel or energize the academic staff to achieve the best for themselves and the organization he is employed. This involves motivation, financial support (i.e) if an individual is motivated, his attitude to work would change drastically and this would propel him to perform better. Moral support and encouragement to staff would help them to perform their work better. Ardayfio (2009) also observed that infrastructural development, provision of tools, equipment and materials will enhance academic staff teaching, learning and research, if the instructors are to produce graduates who can effect the changes in the tertiary institutions.

Guskey & Sparks (1991) were with the opinion that institution wishing to demonstrate their commitment to staff development should provide an accessible environment which should include a comprehensive plan for staff development. They emphasized that staff development programmes must encompass all aspect of the institution which must be an integral part of the institution policy for academic staff in the faculty.

IX. Conclusion

Based on the result of the study, it was concluded that institutional commitment to staff development must be tenaciously followed in that it assists the academic staff to embrace academic staff development programmes without hindrance and also make them to be committed to the programmes assigned to them. It was

recommended that institutional commitment to staff development should form part of the policies of tertiary institutions so that academic staff embarking on staff development programmes would not be found wanting.

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