
Organizational policies and strategies: an imperative for performance in Anambra State University

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Keywords

Policies, strategies, organization, performance.

Abstract

This study attempts to examine how organizational policies and strategies affect performance of staff of Anambra State University. It also x-rays the relationship between organizational policies, strategies and performance of the staff of the university. The nature of policies made and type of strategies employed no doubt affect performance in organizations. Good policies and unique strategies usually lead to actualization of objectives.

The study employed a descriptive design; the researchers randomly selected 200 staff from all the faculties in the university which comprised academic and non - academic. The major sources of data used were primary and secondary data. A 15 item questionnaires of likert scale were designed and administered. Correlation analysis was used to ascertain the relationship between policies, strategies and performance. The findings showed among others, that there is a relationship between policies, strategies and performance in Anambra State University. Based on the findings, the researcher recommend that to have a better performance in the organization, policies and strategies employed should be flexible and not rigid, that policies should emanate from the environment of the work place and not from the blues.

Introduction

The need for improved performance in an organization depends deeply on the effectiveness of the organization policy and the strategies employed for its actualization. The policies and strategies a manager of an organization adopts to meet its employees motivational needs are of vital importance and significant, because the success or failure of any organization is largely determined by the strategic implementation of its policies. Output determination is based on workers performance. Organization's policies and strategies are part of the organizations activities and are made for organization' practice. Policies and strategies must be understood by the subordinates before it would be effective.

There have been cases of inefficiency in Nigerian universities. The resultant effect is that many universities in the country find it difficult to meet up with their set goals and objectives due to the type of strategies put in place for achieving such goals. Policies and strategies have

important role to play in Nigeria Universities, especially in Anambra State Universities. There is no gainsaying that, all activities of any academic institution is initiated and determined by the persons who make up that institution. Azhar (1999) posits that working organizations presumably begin with ideas and strategies for actualizing the ideal, but their next requirement is people. Whatever may be their organization policies, goals and objectives, they can only be implemented through the efforts and co-operation of people. The ability of managers to motivate the workers through involvement in decision making and strategies for implementing organizational police will go a long way to enhancing performance. polices are instrument of management it is a guide to action a management tool for solving socio economic and political problems in human, public and industrial organization strategies are plans to carry out value and objectives of a university / organization mintzberg and Quinn (1991) note that the essence of strategy is to build a posture that is so strong (flexible) in selective ways that the organization can achieve its goals despite the unforeseeable way in which external variables may actually interact.

Statement of problem

One of the most fundamental problem currently militating against performance in Anambra State university is simply that of failure of leadership (management) to involve the workers in policy making Anambra State university staff (academic and non-academic) are facing many problems especially as the university is still very young and managed by the state government. The academic staff may be facing more problems in their job as the management is facing competing pressure from other universities. Almost all universities are now making new policies, setting new goals and strategies to improve performance so as to compete favourably with other universities in the world. Research has shown that Anambra State University is left out in this pursuit. There is high level of stress and poor performance among the staff of Anambra State University than their counterparts in other parts of the world. Pressure due to policy reform efforts, inadequate administrative support and implementing strategies, poor working condition, poor remuneration, poor funding of academic research, poor infrastructural facilities etc. may be the cause of poor performance among the Anambra state university staff. Others include ineffective policy and strategy, poor communication channel between the senior and junior staff and inadequate government attention. It is against this background that this paper sought to find out how policies and strategies employed by Anambra State University affect workers performance.

The question this study tends to answer are:

1. In what way(s) does the Anambra State University policies and strategies affect implementation of staff performance?
2. How have poor funding and poor channel communication affect workers attitude to work?

Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study is to assess the effect of policies and strategies on workers performance

The specific objectives include:

1. To ascertain the extent to which poor communication and funding affect the performance of Anambra State staff

2. To find out if the strategies employed in policy implementation in Anambra State University affect staff performance

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guide the study

1. Policies and strategies adopted by the management of Anambra State University do not affect staff performance (output).
2. Poor funding and poor communication have no significant relationship with workers attitude to work

Scope of the study

The scope of this is limited to both the academic and non-academic staff of Anambra State University, Igbariam Campus.

Literature review

Policies and strategies are the bedrock of performance in any organization, Anambra State University inclusive. Establishing policy may be described as formalizing organizational attitudes towards specific types of repetitive problems. Policy and strategy are the phases which have to do with the day to day use policy by the personnel in making managerial and operative decisions. Aluko (2001) argues that a policy may be known and understood but not accepted by the employees that must apply or conform to it and so it is not likely to be effective unless it is accepted.

Many concepts of policy and strategy exist. A few of the definitions by various authors will be given below. Webster comprehensive dictionary (Revised Edition) define policy as course or plan of action especially administrative action strategy as skill in management, Mintzberg & Mchugh 1985 define strategy as set of objectives, policies and plans that when put together define the scope of the business enterprise and its approach to survival and success

Principles of policy formulation entail that

Statement of policy should be definite, positive, clear and understandable to everyone in the organization Policy should be flexible but should possess a high degree of permanency. There should be as many policies as necessary to cover conditions prevailing in an organization but not too much as to become confusing or meaningless (Michael Aluko et al 2011)

Strategies on its own part contain three essential elements

- Goal/ objectives to be achieved.
- Policies guiding or limited action
- Major action sequences/ programmes that are to accomplish the defined goals within the limit set (Mintzberg and Quinn 1991)

Strategies determine the direction or action focus of an organization. Goal development is an integral part of strategy formulation. Strategy deals with generation and alignment of programmes to meet pre determined goals. Strategies are plans ahead of time. They deal not just with unpredictable but also with the unknowable (Mintzberg & Quinn 1991). Essence of strategy is to build a posture that is so strong in a selection ways that the organization can

achieve its goals despite the unforeseeable ways which external variables may actually interact. There are basically four criteria for effective strategy. They are

- Strategy must be clear
- It must have security, it must be flexible and there must be
- co-orientated and committed leadership
- Flexibility
- Co-ordinate and committed leadership

Empirical studies on policies strategies & performance

Paul Bitch et al (2002) conducted a study on the relationship between policies and strategies in Atlantic University in the U.S.A. The objective of their study was to examine if there is any relationship between policy, strategy and performance. They applied correlation analysis and discovered that policy and strategy lead to performance. A study was also carried out in Ghana in Zenith University by Akoku Michael (2010) using multiple regression analysis to examine the impact of policies and strategies in University environment, it was discovered that, there was a highly significant relationship between policies, strategies and performance. The study showed with good policy and strategy, performance will be high. Study was carried out in Nigeria by Ukachukwu JP (2011) at Madonna University Okija he tried to find out the best way to accomplish policy, strategies and performance in University environment, it was found that gap in communication was one of the points obstructing performance in the University. The study therefore agrees with the findings of Anazodo 2012, Onyeizugbe 2012 and Agbionu 2012.

Okeke & John 2009 conducted a research on effectiveness of policy and strategy in Enugu State university (Esut) data collected was analyzed using correlation analysis to determine the relationship between the dependent variables and independent variables findings shows that there is positive relationship between the two variables. Pulapa et al (2008) carried out a study on contribution of policy & strategy on performance they surveyed 3 oldest universities in pupla New Guinea they applied spearman correlation analysis to test the relationship between policy, strategy and performance it was discovered that policy and strategy leads to high performance

Theoretical framework

This study is based on systems approach theory of Katz and Kahn (1996) who viewed organization as a system consisting of sub system viz, Production/ technical sub system that provides primary function or purpose of the organization

Supportive sub which support the production and disposes outputs or products.

Adaptive sub systems that ensure that the organization adapts to changing circumstance e.g. research and development.

The three principles were found suitable for this study. All the staff support the management in the good policies & strategies mapped out which enhance performance, the staff also adapt to the changes in the policies and strategies for better performance. All the sub system in the university function together to promote performance using the policies and

strategies available. Policies and strategies if well implemented enhance performance leading to achievement of organizational objectives.

Benefits of policy & strategy

Organizations policy has the following characteristics flexibility, clarity, consistency. Policy and strategy if well allow makes a university organization to be proactive rather than reactive in shaping its future. It allow an organization to initiate and influence its environment and this exert control over its own activities. It helps to elicit understanding and commitment from all managers and employees. When employees understand what the organization is doing and why, they feel belonged and become committed to assisting it. Achieve its goals, employees help to integrate the behavior to individuals into a composite effort, it minimizes the adverse conditions and changes.

Methodology

Descriptive research design was employed in this study. This design describes and interprets the data obtained from the respondents (Burns and Bush 2005). It was considered appropriate because we were interested in the perception of workers of Anambra State University, Igbariam Campus to particular phenomena, that is, the relationship between the staff performance and the university policies and strategies.

The target population of the study consists of all the staff of Anambra State University, Igbariam Campus which totaled 200 persons population was small, the whole population was used as the sample size. Primary data were obtained from the respondents through a survey in which questionnaire was administrated on the sampled population. The questionnaire was in two sets, one for the academic staff and the other for the non academic staff. The questions were close ended and were in form of a 5 point likert scale which is a technique for the measurement of attitudes. Out of the 200 questionnaires administered 182 were well completed and returned by the academic and non-academic staff. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. While the hypotheses were analyzed using Z-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Finding

The findings of test of hypotheses are as follows:

Z-test of proportion in respect of the policies and strategies adopted by the management of Anambra State University calculated form Table I is 2.00. We therefore reject the null hypothesis since the calculated value was greater than the table value Z (1.96). this shows that the polices and strategies adopted by the management of Anambra State University affect the performance of staff in the University.

In table 2 means variance of the responses for poor funding and poor communication were analyzed. Z-test was applied between poor funding of the University and poor communication among the staff as it affects staff performance. The test result showed that poor funding of the university and poor communication among staff have significant relationship with staff performance.

Summary of findings

The result of the study revealed that organizational policies and strategies go a long way in affecting the behavior and performance of workers in an organization. The implication is that when management makes policies and maps out the strategies for its accomplishment, workers must be involved. This is because it is the worker that will perform to achieve the organizational goal it is therefore very important that the university understands the needs of the employees and provide what is best for the employees to enable them put in their best to achieve organizational goals.

The result of the second hypothesis reveals that poor funding of the university affects workers output. Inadequacy of fund to carryout academic research retards the intellectual growth of the academic staff of the university, also affects the motivation of the non academic staff who have complained that their leave allowances was not usually paid as and when due. Again, because of the communication gap between the management and staff, information is usually distorted and this normally breeds animosity between the university staff and the university management. The strategy employed by the management in the promotion exercise of workers is lopsided and this creates suspicion and dissatisfaction between the university staff and management.

Recommendation

Base on the findings of the study, the researchers recommend

1. The state government and the university management should make the policies enacted in the institution have a human face. This can be done by bearing the interests of the workers at heart when making such policy and involving them in policy making as they are the persons that would implement the policies
2. That value oriented holistic approach to management should be adopted by management to remove purulent and unethical behavior among workers to enable them contribute their best towards improved performance. Sherickar (2001) notes that an organization adopting value-driven management can manage for profit and assured the common good of the workers.
3. Anambra State University in particular and Nigerian University in general should have flexible policies and strategies that can absorb change.
4. Anambra State University management should communicate policies/ strategies to their staff to ensure proper understanding and implementation for enhanced performance.
5. The management should check the factors militating against policies/ strategies in the institution and prune them.

Conclusion

This study concludes that it has been evidently proved that staff performance depends largely on the organizational policy and strategies employed to actualize this, Proper methods or strategies for achieving enhanced staff involvement since they are the people that will either make or mare performance in the organization. It is therefore left for Anambra State University to blend its polices and strategies in a perfect way to enhance performance.

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