

Application of lecturers' research skills and effective job performance in universities in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

Lecturers employ their research skills to engage with various groups during their investigations. This study aimed to investigate the utilization of lecturers' research skills and their impact on job performance in universities located in Cross River State. A descriptive survey research design was used. The study formulated two research questions and two null hypotheses. The population included 3,958 lecturers from both public and private universities in Cross River State, and a sample of 200 lecturers was randomly selected. The "Application of Lecturers' Research Skills and Effective Job Performance Questionnaire (ALRSEJPQ)," a self-developed questionnaire, was used to gather data. Departments of Measurement/Evaluation and Educational Management experts validated the instrument. Its reliability was confirmed through the Cronbach Alpha method, with a coefficient range of .71 to .86. Data analysis was performed using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results indicated that lecturers' research report writing skills and research communication skills predict their effective job performance. Among other suggestions, it was recommended that seminars and regular workshops be organized to enhance lecturers' research skills.

Keywords: Application, Lecturers Research skills, Effective Job Performance, Communication, Report writing, University.

Introduction

University education is widely acknowledged as crucial for the growth and development of a nation (Odukunle, 2001). Universities aim to fulfill the specific and general educational needs of a country by educating students, conducting research, disseminating knowledge, and providing community services that help achieve institutional goals. According to Odukunle (2001), higher education is widely acknowledged as a crucial instrument for propelling Nigeria's

socio-economic, political, and cultural advancement. The author underlined how important it is for universities to use their core missions of teaching, research, and community service to propel the country forward. The job performance of lecturers is a measure of their effectiveness in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities within the university setting (Odukunle, 2001). These roles are used to assess whether lecturers are performing their duties as expected. Over the years, observations have suggested that a significant number of university lecturers in

Cross River State are underperforming in their jobs. According to a study by Nassuwa (2013), 70% of university lecturers said they frequently became unavailable to oversee the research students assigned to them, and over 80% of the lecturers acknowledged not teaching all of the lectures that were assigned to them. These findings indicate a concerning trend of underperformance among a large proportion of university lecturers in the region, which may have implications for the quality of education and research being delivered

The study conducted by Kakalu (2010) revealed further insights into the underperformance of university lecturers in the region. The results show that more than 78% of the lecturers polled did not complete all of the courses that were given to them. Furthermore, 56% of the lecturers postponed the student evaluation process, which caused delays in the students' graduation, and 67% of them were not well-prepared before giving the majority of their lectures to the students. Concerns regarding university professors' supervision of undergraduate researchers were also brought to light by Odungu's (2017) study. According to the survey, even in cases where the research students made an attempt to make appointments, the majority of the professors tasked with supervising them did not provide the required guidance.

Lecturers were frequently canceling or postponing supervision meetings at the last minute, citing their involvement in other research projects. Moreover, the study revealed that the level of participation by most lecturers in community service activities was far below the expected standards, further contributing to the overall underperformance of university lecturers in the region. These findings paint a concerning

picture of the state of lecturers' job performance at universities in Cross River State, with significant shortcomings in their teaching responsibilities, research student supervision, and community engagement.

According to Osaat and Ekechukwu (2017), students' subpar exam performance and their engagement in exam malpractice are signs that lecturers were not carrying out their teaching duties to the fullest extent possible. This suggests that factors beyond the student's control, such as the lecturers' performance, may be contributing to these issues. It is expected of university lecturers to be skilled and informed teachers who are accountable for maintaining the educational standards of their respective institutions. The government holds universities accountable for the attainment of their goals, which include the provision of high-level, relevant manpower training and the acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills that empower individuals to become self-reliant and productive members of society (FRN, 2014). The actual implementation of these goals rests largely on the lecturers, as they have direct contact with students through teaching and research activities. Their performance in these roles is crucial in determining the success of the university's mission and the overall development of the students and the society

The observations further reveal serious concerns about the lecturers' poor performance in their core responsibilities. It has been observed that many professors exhibit a weak command of the material they are supposed to be teaching in class. They frequently neglect to conduct thorough lesson planning or to refer to a wide range of student-appropriate academic resources. Emaikwu's (2012) research laments the ineffective ways in which lecturers handle student assessments, which has led to

various malpractices, such as hiring lobbyists, extortion, grade alteration, and the increasing incidence of missing examination scripts. Moreover, Odu's (2018) study highlights the issues with research supervision by lecturers. As the primary supervisors, lecturers are expected to ensure that students follow the right methodology and procedures in accordance with the stipulated specifications. It has been discovered that certain instructors, particularly when it comes to the analytical parts of the study process, are inefficient. There have been instances where students have misplaced their research materials, which has caused delays in their program completion. These findings collectively point to the poor job performance of lecturers, which is manifested in their lack of subject mastery, ineffective lesson planning, improper handling of student assessments, and inadequate guidance in the research supervision process.

The poor job performance of lecturers can be attributed to various factors, as highlighted by research. Ssesanga and Garriett (2005) have identified job dissatisfaction and work-related stress as significant contributors to the issue. Furthermore, elements specific to universities, such as funding and institutional management, have been found to affect how well instructors work. Government regulations and the compensation of academic staff may also be important factors, according to Liang et al. (2016). Alfagina et al. (2017) point to administrative leadership as another factor, while Kazar and Holcombe (2017) highlight the challenges of inadequate funding, lack of motivation, insufficient instructional materials, and limited internet facilities, as well as the absence of lecturers in decision-making processes. These factors collectively constitute a source of concern for all

educational stakeholders, including the government, students, parents, and educational administrators. The government, through the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders, has made efforts to improve lecturers' job performance by organizing in-service training, seminars, and workshops, and providing motivational packages and well-conducive office spaces. Despite efforts to address it, the issue remains. Lecturer job performance is characterized by how well academic staff fulfill their teaching duties, encompassing lesson planning, research activities, and community service (Victor & Babatunde, 2014).

Igbojekwe et al. (2015) offer a comprehensive view of the essential aspects of lecturers' job performance. They argue that it encompasses several key activities: delivering lectures as per the timetable, assessing students through coursework, tests, and examinations, and submitting the results for final evaluation and accreditation.

Furthermore, to perform well, research students must be supervised by a supervisor who will set aside time to mentor them while they complete their projects, dissertations, and research proposals (Odungu, 2017). It is also anticipated that lecturers to carry out study and publish the outcomes in respectable academic publications, or utilize the information to write textbooks, book chapters, and pieces for different media (Kakulu, 2010).

These components illustrate the complex nature of lecturers' job performance, which includes not only teaching but also student assessment, research supervision, and scholarly publication. The writing of research reports, whether in print or digital format, is crucial as it communicates the results to students and adheres to specific formats established by each university. This research

report, often referred to as a research project or thesis, is an integral part of academic work. Metin, (2019). It is the ability to effectively write in print or computer, the research carried out, the procedure it followed, findings/conclusions arrived at, and suggestions proposed.

Okon (2008) defines communication as the process of transmitting information and understanding from one person to another. This implies that a lecturer's research skills cannot be effective without strong communication abilities, as communication is the primary medium for delivering instructions and sharing research findings. Maher(2013) conducted a study to determine the influence of report writing ability on students' academic performance in South Asian tertiary institutions. The results showed that producing research reports did not have a statistically significant impact on the performance of students, which only accounted for 11.5% of the competitiveness variables. In contrast, Warring (2017) investigated the impact of writing on students' achievement using testing and quasi-experimental designs. The study noted that writing helps in the development of student's abilities and capabilities, as it raises questions and requires instructions for successful and meaningful communication to occur. These studies suggest that while research skills and report writing are important, effective communication skills are crucial for lecturers to successfully deliver their research findings, provide instructions, and facilitate meaningful learning outcomes for students.

Using a survey approach, Akpan (2014) investigated the relationship between ICT proficiency and lecturers' work efficacy in Cross River State. According to the report, in order to facilitate better access to academic resources, university administration should

provide ICT facilities including internet connections to academic staff offices. In a similar vein, Bamdele (2014) investigated how institutional administrators used ICT for administrative tasks. The study discovered a substantial correlation between ICT use and the efficiency of instructors and others in college administration, despite the fact that ICT utilization was determined to be relatively low. A t-test value of 2.96, which was more than the crucial t-value of 1.98 at the 0.05 level of significance, provided support for this.

These studies suggest that the provision of ICT facilities and ensuring adequate access and usage of these technologies by both lecturers and university administrators can positively impact their job effectiveness and overall academic performance. The findings highlight the need for institutional support and investment in ICT infrastructure to enhance the efficiency and productivity of academic staff.

Okon (2021) carried out a study to investigate the connection between academic staff members' research abilities and their efficacy at work at Cross River State universities. The study's conclusions showed a positive correlation between academic staff members' research skills and their efficacy at work. In other words, the study found that the research skills possessed by academic staff were positively associated with their overall job effectiveness within the university setting. This suggests that the development and enhancement of research skills among lecturers and professors can contribute to their overall performance and productivity in their roles. The study highlights the importance of research skills as a key component of the academic profession, and the need for universities to prioritize the development and support of these skills among their faculty members. This can have

positive implications for the quality of teaching, research, and other academic activities within the institution.

Statement of the Problem

Okon (2021) observed that there is evidence of poor preparation of lecture notes, uninteresting modes of lecture delivery, and unsatisfactory methods of evaluation in some universities. Furthermore, it appears that lecturers operate in an unpleasant atmosphere with inadequate accommodations for staff, ill-equipped lecture halls, and a lack of laboratories. In some cases, lecturers' offices are not well-equipped, with appraisal systems. The implementation of policies remains lacking, and salaries and allowances are generally inadequate and discouraging. The author warns that if this situation persists, it could undermine the objectives and goals for which the university system was established. As such, the study's main goal is to evaluate the degree to which lecturers' efficacy and research abilities influence how well they do their jobs.

Purpose of the study

The study's main goal is to find out how lecturers' use of their research abilities relates to their ability to do their jobs well in Cross River State universities.

The study seeks to find out

1. Lecturer report writing skills and their job performance
2. Lecturer communication skills and their job performance

Research questions

Two research questions guide the study.

- i. To what extent do lecturers research report writing skills related to their job performance?

- ii. How do lecturers research communication skills relate to their job performance?

Research hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide this study.

- i. There is no significant relationship between the lecturer's research report writing skills and their job performance.
- ii. Lecturers' research communication skills do not significantly relate to their job performance.

Methodology

The study used a causal-comparative descriptive survey design. Meheshwarin (2018) claims that this design was chosen because it seeks to ascertain the link between the independent and dependent variables following the completion of an action or event. The study population included 3,958 university lecturers in Cross River State, with a sample of 200 lecturers randomly selected for the study. Data were collected using a research design questionnaire titled "Application of Lecturers' Research Skills and Their Job Performance in Cross River State (ALRS JPQ)." The instrument comprised two sections: Section A gathered respondents' biodata, while Section B contained structured items related to the study variables. To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, three experts two in measurement and evaluation and one in educational management reviewed it for face and content validity. Their corrections and modifications were incorporated into the final version before administration. The instrument's reliability was pilot-tested using the Cronbach Alpha reliability index, which ranged from .71 to .85. Using the Pearson

Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient, the null hypotheses were examined.

Skills

Presentation of result

Research question 1

To what extent do lecturers' research report writing skills relate to their job performance mean and standard deviation on the mean scores of lecturers' application of research writing

Table 1: Mean values exceeding the criterion mean of 2.50.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
1	I can adequately apply research design	3.75	0.75	
2	I can present research findings with clarity	2.80	0.94	Agreed
3	I cannot review related literature in research	2.75	0.96	Agreed
4	I used to effectively reference cited works during research	2.80	0.89	Agreed
5	I cannot effectively present the background to a study	2.88	0.93	Agreed

Table 1 shows that all items have mean values exceeding the criterion mean of 2.50. This suggests that there is agreement among lecturers regarding the impact of applying research skills in report writing on their job performance.

Research Question 2

How do lecturers' research communication skills relate to their job performances?

Table 2: shows the mean and standard deviation of the ratings for lecturers' work performance and use of communication skills.

S/N	Items	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
6	I cannot simply understand the language of a research paper	3.06	0.85	Agreed
7	I can confidently present quality research paper	2.75	0.96	Agreed
8	I cannot provide a clear background information	2.9	0.88	Agreed
9	I used to effectively establish a research problem	2.71	0.98	Agreed
10	I hardly gather data with an adequate instrument	2.61	0.96	Agreed

Table 2 shows that all items have mean scores exceeding the criterion mean of 2.50. This indicates that lecturers agree on the relevance of research communication skills in relation to job performance.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between lecturer's research report writing skills and their job performance.

Research hypothesis

Table 3: Pearson product-moment correlation analysis on lecturers' research report writing skills and their job performance N = 200

Variable	Σx	Σx^2	Σxy	r-value
Lecturer's research report university skills	8169	45857	247363	0.85*
Job performance	.6617	.26404		

*significance at .05, df = 198; critical r-value = 0.138

Table 3's analysis shows that, with 198 degrees of freedom and a 0.05 threshold of significance, the determined r-value of 0.85 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.138. The alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected since the computed r-value is greater than the crucial r-value. This implies that the research abilities

of instructors in their university assessments and their work output are significantly correlated.

Hypothesis 2

Lecturer's application of communication research skills does not significantly relate to job performance

Table 4: Pearson product moment correlation analysis on lecturer's application of communication skills and their job performance N = 200

Variable	Σx	Σx^2	Σxy	r-value
Lecturer's application of communication skills	8169	45857	.219596	0.67*
Job performance	.6411	.24677		

*significance at .05, df = 198; critical r-value = 0.138

The analysis results in Table 4 reveal that the computed r-value of 0.67 exceeds the critical r-value of 0.138 at a 0.05 level of significance and with 198 degrees of freedom. As the calculated r-value is higher than the critical r-value, the null hypothesis is rejected in favor of the alternate hypothesis. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between lecturers' application of communication skills and their job performance.

mean, standard deviation, and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient.

The findings indicated a significant relationship between the application of lecturers' research skills and their job performance. Specifically, the first hypothesis revealed that lecturers' report writing skills are related to their job performance. This result is consistent with Warring's (2013) observation that writing encourages the growth of skills and capacities, empowering people to pose queries and engage in critical thought—both of which are necessary for clear and successful communication.

Discussion Of Findings

The study aimed to explore the relationship between the application of lecturers' research skills and their job performance in universities in Cross River State. Guided by two research questions and two research hypotheses, the analysis utilized

Additionally, hypothesis two demonstrated a significant relationship between lecturers' communication skills and their job performance. This result is consistent

with research done by Akpan (2014), who looked at lecturers' job efficiency and ICT competency in Cross River State. According to Akpan's study, the most important components of lecturers' learning of communication skills were professional advancement and enrichment, as well as their quantitative delivery of high-quality and effective instruction.

Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, the following conclusions were made:

- 1) Research report writing skills have a significant impact on lecturers' job performance.
- 2) Research communication skills are significantly related to lecturers' job performance.

Recommendation

The study's conclusions led to the following recommendations being put forth:

It is advised that in order for professors to stay current and retain their research abilities, frequent conferences and training sessions on the subject be held.

- 1) The government and private sectors should support the professional development of lecturers by providing funding and necessary facilities for research in universities.

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