INTEGRITY AND OPENNESS AS CORRELATES OF UNIVERSITY EFFECTIVENESS IN SOUTHWEST, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *This study examined the relationship between some leadership traits and university effectiveness in Southwest Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised all the 3,418 academic and 8,937 non-academic staff in all the 7 federal universities and 11 states universities in Southwest Nigeria. The sample for this study was 900 respondents, comprising 60 academic members of staff and 90 administrative staffs drawn from 6 universities in three states in Southwest Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling procedure which involved, simple random, stratified and proportionate sampling techniques was used to select sample for the study. Two sets of instruments tagged "Leadership Integrity and Openness Questionnaire" (LIOQ) and "University Effectiveness Questionnaire (UEQ)" were used for the study. The two instruments were validated by experts with LIOQ and UEQ yielding reliability coefficients of 0.79 and 0.81 respectively. The data were analysed using inferential statistics. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study showed that there was significant relationship between leadership traits and universities effectiveness in Southwest, Nigeria. The study showed that leadership integrity and openness correlated significantly with university effectiveness. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that management of universities should endeavour to build good leadership traits in its management staff by exposing them to regular leadership and management seminars and conferences for efficient and effective management towards enhancing the level of university effectiveness.*

KEYWORDS: integrity, openness, university effectiveness, Southwest, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Universities as a major level of education have facilitated and contributed to societal development. They have aided the removal of the major sources of poverty, tyranny, etc. Development is essentially about proper knowledge use and application in developing countries such as Nigeria. Universities as institutions for knowledge generation and its transfer to society have been central to development, contributing ideas, skills, technology and expertise in many spheres of human endeavour (Jega in Nweze, 2010). They are centres of creative undertakings, innovation and inventions and they impart skills pertinent to these to all those who qualify for enrollment (Nweze, 2010).

Despite the immense benefits of university education to nation building yet the potentials of higher education and indeed the university system in developing countries to fulfill these responsibility is frequently thwarted by long-standing problems bedeviling the system. It seems that university education is faced with number of multi-faceted problems of management challenges which may likely inhibited the aim of attaining effectiveness in both academic and administrative activities in the university system.

Effectiveness is important to every member of the university community as it gives satisfaction and as well leads to production of quality graduates. Achieving effectiveness in any educational setting require good leadership structure, adequate facilities, conducive learning and teaching environment. Effectiveness relates to performing the correct activity or operation. The effectiveness of a university system is all about the degree to which predetermined goals of the university are successfully achieved. The extent to which members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, are effective could make or break the university's performance, and it could go a long way toward determining the degree to which objectives are met and problems are solved within the university system.

For ensuring effectiveness of any educational programme, adequate attention must be given to the personal traits of the leaders out of which integrity is considered in this study. Integrity, or being honest and doing the right thing at the appropriate time, is the cornerstone of place of work ethics. Integrity means being honest in what you say and do. You value honesty, duty, and solid moral ideals. Integrity means always doing the right thing, regardless of personal cost or benefit. Leader's stance is highly valued by honesty, credibility, and consistency in implementing ethical values (Schermerhorn, 2002). However, the ugly situation in Nigeria in term of level of corruption perpetrated by some leaders has found its way into the university system thereby making people of the society doubting the integrity of some university leaders. This seems to have taken its toll on the effectiveness of the university system.

Ineffectiveness of the university in southwest Nigeria seems to have reflected in the area of employability of some university graduates has generated issues among various labour employers. Employers often lament about the poor performances of some university graduates as many of them fail to perform up to expectation in their respective places of work. It appears that the universities graduates are not adequately prepared for employment standard as many of the graduates are only qualified by mere academic certificate but their level of communication and problem resolving skills is below expectation. Employers expected a higher display of knowledge and problem resolving skills from every university graduates employed to work in their organization but their expectations are not met.

Observation has shown that some university management failed to encourage their staffs to work towards achieving university goals. It has been observed that some university management are of the habit of recruiting academic staff without following due process and not considering the plight of existing staffs. Experience have shown that some academic staffs recruited through back door often performed below expectation and this seems to have negative effects on university effectiveness as quality teaching may be endangered. Further observation has shown that some university management do engaged in the dismissal of some academic and non-academic staffs without following due process and this often demoralize other academic staffs and led to ineffectiveness of services rendered.

In addition, there appears to be ineffective leadership on the part of some universities administrators in some universities in Southwest, Nigeria. University administrators manage different programmes and activities within the university which aims at the actualisation of the prime objectives of the university. Their ability to effectively manage the institution activities is a significant factor that influences the effectiveness of such institutions. However, observation from the universities in the southwest Nigeria has shown that some of the universities are poorly managed. Some universities leaders are generating more problems for the university rather solving their problems.

The inefficiency of some universities in Nigeria was often seen to be linked to the leadership traits of some university leaders. These leaders should be equipped with good leadership traits to manage human and physical resources available to them efficiently.

Integrity of university leaders is of utmost importance in achieving university effectiveness. University like any other level of education and sector is expected to have leaders whose hands were not stained with corruption. A leader that could be accepted by a larger percentage of the followers and whose administrative and educational responsibilities are without blemish. This may be a strong connecting factor to external investors who may wish to contribute their own quota by investing their money in the university without fear of embezzlement or unapproved spending. This could only be

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possible with a university leader that both the students and the staff could trust with responsibilities within and outside that university environment.

Another important leadership trait for consideration in this study is openness to change. Openness to change is something that should be integrated in the university system so as to make sure that all members will have the same vision and attitude toward change. It has been observed that some university leaders lack openness in the system of administration as they resist change. Change is feared by most people, hence some leaders tend to resist it (Bortolotti, 2011). Openness to changes is a collective effort from both university managers and the employees and employee's resistance to change usually affects the implementation of the change process (Mayer and Gavin, 2005). This resistance to openness may have negative impact on the effectiveness of the university system.

The quality of education imparted in educational institutions in a society will contribute significantly to shaping the effectiveness of such society. Henceforth, educational institutions such as universities prepare a strong foundation for the progressive changes in the society. Therefore, the effectiveness of an educational institution largely depends on the cooperation of the students, parents, staffs and the school management who work towards achieving the objectives of the school. Consequently, any educational institution with good leadership structure with integrity and openness is considered being effective.

It is presumed that leaders with good integrity and openness for effective management of both educational and human resources in the university system will enhance administrative work, improve staff job performance, enhance academic research and improve students' academic performance which is the overall success of the university. To this end, this study purposes to find the relationship between leadership integrity and openness and University effectiveness in Southwest, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study
The study investigated the means of achieving effectiveness through leadership integrity and openness in universities in Southwest, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:
  i.   examine the relationship between leadership integrity and universities effectiveness.
 ii.   find out the relationship between leadership openness and universities effectiveness.

Research Questions
The following research questions were addressed in this study:
(1)   Is there any significant relationship between leadership integrity and universities effectiveness?
(2)   Is there any significant relationship between leadership Openness and universities effectiveness?

Research Hypotheses
The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:
1)   There is no significant relationship between leadership integrity and universities effectiveness.
2)   There is no significant relationship between leadership openness and universities effectiveness.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Organizations around the world are created primarily to achieve preset goals and targets in the public and private sectors. The role of human factors (employees) cannot be over-emphasised in accomplishing these aims and objectives (Gberevbie, 2017; Mokgolo, Mokgolo, & Modiba, 2012; Mottoh, 2015). Openness indicates a tendency to be informed, creative, informative, interested and experienced. Openness becomes an imminent attribute of leadership when it is obvious that the leader values new skills and new thinking progressions. Openness is a comprehensive concept or philosophy characterised by an emphasis on openness and free unlimited access to information and knowledge, collaborative or cooperative governance and decision-making and not a central authority. Openness is the antithesis of concealment (Peters & Diemann, 2013).

In a study conducted by Hussein and Hafseld (2016) on influence of openness on organizational leaderships submitted that Openness helps team members match goals and expectations and grasp the project scope (McLeod & MacDonell, 2011). Open and appropriate communication improves mutual understanding, nurtures obligation, ensures deadlines are met, and builds trust between associates (Dyer & Chu 2003; Bstieler 2006; Zidane et al. 2016). Openness to new experiences is a personality trait that includes traits like creativity, originality, curiosity, openness to new ideas, imagination, unconventionality, and a predisposition to take risks. University leaders who lack openness is restrained, conventional, conservative, unimaginative, and fearful of danger. This may pose great danger to the university system where constant changes to new development improve efficiency of the university.

Additionally, effectiveness of the university system entails leadership with high level of integrity as well as the ability to accept people who speak important truths, no matter how difficult they may be to hear. Surrounding a Vice-Chancellor with yes-men and women will sink him or her faster than anything else. Even when principled skeptics are correct, they compel the Vice-Chancellor to rethink his positions and test his assumptions for flaws. When good ideas are challenged, they become even better (Bain, 2004). Integrity, according to Palanski and Yammarino (2011), is a worldwide reputation for honesty and reliable corporate behaviour.

According to Covey, Stephen and Merrill (2006), integrity is paramount in leadership. This characteristic of leader behaviour refers to following attributes; being fair to them, having faith in staff, dealing with staff equitably. Bryman (2009) realized if leaders treated staff equitably and fairly, it would be more probable that leader develops and maintain self-esteem. Therefore, one of the vital aspects ineffective leadership is that leaders must be able to deal with staff consistently, fairly, inclusively, and responsively. The importance of the commitment of university leaders, particularly the Vice-Chancellor cannot be overstated in the quest for effectiveness in all activities of the university (Matsiliza, 2013). Trocchiaand Andrus (2003) carried out a study to identify the top features of effective leaders working in marketing departments. They found that integrity, honesty, and fairness were the top characteristic. They revealed that fairness is more associated with the components of effective leadership.

According to Bryman (2009), corporate purpose statements frequently mention honesty. In most circumstances, successful leadership requires honesty, which has taken different shapes over time. He added that a vice-personal chancellor's convictions, everyday actions, and core organisational goals comprise his or her integrity as a whole. Personal integrity refers to moral uprightness and adherence to one's principles (for instance an educational leader who advocates faithfulness in ethics of service of the subordinate staffs, but himself has a habit of embezzling fund meant for school progress, would not be considered a person of integrity). Accountability, according to Bryman (2009), is an element of integrity. Accountability involves allowing all legitimate stakeholders to verify that the university is doing what it says. No one can act with high integrity unless they are willing to be open and accountable. For example, a university vice-chancellor who is intelligent, ethical, and avoids corruption cannot claim high integrity if he avoids paying personal income tax. This study seeks to find the link between leaders' integrity, openness and university effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprises of all the academic members of staff, non-academic members of staffs and management team of the 7 Federal, 11 State Universities in Southwest, Nigeria. According to NUC (2019), there is 3,418 academic and 8,937 non-academic staff given a total population of 12,355, as at the time of the study. A sample of 900 respondents (60 academic staff members and 90 administrative staff members) was selected from six (6) universities using a multistage sampling approach that included simple random sampling, purposive sampling, and proportionate sampling.

Two sets of instrument titled "Leadership Integrity and Openness Questionnaire (LIOQ) and University Effectiveness Questionnaire" (UEQ) were used to collect data for the study. Face and content validity of the questionnaire were ensured by experts. The reliability coefficient of 0.79and

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0.81 were obtained for LIOQ and UEQ respectively with the help of using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The data collected were analysed using inferential statistics such as Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The two hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Testing of Hypotheses
Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between leadership integrity and universities effectiveness.

In order to test the hypothesis, scores relating to leadership integrity was computed using items 1-5 in Section B of "Leadership Integrity and Openness Questionnaire" (LIOQ) while universities effectiveness was obtained using items 1- 40 in Section B of "University Effectiveness (UEQ)". These sets of scores were subsequently subjected to statistical analysis involving Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Leadership Integrity and Universities Effectiveness

Variables	N	x̄	SD	rcal	Pvalue
Leadership integrity	6	13.58	4.17	0.849^*	0.033
Universities effectiveness		95.31	1.45		

*$p<0.05$

Table 2 shows that the computed r-value (0.849) is significant at $p<0.05$ level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between leadership integrity and universities effectiveness. The correlation between leadership integrity and universities effectiveness is high and statistically significant in a positive direction.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between leadership openness and universities effectiveness.

In order to test the hypothesis, scores relating to leadership openness was computed using items 6-10 in Section B of "Leadership Integrity and Openness Questionnaire" (LIOQ) while universities effectiveness was obtained using items 1- 40 in Section B of "University Effectiveness (UEQ)".

These sets of scores were subsequently subjected to statistical analysis involving Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Leadership openness and universities effectiveness

Variables	N	x̄	SD	rcal	Pvalue
Leadership openness		14.09	0.02	0.875[*]	0.022
	6				
Universities effectiveness		95.31	1.45		

[*]p<0.05

The result on Table 3 shows that the computed r-value (0.875) is significant at $p<0.05$ level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between leadership openness and universities effectiveness. The correlation between leadership openness and universities effectiveness is high and statistically significant in a positive direction.

DISCUSSION

The study showed that there was significant relationship between leadership traits and universities effectiveness in Southwest, Nigeria. This implies that leadership traits will improve or have direct positive impact on the universities effectiveness. This may be responsible for this finding is the fact that university system may not succeed in terms of quality of its outputs without good leadership traits by its leaders to effectively manage the academic and nonacademic resources available for his use. This finding is in agreement with the study of Bamiro (2012) which discovered that unfavourable governance in the education sector has led to series of strikes which accounted for low quality education in Nigeria. This may hamper smooth running of the institution and negatively affect the university effectiveness.

The study showed that there was significant relationship between leadership integrity and universities effectiveness. This implies that if the leadership operates high level of integrity, effectiveness in the university system will be enhanced. This finding may be as a result of the fact that leader's honesty, credibility and consistency in putting ethical values into action which will engender effectiveness in the university system. The finding is in line with the submission of Bryman (2007) who posited that

leadership integrity is significantly related to membership trust, cooperation and organizational effectiveness.

The study showed that there was significant relationship between leadership openness and universities effectiveness. This by implication means that leadership openness to changes is given a needful attention. The finding may be due to the fact that the university management has realized that effectiveness and efficiency will be enhanced if the university leaders are opened to new experiences and ideas. The finding is in agreement with the views of Wiley and Hilton III (2009), Erkutlu (2012) that openness to new experience has moderate positive relationships with creativity, intelligence and knowledge. This finding contradicts the outcome of the research carried out by Marinova et al. (2015) that proactive personality trait, which encompasses openness, the ability to find and solve problems, and opportunity recognition does not predict work effectiveness.

It was found out in the study that integrity and openness variables of leadership traits significantly predicted university effectiveness. There is no doubt about the fact that that the success of an organization depends largely on the leadership traits of his management staff. To this end, effectiveness in the university system will be enhanced, where the management staff exhibit good leadership traits.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that leadership traits variables such as integrity and openness were important factors that influenced universities effectiveness in Southwest Nigeria. Leadership traits were the best determinant of universities effectiveness in Southwest, Nigeria.

Recommendations
Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:
1.	Management of universities should endeavour to build good leadership traits in its management staff by exposing them to regular leadership and management seminars and conferences for efficient and effective management towards enhancing the level of university effectiveness.
2.	University leadership should place high premium on honesty, credibility, consistency, fairness, sense of duty, sound ethical and moral principles in dealing with their subordinates in order to enhance trust and cooperation among staff members and enhance organizational effectiveness

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