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## Perceived impact of staff orientation exercises on lecturers' productivity in public Universities in Anambra State

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### Abstract

The main purpose of the study was to determine staff orientation exercises on lecturers' productivity in public universities in Anambra State. One research question guided the study and one hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The descriptive research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 155 lecturers of the Department of Educational Management in two public universities in Anambra State. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument was validated by three experts in education and the reliability test on the instrument using Cronbach Alpha Reliability Method yielded a coefficient value of 0.86 for the internal consistency of the instrument. Mean, standard deviation and t-test were used to analyze data for the study. The findings of the study revealed that staff orientation exercise improves lecturers' productivity in public universities in Anambra State to a high extent. Furthermore, findings of the study revealed that lecturers in federal government-owned universities and state government-owned universities did not differ in their opinion on the extent staff orientation exercise improves lecturers' productivity in public universities in Anambra State. Based on these findings, the researcher recommended among others that heads of departments should make funds available for organizing orientation exercises for newly recruited lecturers.

**Keywords:** Impact, Staff, Orientation Exercise, Lecturer, University

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### Introduction

University is the highest level of tertiary education in Nigeria. University according to Egbri (2015) <sup>[5]</sup> is the uppermost level of formal education training that prepares individuals for various fields of academic discipline. A university is a higher education institution that typically consists of liberal arts and science colleges, graduate and professional schools, and confers degrees in a variety of subjects (Mole, 2017) <sup>[9]</sup>. It is a top-tier educational institution that may award both undergraduate and graduate degrees. Universities can be defined as a high-level or a specialized form of human capital, the contribution of which is very significant to economic growth in any society (Otonko, 2012) <sup>[13]</sup>. Thus, universities are higher education institutions that provide instruction in a variety of disciplines and generally have the authority to award degrees to students at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

In the same vein, Ogunnode and Abubakar (2020) <sup>[12]</sup> defined the university as an academic training institution at the tertiary level which offers organized learning and training activities. Universities according to Egbri (2015) <sup>[5]</sup> are formal training institutions where students undergo training to acquire the skills/knowledge of research and obtain certificates/degrees. Egbri further noted that these institutions are owned and managed by the federal government, state government or private individuals or groups. In Anambra State, there are two public universities; Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka and Chukwuemeka

Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Uli. These undergraduates are trained by individuals with the requisites of professional, pedagogical and subject-matter knowledge, skills and competencies. Universities education in Nigeria offers undergraduate and postgraduate educational programmes. These individuals are called lecturers. Lecturers are academic experts who are hired on a full-time or part-time basis to teach undergraduate and postgraduate students. Lecturers are also academic researchers who are expected to carry out instructional and administrative functions during their duties in line with the realization of the goals and objectives of the university. Thus, it is pertinent that upon employment, lecturers are exposed to some employee development programmes like staff orientation which will introduce them to the culture, values, regulations and job processes in the university in which they are employed.

Staff orientation is an introductory staff development programme that educates lecturers on the school culture and expectations. Orientation according to Brookins (2017)<sup>[3]</sup> is very critical to the achievement of organizational success. Amie-Ogan and Unachukwu (2021) opined that orientation is the process of assimilating new employees into the organization and it is an essential part of the employees' continuous socialization process in the organization. Orientation is the planned introduction of new employees to their jobs, their co-workers and the culture of the organization. Orientation provides new staff with the basic background required to perform their jobs satisfactorily, such as information on the rules, culture, tradition, objectives, and facilities of the educational organization. According to Amie-Ogan and Unachukwu (2021), orientation offers new lecturers the opportunity to build their commitment, reduce their anxiety, understand the school and convey their expectations from the school. Adi, Agbe, Odeh and Tyokyaa (2019)<sup>[1]</sup> reported that orientation as a variable of staff development has a significant influence on the job performance of staff. Ihekoronye, Opara and Olofu (2020)<sup>[8]</sup> found that school induction enhances novice teachers' job performance in public secondary schools. In light of the preceding, Hortance (2017)<sup>[7]</sup> discovered that a successful new teacher orientation programme assists new employees in becoming acquainted with their organizational environment and understanding their responsibilities. Orientation has been shown to produce performance-related benefits for both the worker and the organization by significantly influencing employee performance through the development of worker knowledge, skills, ability, competencies, and behaviour.

Despite the views of Hortance (2017)<sup>[7]</sup> and Ihekoronye, *et al* (2020)<sup>[8]</sup>, there is no empirical evidence to show that staff orientation exercise improves lecturers' productivity. Lecturers' productivity according to Ekpoh and Eze (2016)<sup>[6]</sup> is seen as the work output of an individual, a group, a unit, or an organization assigned towards the achievement of an organizational goal. Lecturers' productivity is defined as the aggregate of efforts and competencies of an individual in ensuring quality service delivery (Nyong, Onyeike & Meenyinikor, 2019)<sup>[11]</sup>. Productivity in the context of this study is defined as the level to which teachers carry out their expected roles and responsibilities in guiding students learning for improved performance as well as meeting school goals. The researchers, therefore, wonder if engaging lecturers in orientation exercises would improve lecturers' productivity as it appears like very little attention is given to organizing staff orientation programmes in the universities in

Anambra State. This is evident in cases where lecturers are employed in various departments and faculties in universities and little or no form of orientation exercise is organized to acquaint them with the ethos and culture of the institution. It is against this background that the study was conducted to empirically ascertain, the perceived impact of staff orientation exercise on lecturers' productivity in public universities in Anambra State.

### Statement of the Problem

The researcher is concerned about the poor level of priority attention given to staff orientation exercises in public universities in Anambra State. This assertion is buttressed by the personal experience of the researcher when she was employed as a lecturer at the university. Upon engagement of the researcher, she was assigned to teach certain courses, carry out students' assessments and supervise students' research works without any form of training or orientation. Field observation by the researcher also revealed that some newly recruited lecturers seem to lack the pedagogical competencies in teaching the courses they have been assigned. This situation indicates poor task performance among some of these newly recruited lecturers. The researcher is worried that this worrisome situation threatens the level of productivity of public university lecturers and also affects the quality of products (graduates) of public universities.

### Purpose of the Study

The study ascertain perceived impact of staff orientation exercises on lecturers' productivity in public universities in Anambra State.

### Research Question

To what extent do staff orientation exercises improve lecturers' productivity in public universities in Anambra State?

### Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers in federal government-owned universities and state government-owned universities on the impact of staff orientation exercise on lecturers' productivity in public universities in Anambra State.

### Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. It was conducted in Anambra State, Nigeria. The population of the study was made of 155 lecturers of the Department of Educational Management in two public universities in Anambra State. The universities are Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Igbariam Campus and Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire which was developed by the researchers. The instrument was titled "Questionnaire on the Impact of Staff Orientation Exercise on Lecturers Productivity (QISOELP)". The instrument has two sections; A and B. Section A contains one item eliciting information on the ownership of the institution. Section B contains 8 items on the Extent Staff Orientation Exercise Improves Lecturers Productivity in Public Universities. The instrument was structured on a 4- point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). The instrument was validated by three experts

in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University. The instrument was pilot tested on 10 lecturers of Educational management and policy/planning in Enugu State. The application of Cronbach Alpha to the data collected yielded a coefficient value of 0.86 for the internal consistency of the instrument. This means that the instrument is reliable because it is above the reliability value of 0.70 (Nworgu, 2015) [10]. The researcher administered the questionnaire by sending copies of the questionnaires to the e-mails and Whatsapp messages of the lecturers. In cases where it was difficult administering the instrument electronically. An appointment was made and the instrument was administered on the spot and retrieved. Out of the 155 copies of the questionnaire

administered, 130 copies were returned and used for the analysis of data for the study. This amounted to an 83 per cent questionnaire return rate. The mean value was used to answer the research questions while the standard deviation was used to ascertain the homogeneity or otherwise of the respondents' ratings. In analyzing the mean value, any item with a mean rating between 2.50 and above was regarded as high extent while any item below 2.50 was regarded as low extent. For the hypothesis, a t-test was used to test the hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance. Meanwhile, a null hypothesis was rejected where the P - value is less than the stipulated level of significance (.05). Inclusively, if the p-value is greater than or equal to the stipulated level of significance (.05), the hypothesis was accepted.

**Results**

**Table 1:** Respondents' Mean Rating on the Extent Staff Orientation Exercise Improves Lecturers' Productivity in Public Universities (N=130)

S/No	Item Description	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Orientation programmes familiarize lecturers with the facilities for carrying out their jobs	3.28	.87	Low Extent
2	It offers lecturers the opportunity to know the history of the department, faculty or institution	3.32	.92	Low Extent
3	It promotes the feeling of belongingness among newly recruited lecturers	3.23	.85	Low Extent
4	It educates newly recruited lecturers on the procedures for carrying out assigned tasks	3.31	.91	Low Extent
5	It fosters team spirit between the newly recruited lecturers and the older lecturers	3.19	.95	Low Extent
6	It provides an avenue for newly recruited lecturers to align their objectives with the institutions' objectives	3.37	.89	Low Extent
7	It increases the commitment of new lecturers towards the job	3.50	1.01	Low Extent
8	It helps to reduce the anxiety of new lecturers on the job	3.22	.90	Low Extent
	Cluster Mean	3.30		Low Extent

Data in Table 1 reveal that the respondents rated all the items with mean ratings ranging from 3.19 to 3.50 on the extent staff orientation exercise improves lecturers' productivity in public universities in Anambra State to a high extent. The standard deviations ranging between .85 to 1.01 indicate that the respondents' opinions were close. The cluster mean of 3.30 indicates that staff orientation exercise improves lecturers' productivity in public universities in Anambra State to a high extent.

**Discussion**

The findings of the study revealed that staff orientation exercise improves lecturers' productivity in public universities in Anambra State to a high extent. The study further revealed that staff orientation increases the commitment of new lecturers towards the job, educates newly recruited lecturers on the procedures for carrying out assigned tasks and provides an avenue for newly recruited lecturers to align their objectives with the schools' objectives. This finding is in agreement with Adi, Agbe, Odeh and Tyokyaa (2019) [1] reported that orientation as a variable of staff development has a significant influence on the job performance of staff. Adi *et al* (2019) [1] suggested that administrators should provide adequate measures to ensure teachers are given proper orientation services to improve their performance at all times. Findings also showed that novice teachers are given induction but it is inadequate. Ihekoronye, *et al* (2020) [8] stated that a well-designed induction programme for instructors would facilitate their rapid adjustment and integration, enhance their job performance as well as minimize the rate of attrition. Furthermore, findings further showed no significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers in federal government-owned universities and state government-owned universities on the impact of staff orientation exercise on lecturers' productivity in public universities in Anambra State. This is in agreement with Amie-Ogan and Unachukwu

**Table 2:** Summary of t-test analysis on the Extent Staff Orientation Exercise Improves Lecturers' Productivity in Public Universities Based on Ownership of Universities

Variable	N	X	SD	df	α	p-value	Decision
Federal Owned Uni. Lecturers	82	3.18	.89				
State Owned Uni Lecturers	48	3.25	.91	128	.05	.33	Not Significant

Data in Table 2 showed that the p-value of .33 is greater than the .05 alpha level of significance. This means that there is no statistically significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers in federal government-owned universities and state government-owned universities on the impact of staff orientation exercise on lecturers' productivity in public universities in Anambra State. The hypothesis was therefore accepted.

(2021) who reported that staff orientation is crucial to improving the productivity of teachers.

### Conclusion

The researcher concludes based on the findings of the study that staff orientation exercise improves lecturers' productivity in public secondary schools in Anambra State. Organizing orientation exercises for newly recruited lecturers in public universities would enable the lecturers to familiarize themselves with the culture, work processes and expectations. This would invariably lead to improvement in the level of their productivity.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

1. Heads of Departments should make funds available for organizing orientation exercises for newly recruited lecturers.
2. The Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments should engage in the publication of operational handbooks to guide newly recruited lecturers in the discharge of their duties.

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