

# Evaluation of Staff Personnel Administration in Universities in North Central Nigeria, 2007-2012.

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**Abstract:** *This study was designed to evaluate staff personnel administration in Universities in North Central Nigeria, with a view to finding out the extent to which the guidelines on staff personnel administration are adhered to. The instruments used included; Staff Personnel Administration Questionnaire (SPAQ), oral interview and examination of documents. The SPAQ was used to collect relevant data from 358 university officers sampled from 6 out of 15 of the universities in the region. Standard deviation and means were used to answer the research questions while analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Scheffe test were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed among others that to a large extent, universities adhered to the approved guidelines in staff recruitment and to a low extent in orientation practices. This situation cut across Federal, State and Private universities. Some of the implications of the study are that the universities should not be blamed for any unrest or job dissatisfaction since they complied with the regulations governing staff personnel administration. Some recommendations were made to the effect that Universities should produce and make guidelines available to all staff, and incorporate orientation practices in the guidelines. It was also recommended that universities should ensure a balance growth through the training of their administrative staff.*

## Introduction

Personnel administration is used interchangeably with Personnel management, manpower management, or human resource management and they refer to the management of people at work in an organisation. Therefore, staff personnel administration as a specialised field of management is concerned with the development and effective utilisation of human resources so as to achieve organisational objectives. The American Management Association (1999) defined staff personnel administration as a responsibility of all those who manage people. It is part of management

which is concerned with people at work and with their relationships within an enterprise. It applies not only to industry and commerce but to all fields of employment.

Personnel administration, according to Obi (2003) can be viewed from different angles. One angle is to view personnel administration as a function or responsibility of every manager or supervisor who has people under him all of whom are working towards the achievement of desired goals. The second angle is that Personnel Management may be seen as a function in an organisation which is performed by a department, the personnel department. Sharing a similar view, Ajayi and Ayodele(2001:15) stated that "personnel administration is a basic function of management." The most elaborate and comprehensive definition of staff personnel administration is that given by Flippo (1990:65). The study showed that there are two categories of functions: management and operative. Summing up these managerial and operative functions, Flippo define personnel administration as the planning, organising, directing, and controlling of the procurement, development, compensation, integration and separation of human resources to the end that individual, organisational and societal objectives are accomplished."

Ogunsaju (2006) did not differ much from Flippo when he defined staff personnel administration as the effective mobilisation of human resources based upon appropriate recruitment, selection, training and placement of appointed staff in order to achieve the organisational set down goals and objectives. He also viewed it as the effective utilisation of human resources in an organisation through the management of people and related activities. From these definitions, personnel administration may be viewed as a set of functions and activities used in the management of human resources in a non-discriminatory, affirmative, and effective

manner for the benefit of the organisation, the individual and the society. Nwachukwu (2005:73) identified the traditional functions or activities with which staff personnel administration is concerned. These are: Staff recruitment, orientation, motivation and welfare, training and development, manpower planning, job analysis, health and safety, wages and salary administration, Industrial relation, collective bargaining, discipline, performance appraisal, personnel audit, employee communication, human resource research and employee retirement.

The critical functions of staff personnel administration highlighted by Nwachukwu (2005) is examined in the context of the general practice in organisations particularly in universities in North Central Nigeria. For the purpose of this study, the following staff personnel functions were focused on. They are: staff recruitment practices and staff orientation. The choice of these administrative functions was based on two reasons. First, the practices fall in line with Edwin Flippo's operative functions of procurement, development, compensation, integration and separation. Each of these variables correlate with those already listed for the study; for instance, procurement is related to recruitment, compensation to motivation, separation to retirement, integration to orientation and development to training. The second reason for the choice of these functions was that they are the activities or functions which the universities have in common in their regulations. Because these functions have common regulations among the universities, they form the benchmark for this study.

This study determined to what extent the universities in North Central states of Nigeria adhered to the guidelines. This was done by looking at the universities both as an entity and on the basis of ownership i.e. Federal, State and Private Universities. In order to achieve the objectives, carefully selected instruments such as questionnaire, and oral interview were used on the principal officers of the universities, the head of units and the senior Registry staff of the universities selected for study. The main technique was evaluation.

Evaluation is the process of delineating, obtaining and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives. It is, in the opinion of Alkin (2008) to mean to judge, appraise, conclude, describe, justify, support, etc the planned programmes or activities. Evaluating administrative practices is necessary when one consider the essence of evaluation. According to Akem (2012) educational evaluation is a continuous process where a value judgement or decision is made by an

evaluator in a given programme or activity. It is therefore necessary to evaluate administrative functions identified in the universities in North Central in order to determine whether the practices require review or not, whether the objectives of the practices are being achieved or not and which areas of the practices require strengthening or to be removed. This evaluation therefore covered the period 2007 to 2012. (5 years). This period was considered appropriate for the evaluation because it witnessed remarkable transformations in the universities both in terms of curriculum development, that included introduction of new programmes such as entrepreneurship studies, mass identification of state and private universities, introduction of new policies by legislation such as the increase to 70 years from 65 years retiring age of Professors and senior administrative staff from 60 to 65 years, review of appointment procedure, management and e-learning delivery services as well as pegging the tenures of principal officers of the university to a single term of 5years, world class assessment of universities, among others. These transformational and technological changes led to global and national competitiveness among university staff. It made staff of universities in North Central Nigeria became aware and sensitive to staff personnel administration in other higher institutions world over.

Orientation as another function in personnel administration is defined by Dash (2007: 56) as "the process by which new employees are introduced to their tasks, colleagues, work groups, superiors and the organisation in general". He also notes that orientation activities are formal procedures organised to facilitate the adjustment of new employees to their new environment. Orientation of newly recruited staff into the University working environment appears to be given less attention. This may be due to crowded programmes of the Universities, logistics or lack of funds to execute the programmes. Given the importance of orientation programme to new staff, it is necessary for the universities to consider this personnel function as essential in the adjustment of the new staff to their work environment.

An orientation programme covers various activities and provides information on numerous issues. The topics covered in orientation programmes vary from one organisation to the other; and even within an organisation depending on the categories of employees (skilled, unskilled, clerical, and managerial). There is need to find out why the university system has not made adequate provision for staff orientation in their schemes of service/guidelines for appointments? This suggests that it is not given adequate attention. Staff orientation is necessary not only for newly

recruited staff but for old staff who should be oriented to new innovations introduced, or into higher positions of leadership arising from promotions and also to new materials or equipment for proper handling.

Tisadale and Brown (2004) found that staff newly recruitment irrespective of sex, location and other factors did not reveal that the level of commitment/productivity was different from the older staff in academic achievement. Areas of productivity were in examination standards and in truancy, character building. Mnyau and Waziri (2005) reported that orientation is more important to employees of an organization, like the cooperative extension service, than has previously been recognized, those individuals who were highly satisfied, and who rated their orientation program high and more important, had high performance ratings, higher job satisfaction can lead to higher job performance, hiring of more mature individuals in the Missouri cooperative extension service may lead to higher job satisfaction and better job performance, the program is more effective in some subject categories in the Missouri cooperative extension service than others.

This study therefore investigated how newly recruited staff in the universities in North Central Nigeria receives orientation to their jobs, and to find out if the guidelines on orientation practices were adhered to, during the targeted period. Many staff personnel administration literature point to the fact that staff personnel administration consist of the designing and implementation of policies and practices that can assist in promoting efficient utilization of human resources (Flippo 1990). The practices were discussed under staff recruitment, orientation, motivation, training and retirement. Apart from the need to periodically evaluate personnel programmes, there is also need to determine the extent of adherence to the guidelines. Earlier works on this investigation did not provide or indicate the extent to which the universities adhered to the guidelines on staff personnel administration but this study did.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Staff personnel administration in universities in general and North Central Nigeria in particular between 2007 and 2012 deserve to be evaluated. It was necessary because evaluation is supposed to be done on a continuous basis to find out how well a programme is faring. From casual observation, as well as committee reports, there appeared to be sharp practices in staff recruitment such as recruitment without following due process, recruitment of unqualified staff that were sometimes imposed on the administration and over

recruitment of staff from certain catchment areas at the expense of others.

Similarly, there appeared to be inadequate attention given to staff orientation. This study investigated these practices in the universities in North Central Nigeria with a view to establishing whether they conformed to the approved guidelines or not. Unrests in universities occasioned by staff dissatisfaction required to be known in terms of what was responsible. Could it be ineffective or inefficient staff personnel administration? Or non-compliance to guidelines or obsolete guidelines? This study therefore investigated these variables and particularly the extent of adherence by the universities to the approved guidelines.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate practices in staff personnel administration in universities located in North Central Nigeria between 2007 and 2012. Specifically, the study investigated:

1. whether the universities adhered to guidelines on recruitment practices.
2. the extent new staff are given orientation to their jobs according to established guidelines.

#### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. To what extent do the universities in North-Central Nigeria adhere to the NUC approved guidelines in staff recruitment?
2. What is the extent of compliance of the universities in North Central Nigeria to the NUC guidelines on staff orientation practices for newly recruited staff?

#### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Ho<sub>1</sub>. There is no significant difference in the perception among the Principal Officers, Unit Heads and Senior Registry staff with regards to universities compliance to the approved NUC guidelines on staff recruitment.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>. There is no significant difference in the perception of Principal Officers, Unit Heads and Senior Registry staff as regards the extent the Universities compliance to the guidelines on staff orientation.

#### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant in many respects.

To the National Universities Commission, the study will help her to assess the implementation of the regulations on staff personnel administration by the universities. It will enable NUC determine

whether the provisions in the general guidelines need to be maintained or reviewed by addressing the challenges the universities may be facing in implementing them. In other words, NUC will require this study to draw a benchmark in addressing the universities programmes as they affect personnel administration.

On the part of the universities, the study will help them to see the need to frequently evaluate their personnel programmes in the light of frequent administrative and policy changes. This study will also help the universities to assess itself in terms of their degree of adherence to the guidelines in implementing personnel practices. The result of this study will further strengthen Universities to close up the gaps in the areas of identified lapses that may be established. Finally, the findings of this research would also serve as source of information based on and invaluable literature that students of educational management, present and future scholars might find quite useful in the area of personnel administration in universities.

#### **Review of Related Literature**

The review of related literature is carried out under the following sub-headings.

##### **Concept of Staff Personnel Administration**

Staff personnel administration is defined by Ibukun (2006, p.75) as “involving the development, application and evaluation of policies, procedures, methods and programmes relating to the individual organisation. People are the essential ingredient in all organisations, be it business, governmental or educational.” Staff personnel department in organisations are responsible for activities such as recruitment and selection, training, wage and salary administration, establishing staff ratios, benefit planning and productivity. It is their responsibility to develop and recommend policies and procedures which will contribute to the achievement of the goals of the organisation. In summary, the functions of personnel are to select, train, develop, assimilate and remunerate employees.

Accordingly, staff personnel administration practices include recruitment, which entails advertising for jobs, interview for selection of qualified candidates taking into consideration age limit and academic qualifications among others. Staff recruitment according to Dressler (2006) involves all prospective applicants for job positions in the organisation. A good recruitment programme is one that is properly planned and well operated. Factors that influence the type of recruitment to be made include: the quality and number of staff and positions to be filled, the financial position of the organisation, availability of required staff.

##### **Concept of Evaluation**

Evaluations are, in a broad sense, concerned with the effectiveness of programs. While common sense evaluation has a very long history, evaluation research which relies on scientific methods is a young discipline that has grown massively in recent years (Spiel, 2001). According to Weless (1998), evaluation is a systematic process to understand what a program does and how well the program does it. Evaluation results can be used to maintain or improve program quality and to ensure that future planning can be more evidence-based. Evaluation constitutes part of an on-going cycle of program planning, implementation, and improvement.

Several other definitions of the concept of evaluation, reflecting different approaches are found in educational literature. Alkin (2008:20) defined evaluation as the process by which the decision areas of concern, selecting appropriate information, collecting and analysing information are ascertained. This he said is done with the aim of reporting summary data useful to decision makers in selecting among alternatives. Scriven (2000:43) regarded evaluation as “the gathering and combining of performance data with a weighed set of goals to produce comparative or numerical ratings.” He categorised evaluation as either formative or summative. According to him, formative evaluation is concerned with evaluation taking place during the developmental process of the programme or product while summative evaluation is the evaluation of the final product.

In supporting the above view, Mouly (2009:184) was of the view that evaluation “is primarily concerned with securing dependable answers concerning the functionality of a single programme or even a single phase of a given programme.” According to him, formative evaluation is concerned with the effectiveness of an on-going personnel service. The aim he said, is to detect possible shortcomings, co-ordinate its various components for better articulation and greater fidelity to the objectives and generally for the improvement of the programme where possible. Summative evaluation on the other hand he opined, constitutes an end-of-programme accounting of its effectiveness by reference to may be a comparative alternative or criterion-referenced standards.

##### **Theoretical Framework**

##### **Human Relations Theories (Motivation and Behavioural)**

Several motivation theories have been postulated in an attempt to predict workers' behaviour in organisations. These include Abraham Maslow's theory; on the hierarchy of needs which stated that an unsatisfied need is a motivating force. They suggested that motivation to produce stemmed from a present or anticipated state of discontent and a perception of direct connection

between individual's production and a state of satisfaction. Other theories that have contributed in this direction include: Skinner's (1953) Reinforcement theory, Herzberg's two-factor theory; which tried to relate motivation and need satisfaction to employee performance and productivity, and concluded that positive job attitudes are favourable to increased productivity; McGregor's (1960). Theory X and Theory Y, McClelland's (1961) Learned needs theory, Vroom's (1964) Expectancy theory and Alderfer's (1972) ERG theory of work motivation. Some theories attempted to predict performance behaviour. Locke's (1978) Goal-Setting theory and Adam's (1963) Equity theory emphasised the role of social comparisons as an important motivator of behaviour. Likert (1969) was of the opinion that the quality of supervision could have a direct correlation with work satisfaction and productivity.

Mullins, (1999:52) and Nwachukwu (2000:75) both expressed the view that reward is a very strong motivating factor for workers and they make use of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Oloko (2001:48) discovered that Nigerian workers were more committed and motivated to work in organisations managed by fellow Nigerians in which they foresee opportunity for advancement as limitless, than in organisations managed by foreigners where management and supervisors' positions were regarded as belonging to a special class. However, performance and productivity was still low in these Nigerian organisations. According to Oloko in his 1999 study, the low level was due to some other factors such as reluctance of supervisors to delegate responsibilities to subordinates, reluctance of subordinates to accept responsibilities, which is rational reaction to the fixed sum view of power held by their superior, absence of cooperative relationship between and within grades of employees, and treatment of members and time with careless abandon by management.

It is obvious that management's long standing concern with motivation stems from the fact that low worker motivation are thought to be reflected in such circumstance as low productivity, strikes, personal conflicts between supervisors and their subordinates, absenteeism and high labour turnover (Ajila, 1996). The significance of these theories to this study lies in the motivation of worker towards higher productivity. The theories emphasize the psychological and social aspects and the consideration of human needs in motivating workers. The universities in line with the needs theory provide various avenues to satisfy the basic and ultimate needs of workers. Clearly, the

Universities need to provide definite motivating and welfare packages to staff to enhance good working relations and productivity.

#### **Methodology**

This study adopted an evaluative research design. The study is confined to North Central region of Nigeria, which comprised seven states with a total of 15 Universities made up as follows: Federal Universities seven, State Universities five, and Private Universities three. The states that made up the North Central region were; Niger, Benue, Plateau, Kogi, Nassarawa, FCT Abuja and Kwara. The population of this study involves six universities in North Central Nigeria made up of three Federal, two States and one private university. The sum total of the population for this study is 980 made up of The principal officers include the Vice Chancellors, the Deputy Vice Chancellors, the Registrars, the Bursars and the University Librarians. The Heads of Units include the Deans, the Directors and Heads of Department while the senior administrative staff are those in the Registry assigned to various Units carrying out directives and instructions of management. Three Federal Universities out of seven, two State Universities out of five and one Private University out of three made up the first stage of the sampling (i.e. 40% of 15 universities make up 6). In the same manner, 40% of the total population of 980 i.e. 392 was sampled for the study using convenient sampling technique. This study used two instruments to facilitate the evaluation of the personnel practices being investigated. A 12-item structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled "Staff Personnel Administration Questionnaire" (SPAQ) and oral Interview schedule was used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by two experts in Science Education, with bias in Test and Measurement and one in Personnel Administration in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in Benue State University, Makurdi. The SPAQ was trial tested on 40 staff comprising principal officers, Deans, HODs and Senior Registry Staff of the Nasarawa State University which proved that the instrument is reliable for use. The data collected was analyzed using standard deviation and means to answer the research questions while analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Scheffe test were used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance..

#### **Presentation of Results**

**Research Question One:** To what extent do staff recruitment practices in the university in North Central Nigerian conform to the approved guidelines?

Table 1: Extent staff Recruitment Practices follow Approved Guidelines

N = 358

N/S	Hem Statement	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Advertisement precede staff recruitment	2.89	.99	Great Extent
2	Qualifications for appointments as advertised are usually the criteria for recruitment	3.13	.93	Great Extent
3	Appointment of staff to established posts of Nigerians below the age of 50 are on pensionable basis	3.16	.92	Great Extent
4	Interview and assessment panels are usually constituted by the Vice-Chancellor to interview shortlisted candidates for various senior staff positions	3.32	.83	Great Extent
5	Recommendation for all appointments are forwarded through A&PC to Council for approval	3.34	.86	Great Extent
6	Confirmation of staff appointments are done after two years of satisfactory service	3.48	.82	Great Extent
	<b>Cluster mean</b>	<b>3.22</b>	<b>.59</b>	Great Extent

The results presented on Table 1 indicate the mean ratings of respondents on the extent staff recruitment practices in the universities in North Central Nigeria, conform to the approved guidelines. The table shows that to a great extent, the universities' advertisement precede staff recruitment, qualification for appointments as advertised are usually the criteria for recruitment. This is shown in Item 1 which has a mean of 2.89 and SD of 0.99 Appointment of staff to established post of Nigerians below the age of 50 are on pensionable basis with a mean of 3.43 and SD of 0.93, interviews and assessment panels with mean of 3.32 and SD of 0.83 are usually constituted by the Vice Chancellor to interview shortlisted candidates for various senior staff positions, recommendations for all appointments are forwarded through A and PC to Council for approval and confirmation of staff with a mean of 3.34 and SD of 0.86, appointments are done after two years of satisfactory service. These are shown by the mean ratings of 3.48 and SD of 0.82. The cluster mean of 3.22 further lend support that to a great extent, the universities in the North central

Nigeria conform to the guidelines approved for the recruitment of staff. The standard deviations which are less than 1.00 suggest small variation in the ratings of the respondents as their scores clustered around the mean.

#### Result from the Interview

The findings from the oral interview conducted on the Registrars and Deputy Vice Chancellors of each of the six universities under study further confirm that to a great extent the Universities in the North Central Nigeria conform to the guidelines on staff recruitment. In this interview segment, five out of the six Universities representing 83.3% informed that the University conform with the procedures in the guidelines for recruiting staff. Common phrases from the responses of the interviewees such as: "we cannot record 100%", "sometimes advertisement is not done...", "we comply very much to the guidelines..." etc support this finding.

**Research Question Two:** To what extent do the universities adhere to the guidelines on staff orientation practices for newly recruited staff?

**Table 2: Extent Universities Conform to Guidelines on Staff Orientation Practices N = 358**

N/S	Hem Statement	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
7.	Universities guidelines provide information on orientation of newly recruited staff	2.43	1.02	LE
8.	Departments provide orientation to new staff posted to them	2.48	.94	LE
9.	New staff receive orientation by under studying their senior colleagues only	2.63	1.02	LE
10.	New staff do not receive orientation at all	1.99	.81	LE
11	New staff receive orientation through training outsides the university	1.50	.81	LE
12	Staff promoted to higher position of responsibilities receive orientation for new office	1.89	.95	LE
	<b>Cluster mean</b>	<b>2.15</b>	<b>.50</b>	<b>LE</b>

Results on Table 2 show the mean ratings of the respondents on the extent universities in the North Central Nigeria conform to the guideline on staff orientation practices for newly recruited staff. The data shows that to a great extent new staff receive orientation by under studying their senior colleague only. This is shown by the mean rating of 2.63 and SD of .02. The data showed that to a little extent (mean 2.43 and SD 1.02) the university guidelines provide information on orientation for newly recruited staff, department provide orientation to new staff posted to them, new staff receive orientation through training outside the university, staff promoted to higher positions of responsibilities receive orientation for new office and new staff do not receive orientation at all. The cluster mean of 2.15 indicate that in overall, the universities to a little extent conform to the guidelines on staff orientation practices for newly recruited staff.

**Result of the Interview**

Also from the oral interview conducted on the Registrars and deputy Vice Chancellors of the

Universities under study, four Universities out of six representing 66.6% admitted that they do not have any formal orientation for newly recruited staff particularly academic staff. Two Universities i.e. 33.4% said that newly recruited administrative staff moved round departments to understudy their senior colleagues. The findings from the result of data analysis of this cluster which indicated that the universities to a little extent conform to the guidelines on staff orientation practices was collaborated by the oral interview findings. The Registrars confirmed that orientation guidelines for newly recruited staff were not contained in the guidelines.

**Testing Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference in the perception among the Principal Officers, Unit Heads and Senior Registry Staff on the extent universities conform to the approved guidelines on staff recruitment.

**Table 3: One-Way Analysis of Variance on Extent Universities Conform to Guidelines on Staff Recruitment**

Group	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between groups	1.157	3	.579	1.685	.187
Within Groups	121.919	355	.343		
<b>Total</b>	<b>123.077</b>	<b>357</b>			

Results presented on Table 3 above shows that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Principal Officers, Unit Heads and Senior Registry Staff on the extent universities conform to

the approved guidelines on staff recruitment. This is shown by the f-value of 1.685 which is not significant. This is because the P-value of 0.187 is greater than 0.05  $\alpha$ -level. Thus, the null

hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of Principal Officers, Unit Heads and Senior Registry Staff was accepted.

**Hypothesis Two**

There is no significant difference in the opinion of principal officers, unit heads and senior Registry Staff on the extent the universities conform to the guidelines on staff orientation.

**Table 4: One way analysis of variance on the extent universities conform to guidelines on staff orientation**

Group	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between groups	1.603	2	.802	3.284	.039
Within Groups	89.669	355	.244		
<b>Total</b>	<b>88.273</b>	<b>357</b>			

Data presented on Table 4 show that there is a significant difference in the mean ratings of Principal Officers, Unit Heads and Senior Registry Staff on the extent universities conform to the guidelines on staff orientation. The F – value of 3.284 is not significant. This is because the P-value of 0.039 is greater than 0.05  $\alpha$ -level. Thus, the null

hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean ratings of the respondents is rejected. In order to determine the direction of the significant difference among the three groups, a multiple comparison analysis using Scheffe test was conducted and results presented on Table 5.

**Table 5: Multiple Comparison Analysis of Differences in Mean Response of Principal Officers, Unit Heads and Senior Registry Staff**

Department Variable	(i)Category of staff	(j) category Staff	Main difference	Sig
Groups	Principal Officers	Unit Heads	-.21226*	.04
		Senior Registry Staff	-.09311	.68
	Senior Registry Staff	Principal Officer	.211226*	.04
		Senior Registry Staff	.11915	0.9
	Unit Heads	Principal Officer	.09311	.684
		Unit Heads	-.11915	.09

\* Significant at 0.05 level

Data in the table above indicate that Principal Officers differed significantly from the Unit Heads in their perception on the extent universities conform to guidelines on staff orientation. This is shown by the mean difference of -.21226 which is significant at 0.04 level of significance and also significant at 0.05 level of probability. The data further showed that principal officers did not differ significantly in their mean opinion from Senior Registry staff. The Senior Registry staff and the Unit heads did not also differ significantly in their mean responses on the extent universities conform to guideline on orientation of staff.

**Discussion of Findings**

The findings which sought to establish the extent to which staff recruitment practices in the universities conform to the approved guidelines show that to a great extent the Universities placed advertisement for staff vacancies before recruitment. The study also shows that qualification

for appointments as advertised were usually the criteria for recruitment. In addition, appointment of staff of Nigerians below the age of 50 were on pensionable basis, interviews and assessment panels were usually constituted by the Vice Chancellor and recommendations for all appointments were forwarded through the A and PC to Council for approval and confirmation of staff appointment were done after two years of satisfactory service.

The fact that 100% level of compliance with approved guidelines on staff recruitment cannot be achieved, is supported by a Council Committee report on staff Audit in 2010 in one of the State universities covered in this study. Another most probable reason for the level of compliance not reaching 100% is the ownership status of these universities i.e. private universities where the incentives including salaries are not attractive

enough compared to government owned universities. These universities (private) hardly receive responses from candidates when positions are advertised; so recruitment is often done in these universities whenever qualified candidates offered themselves. An important fact that arose from oral interview response showed that when universities were faced with emergencies such as an accreditation visit, due processes of advertisement before recruitment were often not done. For example, one of the oral interview respondents is quoted as saying "Advertisement is sometimes not done when doing replacement of an appointment or when faced with a need for an emergency employment such as during NUC accreditation visits". This situation appears to be applicable to all the universities investigated.

In order to collaborate the finding on the first research question, data in relation to hypothesis I show that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Principal Officers, Unit Heads and Senior Registry staff on the extent Universities conform to the approved guidelines on staff recruitment. In other words, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This finding is also supported by the oral interview result in which the respondents all agreed that to a large extent, the Universities conform to the guidelines on staff recruitment. Conforming to the guidelines on staff recruitment will ensure selection of well qualified personnel. Dressler (2006) expressed the view that a good recruitment exercise will ensure that the right calibre of staff are recruited.

Also, Taiwo (2005) opined that the success of the University today depends on its ability to recruit and select high quality staff at all levels. One sure way of getting this high quality staff, Taiwo (2005), is by advertising the vacancies in both local and national media. While not compromising quality, it is important that quota allocation should not be undermined as all these contribute to harmonious and peaceful learning environment. This finding further lend credence to the work of Orubuloye (2006) which shows that a successful appointment can produce results which impact favourably on the wider university community while a poor one can have damaging effects outside the Department. There is no doubt therefore that a well planned and executed recruitment along approved guidelines offers the university to present itself in a favourable light. It is therefore not surprising that the universities today are enjoying relative peace, stable academic calendars and high patronage from stakeholders.

As regards the extent universities conform to the guidelines on staff orientation practices for newly recruited staff, the findings show that new

staff particularly administrative staff to a great extent receives orientation by understudying their senior colleagues only. The data collected show that to a little extent, the University guidelines provide information for orientation for newly recruited staff, Departments provide orientation to new staff posted to them, new staff receive orientation outside the University staff promoted to higher positions receive orientation and new staff (academic) do not receive orientation at all. The cluster mean of 2.5 indicate that in the overall, the universities to a little extent conform to the guidelines on orientation of newly recruited staff.

The result of the study of Rothman and Leonard (2005) who observed no difference in the behaviour and adjustment of two groups of new staff, controlled group and non-controlled group seem to give justification for Universities not organizing formal orientation to newly recruited staff. The graphical presentation in figure 2 derived from oral interview further support the findings in this research question that to a less extent newly recruited staff do not receive orientation. This practice is contrary to the views expressed by Mgbodile (2004), Akpakwu (2012) that newly recruited staff should be properly oriented into their jobs so that they can effectively function in that institution.

In order to verify findings on the second research question, data on the second hypothesis established that, there is a significant difference in the mean rating of principal officers, Heads of Unit and Senior Registry Staff on the extent Universities conform to the guidelines on staff orientation. To further determine the direction of the significant difference among the three groups therefore, Scheffemultiple comparison analysis test was conducted. Results indicated that Principal Officers differed significantly from Unit Heads in their mean opinion on the extent the Universities conform to guidelines on staff orientation. The most probable reason for this difference is that Heads of Unit rather than the Principal Officers ensure that guidelines are followed. Principal Officers are more of policy makers and not implementers.

The findings of this study show that staff orientation practices are not embodied in the guidelines of the Universities which confirm the earlier observation of the researcher. Hellman (2002) in his study of new employee orientation found that a formal orientation process for newly recruited staff would result in higher organizational commitment. This finding seems to be undermined by Universities by not organizing formal orientation for new staff. According to the author, the new comers will feel more positive to their

employer if they participate in formal employee orientation process. The most probably reason(s) why Universities have not considered orientation of new staff important stem from the findings of Rothman and Leonard (2005) earlier pointed out, where no significant difference was found between the controlled group and non-controlled group. Also, from the oral interview results, there were these common answers which showed that staff orientation were not given serious attention: "Very little of this practice is done", "Academic staff do not need orientation", "Only administrative staff move round departments etc.

### Conclusion

The conclusions that have been drawn from this study clearly show that contrary to the speculation that sharp administrative practices were rampant in the universities, it was found that not only are the universities in North Central Nigeria doing well in implementing the guidelines, they are also updating the implementation of the guidelines in line with new administrative policies introduced by legislation.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

1. The universities should as much as possible sustain the practice of advertising before recruitment and also ensure that quota system is maintained but not at the detriment of standards.
2. The universities should ensure that guidelines for orientation of newly recruited staff are included in their Regulations. This will compel the university to implement the guidelines and ensure quicker adjustment of new staff to their new environment.

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