
**CONFIGURATION OF NIGERIAN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS EMPLOYEE USING
MISSION STATEMENTS: A DISCOURSE**

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ABSTRACT: *Organization Mission Statement is a critical roadmap or compass of an Institution. It is useful for practical day-to-day running of Institutions operation. However, significant percentage of Nigerian Tertiary Institutions employees is not adequately informed about the philosophy and objective of the institution which has affected their performance in the system. This qualitative study discusses the configuration of Nigerian tertiary institutions employee by using awareness, motivation and organizational commitment to spur Nigerian tertiary institutions for greater performance. Eclectic theory of social identity was adopted to position the study a distinct study. Results obtained revealed that there is presence of mission statement in Nigeria tertiary institutions; displayed on website, strategic places in the institutions. But significant percentage of the employees is not aware of their institutions mission statement despite the potentials it has to offer. The study concluded, given the mission statements are vital for dynamic management tool and advanced performance; it is outstanding that Nigerian tertiary institutions management should articulate mission statement, based on the environmental exigencies and where necessary make it collective responsibility among the employee in the institution.*

KEYWORD: Configuration, Tertiary Institutions, Mission Statement, Employee, Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Mission statement is a critical roadmap or compass of a tertiary institution's identity; it is useful for practical day-to-day running of institutions operation. It is a management instrument or tool that facilitates the alignment of employee's behaviour to organizational culture and motivate if appropriately crafted and action-based. Thus, Nigerian tertiary institutions are established on the premise of teaching, learning, research and community development. In order to live up to these expectations, it is obvious that mission statement is crafted to guide the conduct and behavior of the employee. This to a reasonable extent affects the employee performance, creative output and development. A well-conceived mission statement facilitates the communication of the organization's direction and purpose, provides a control mechanism over the behaviour of employees, and assists the organization to create a balance between competing interests of various stakeholders as well as focused resources allocation (Bar, 1998; Bart and Baetz, 1998)

cited in Ganu (2013). While mission statements that express tertiary institution mission are significant for overall strategic management and decision-making process, it is anchored on a reliable instrument that provides relevant information to internal and external stakeholders concerning the purpose and direction of the institution.

However, mission statement can help drive the Nigerian tertiary institutions in a manner that may configure dedication, growth, consistency, motivation and foster institution's culture through learning and awareness if properly implemented in the institution. It is obvious to disclose that Nigerian tertiary institutions have value-based missions that are anchored on manpower training and community development. Therefore, the mission statement of any organization must be clearly articulated and collectively implemented by all the members connected with the institution in order to serve as a roadmap and source of inspiration in creating the desired institution outcome and culture. The mission statement's configuration on all employees is very important since the commitment of the whole staff is needed for the mission statement to be effective (Stoven and Bontis, 2002) cited in Ganu (2013). Thus it is evident, that all the employees of the tertiary institution need to know offhand and have it.

The litany of mission statements in the tertiary institutions are derived majorly on the premise of the fact that mission statement gives purpose and direction to the institution and legitimates its existence. Numerous tertiary institutions in Nigeria adopted mission statements to direct their activities, relate their institution within and outside the world in order to sustain the competitive advantage. The development of mission statements can significantly impact on the survival and growth of a business (Analoui and Karami, 2002) cited in Ganu (2013). What is obtainable elsewhere, may also take place in Nigerian tertiary institutions that such a crafted document be unveiled within the institution's offices, website, student's social network and outside to enable both internal and external stakeholders work towards goal realization of its existence. One of the major objectives of mission statement is to communicate direction for the institution, to direct decision making among the management and to motivate employees.

Moreover often these litanies (mission statements) are fed to members of the staff without a full understanding of their influences on the individual and most times keep the employee unaware. It is not strange to have tertiary institutions managers formulate the statements without the input of employees, sometimes kept in a file and heard during matriculation, convocation ceremony and tertiary institution websites of the institution leading to extraneous, more often conflicting values. These statements are usually filled with missing identity and value of the institution its assumed objectives, which are then crafted and most times not hung on the wall for stakeholders and clients to see as they enter strategic places in the institution. Given what is obtainable, a greater percentage of Nigerian tertiary institutions use the mission statements as a slogan purposely for public relation.

In order to avoid paper mission statements in Nigerian Tertiary institutions, what is needed may arise from awareness, institutions culture and motivation and spend time to understand its goals, values/beliefs, growth and expansion plans, as well as why the institution was founded and what it plans to do for its members, within short and long term. Consequently, the thrust of the study

was to examine the configuration of Nigerian tertiary institutions employee using mission statements and its associated expectation on the members of the community.

SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

Social identity theory by Stryker (1980) was adopted to position this study. The theory anchored on culture or collective view of identity in which the concept represent the ideas, belief, and practices of a group. Social organization must have its beliefs/values or identity, these features distinguishes the institution from one another. The mission statement as an organizational roadmap or identity plays the roles of motivating the employees, creating awareness and amplifying the culture of the social institution. The awareness helps the institution to mould the members of the staff to live from individual to overall strategic goal and collective responsibilities in decision-making in the institution.

Tertiary institution mission statements define the institution's purpose, the beliefs/values (values are guiding beliefs about how things should be done, while beliefs amplify the attitude of the stakeholder). Thus, employees are given direction about how they are expected to behave and inspire them to give their best and remain committed in discharging their legitimate functions. These mission statements are shared with both internal and external stakeholders; this is because it shapes behaviour of the employee, attitude and understanding of why they should work with the institution.

It is the revelation from the theory that for any institution to have a place in social system its identity is therefore paramount to external and internal stakeholders. It is the mission statement that is the identity of an institution that projects its values/beliefs and maintains the public relation within and outside the globe. Related to the above, is the flow of persons into positions of importance through the mechanism of elections and appointments as part of the social structure, as is the flows of resources they control, and the mechanisms that support and sustain these flows are the employee and top management team in the tertiary institutions.

The employees are seen playing the role of software in the institution because they are the image maker of the institution having in mind they are motivated and practice the culture. The basis for the understanding of social structure arises from the actions of individuals', keeping in mind that these agents' employee received feedback from the institution they serve, thereby modifying individual culture to institution through awareness. Creating awareness among the employees, encouraging teamwork, and avoiding divide and rule mechanism certainly will boast the culture and motivate the staff in the institution and promote employee performance.

According Stryker, (1987) it is assumed that behaviour is dependent upon a named or classified world and that these names carry meaning in the form of shared responses and behavioural expectations that grow out of social interaction. It becomes significant that motivation of staff in a social system held visions and beliefs, of the institution coupled with a positive culture, can drive energy for success and desired performance.

That persons acting in the context of social structure also name themselves and create internalized meanings and expectations with regard to their behavior. That these expectations and meanings form the guiding basis for social behaviour and along with the probing interchanges among actors shape and reshape the content of interaction, as well as the categories, names and meanings that are used. Negotiated meaning emerging from social interaction is the shared component in these views of social identity theory. In the related work of the associate in the field like (Serpe, & Stryker 1987; Stryker and Serpe, 1994), which believes that social structure configures one's identity, culture, and in turn, behaviour. It is obvious to highlight that the success of any institution depends on the employee and management team.

THE CONCEPTS OF MISSION STATEMENT IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS.

The central mission statements of the tertiary institutions are to provide a conducive atmosphere for teaching, learning, research and rapid community development. The principal means by which the mission is accomplished are through learning, teaching, research and community development. A mission statement is the heart beat of any institution. It articulates the institutional focus and purpose and its role and responsibility to the internal and external stakeholders. The mission statement gives the Visitor, Vice-Chancellor/Provost, Governing Board authority on strategic direction through the mission, which impact the policies and plans configuring the employee's action and behaviours. An articulated mission statement anchors on societal impact rather than simply an explanation of operations, translated from being about something to being for someone. It is evident that tertiary institutions mission is on the target of manpower development and excellence, changing the society through selected public service.

It is heartwarming that increasing amount of literature points to the mission statement as a valuable tool for managers to use to improve organizational performance and increase employee intrinsic motivation. Mission statement is the institution's key to success or failure. It is an identity/password that differentiates one institution from another. Mission statement amplifies the tertiary institutions academic culture of creative output, discipline and integrity that is significant to employee role in the whole. Every employee need to be responsible for identifying a preferred place within the working in the tertiary institutions, and where and how they can best make a contribution to the institution and provide clarity to what they aim to achieve both long term and short term.

Mission statement is an organization's vision translated into written form. It makes concrete for all to see and read a leader's view of the direction and purpose of an institution. For many corporate leaders it is a vital part of their attempt to motivate employees and to set priorities. Bart & Hupfer, (2004), asserted that Mission statement is an instrument that articulates management's beliefs, strategy and approaches in respect to the university purpose, community services and achievable inspiring goals. Thus, mission statement communicates not merely the future desirable state of a firm, rather, it explicitly expresses the long embedded corporate identity, corporate purpose, and strategic intent in a very succinct form. It is the cultural glue which enables an organization to function as a unity by influencing the behaviour of employees via norms and values (Melewar and Jenkins, 2002) cited in Ganu (2013). It is a compass that

employee in the institution needs to observe and work strategically to achieve because it is a statement of action; it is the journey and not destination.

The significant role mission statement plays in tertiary institutions cannot be overemphasized, thus motivation seems to be the commonly held perception, playing side by side with a positive environment, possess energy for success. Therefore, today, one of the most important missions of most institution is anchored on improving their employees' motivation; through the institution academic culture, creating awareness among members of staff and satisfaction that measures the input and output of institution within the space of time. Thus to achieve these goals, the concept of motivation, institution's culture and awareness should be transparent and clear to all stakeholders and free from ambiguity.

Mission statement seems to be the institution vehicle carrying the employee to its direction; this premise is depicted on the condition of the vehicle. When the vehicle carrying the commuters is not functional and maybe they do not have adequate knowledge of direction to a reasonable extent the journey is in doubt that the vehicle may not fit the journey. Therefore unarticulated mission statement of any institution will mislead the overall decision-making process and disrupt the employee performance. The mission statement of the institution is like the software, the written instruction that enables the members of the staff (employee) in the tertiary institution to follow. It is result-based and time-based which anchors on values/beliefs in accordance with the culture of the institution. Similarly, the software is written to perform specific task in a system, so all so the mission statement of the institution is the identity. It is institutional configurations that align employee and its environment to work towards achieving the strategic goal collectively.

Mission statement is a unifier that brings all relevant stakeholders together within and outside. Thus, it is the bridge that enables the top management and employee to look at organizational goal and not individual goal. It is the criterion on which plans are formulated and major decisions made; the bond which unites faculty, students, staff, alumni, and trustees as a tertiary community. The institution pursues the preservation, enrichment, awareness and transmission of knowledge and culture of academic discipline among the members of the community. It is reorganized that mission statement builds the frame of reference for each employee and the administration as a whole. Thus the mission statement supports the institution on the path toward a future-oriented, efficient, and stakeholder-friendly assimilation.

THE ROLE OF MISSION STATEMENT

Given the assumption of the researchers like Bain & Company (1996) who asserted that the managers perceive mission statements as one of the most important managerial tools. The overall strategy goals and decision-making processes is incubated in the mission statement if properly crafted and put into practice or action for day-to-day activities in the University. It seems that the both professional and practitioner alike are of the view that appropriate defined university mission statements are pertinent management tools since many institution explicitly write them in a form of statement for the employee and entire stakeholders concerned to have it offhand.

The mission statement role in the institution could be summarized; strategy implementation, internal and external communication, management and leadership and tertiary institution climate influences, Musek & Williams, (2008) cited in Dermol (2012). Arguing further, the mission statement as management tool accordingly, to a reasonable extent can configure employee performance in the institutional setting. See Table I below depict the key roles of mission statements in the tertiary institutions.

Table I: Key Roles of Mission Statements in the Institutions

Strategy implementation

Putting processes in a tertiary institution perspective
Assuring tradition and stability during changes
Providing a rationale for allocating resources

Internal and external communication

Stimulating internal and external tertiary institution communication
Serving as an effective public relations tool
Fashioning the image of the tertiary institution
Informing employees about the institution's goals and unifying their efforts towards accomplishing them through Teamwork.

Management and leadership

Directing behaviour
Improving individual and collective performance
Enabling valuation of different actions and behaviour
Guiding current, critical, strategic decision making
Helping to save the time
Asserting leadership

Tertiary Institution Climate

Positively influencing institution culture and climate
Tightening interpersonal links in a tertiary institution
Strengthening the sense of unity and belonging
Influencing employee job satisfaction and commitment
Reducing uncertainties for employees
Reducing doubts, frictions and ambiguities
Inspiring enthusiasm about the tertiary institution
Clarifying priorities and vague, undefined and even conflicting issues in the institutions
Helping to prevent unconstructive and damaging processing
Source: Adopted and modify from Musek & Williams, (2008) cited in Dermol (2012)

The role of mission statement that can be explored to configures employee performance in the tertiary institution in Nigeria. In related study, researchers like Lesnik (2008) cited in Dermol (2012), summarized that better performing companies or institutions have better, clearer and stronger mission and vision statements, and process of identification of organizational values is positively related with performance of the organization. Similarly, the Nigerian tertiary

institution that aligns to mission statement will have better employee performance within the edge and outside the edge. Both profit and nonprofit entities have them, it is a proactive tool that ensures and inspires employees to achieve high performance ratings or ranking in the tertiary institutions thereby fostering institutions culture, motivates with the help of adequate awareness within the system. The employer's mission statement may easily configure the employee performance when they became part of the performance standards and may be quantified in the employee's performance behaviour and expectations. Therefore, when the tertiary institution adopts and implements its mission statement and when employees embraces that mission statements having a purpose could strengthen the reason they were employed and, thus, improve their job performance and reduce job turnover.

Influence of Mission Statement on Employee Performance

Similarly, Noordin & Jusoff (2009) assumed that having a competent mission statement may lead to a world class university, the university needs to have world class academic staffs that are dedicated, competent, knowledgeable, and above all committed to the university and their career. But, all these attributes may likely diminish if the employee or the members of the staff perceived that they are not experiencing motivation in the institution.

It is empirically supported by researchers like (Mullane, 2002; Collins & Poras, 1991; Daniel, 1992, Klemm et al., 1991) cited in Darbi (2012). Thus it tends to motivate, shape behaviour, cultivate high levels of commitment and ultimately impact positively on employee performance. Nigerian tertiary institution mission statement is capable of deriving the employee performance in the system, because of its quantification and measurement of their actions. The mission statement is a roadmap for the members of staff to follow and this is not far from a sprinter that desire to win gold medal, he or she must abide by the rules of the game, the obedience to the litany of the rules gives the sprinter the trophy. The employee that desired to be rated excellent in the special area of discipline needs to be familiar with mission statement of the institution and thus configure the employee for greater performance in the areas of specialty.

The complete tasks of unveiling mission statement are anchored on constant awareness campaign and employee motivation is highly needed. This could lead to increase in performance. This applies not only to the interaction between superiors and colleagues, but also to the way in which we treat all those who approach us with concerns and requests. Thus, as part of an institution where people from many different nations and cultures come together to work, learn, teach, and do research, management may be committed to promote the integration of different nationalities in the institution.

The tertiary institution top managers can use mission statement to configure the employees by creating awareness as the medium to align the task of challenging responsibilities and are willing to make decisions. The quality of employees and colleagues cannot merge unless adequate awareness and stakeholder's campaign help and support them in achieving the goals developed and set in a process of discussion. The employee's performance align to represent the interests and demands of the institution's responsibility and taking into account the strategic goals and tasks of the system as a whole. Nigerian Tertiary Institutions employee is expected to secure a high-performance, awareness and motivation, to a reasonable extent in order to maintain

attractive workplaces, which anchored on commitment and efficiently community development. In addition, goal-oriented information transfer, bureaucratic in decision-making processes, and complex procedures are crippled because the important requirements for the quick fulfillment in service delivery is in the mind of the employee that is the mission statement is driving force. The mission statement is capable of supporting, motivate and boost morale of the employee's performance in tertiary institution collectively.

Managing employee's performance is really about configuring staff time, talent and energy to Support institution's mission and strategic goals. If you have already clarified your institution's strategic goals, defined the staff roles accordingly, and recruited staff that can best perform in those roles assigned for the right direction to be accomplished. It is assumed that the daily tasks, motivation, commitment, and professional development and competence are derived by the mission statement. The strategic goal is consistently to improve research, administrative clouds and to adapt them to the desires and expectations of the stakeholders.

The tertiary institution's culture helps to shape the action of the employee. This is because the staff came from various nationalities to perform their tasks in the institution, it is not surprise that when the culture is not amicable, and many may look for a better place. These are seen in most cases when the management insist to train the staff, or sponsor them on conference and related programme that would boast their performance in various areas of discipline. The culture anchored on creative research/output, academic award in terms of grants, rich website in terms of web ranking. The employees as the members of the social system needs to know that they can depend on the culture of institution, protect and nurture them as they struggle with career and life issues. In line with the highlighted, the mission statement speaks volumes on performance and high level of commitment to the things they think are important. When the employees are appreciated they are motivated.

It is assumed that mission statement can configure the employee role and motivate them in the institution. It is recognized in some tertiary institution in the country that when an employee performed his/her tasks very well awards awaits such person. The motivation could be double promotion, cash and commendation letters to boast the morale of employee for greater performance. Similarly, the tertiary institution top management may take a look on factors that drive the members of staff to perform well in their various areas of discipline, what is the employee behaviours that can support the institution's mission and strategic goals, what leadership actions that can configure members of the staff and gear motivation that may support the institution's strategic goals. Therefore, if these questions are appropriately attended to and handled as expected, it is assumed that institution's strategic goals and decision making process over time will encourage performance effectively. Therefore, motivation could arise as a reward because most effective institutions tie their rewards to performance in various ways, depending on the environmental configuration.

Both practitioner and professional alike assumed that organizational mission statement influences the employee performance and such if properly crafted needs awareness/campaign, employee motivation and commitment.

On the Contrary, significant percentage of the employee in Nigerian Tertiary institutions is not adequately aware of their institutions' mission statement. Thus, evidently has affected their performance in their various areas of discipline and responsibilities. Therefore, the essence of this research is to reposition the Nigerian tertiary institution's employees for greater performance and to align among other competitive tertiary institutions around the globe, to join in the litany of the organizational success.

CONCLUSION

In this study we explored that mission statement is a critical roadmap for tertiary institution's social identity, which are used as public relation tools to convince stakeholders that the management is competent. Similarly, significant percentages of Nigerian tertiary institutions employees do not know their various institutions mission statements and to a reasonable extent retard such member of staff performance.

Given that mission statements are vital for dynamic management tool and advanced performance, it is noteworthy that Nigerian tertiary institutions management should articulate mission statement, based on the environmental exigencies and where necessary make it collective responsibility among the employee in the institution.

It is appealing that all employees should be adequately educated or create awareness on the primary role of these statements and how each member's activity can help reposition the institution and induce greater performance among the employees.

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