

## Organizational Culture and Performance of Office Staff in Universities in Rivers State

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### Abstract

This study investigated organizational culture and performance of office staff in Universities in Rivers State. The study adopted the correlative research design. The study operationalized organizational culture into dimensions of norms, values and objectives and related each variable to office staff performance. It used population of 200 principal officers of Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Rumuolumeni Port Harcourt. The sample size of 110 using the stratified sampling technique was adopted. One hundred copies or 90% were duly completed and returned and that was used in the analysis. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, while the null hypotheses were tested at .05 significance level using regression model. The findings showed that there is relationship between office staff performance and norms as well as values. The study recommended among others that administrators of educational institutions should ensure that their organizational norms are maintained and made known to all staff since norms are related to office staff performance.

**Keywords:** Organizational Culture, Norms, Objectives, Values, Office staff Performance, University.

### Introduction

The importance of this study is that it reviewed how organizational culture can direct the performance of office staffs in universities in Rivers State. The findings of the study would be useful in improving the current practice in university organizations with regards to how culture relates to its office staff performance. To scholars, the study would further buttress how organizational culture could be a single factor or variant outcomes. To the organizational office staff, it would create more awareness on how the organizations culture affects their performance thereby increasing productivity that ends up affecting the profit of the organization positively targeted at improving both staff and organizational performance.

The understanding of the relationship between office staff's job performance and culture of the organization would be put in the perspectives of objectives, norms and values. Objectives are defined from the takeoff point of any organizations operations, norms are creations of objectives, while values occur when objectives and norms have been

established with the overall intent of achieving organizational goals (Podsakoff, 2008). In fulfilling this, the culture of the organization and environment plays a lot of roles. The university environment can be developed by enhancing staff performance by adopting and practicing effective culture. Strong culture will make it easy to communicate openly and participate in most efficient and effective way in the decision making and customer satisfaction as the organizational structure has a bit long hierarchy system whereby the director tends to be the top level followed by operational managers then the team leaders at the front liners (Schalwyk, 2018).

Hater, (2017) insists that organizational development has certain factors that improve sustainability on basis of culture. The improvement in productivity leads to office staff commitment as norms, values and objectives helps in improving culture of an organization. The system of organization was based upon effective establishment of culture that keep learning environment strong. The performance of office staffs improves by establishment of strong culture of an organization.

The office staff performance would be considered as backbone of the organization as it has to do with its major resource of goal attainment. The loyalty of office staff relies upon knowledge and awareness of culture that improves behaviour of organization (Brooks, 2016). Organization culture has been identified by Administrative Science Quarterly (Pettigrew, 1979) as cited in Nweke, (2012). The value and norms of office staff is based on management identification that helps in improving office staff performance. Office staff in the university setting may be referred to as the staff who work with principal officers, and other administrators of middle management level in the university system (Jon, 2012).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Some organizations including universities in Rivers State appear to have their staff performance at the lowest ebbs as a result of organizational culture not well defined or adequately communicated. It seems educational organizations would have done far better than they are doing if they had culture that is easily understood by their staff. Lack of clear organizational culture appears to have hampered office staff performance in most organizations today. The objectives, norms and values of organizations are not clearly stated and/or carried out by management or by the interpreters of management policies. This study will therefore x-ray how organizational culture, if properly stated can help office staff performance.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study was to investigate organizational culture and office staff performance in universities in Rivers State, with specific objectives as:

- Find out the relationship between organizational norms and office staff performance in universities in Rivers State

- Find out the relationship between organizational objectives and office staff performance in universities in Rivers State
- Find out the relationship between organizational values and office staff performance in universities in Rivers State

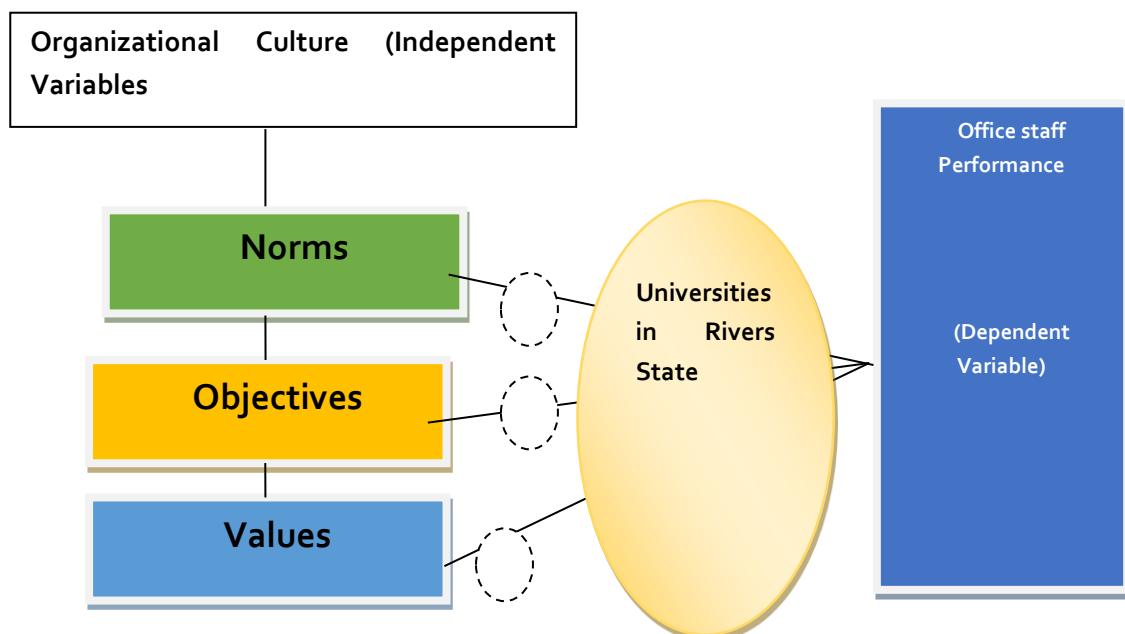
### Research Questions

- What are the various types of organizational culture in universities in Rivers State?
- What is the relationship between organizational norms and office staff performance in universities in Rivers State?
- What is the relationship between organizational objectives and office staff performance in universities in Rivers State?

### Research Hypotheses

- There is no significant relationship between organizational norms and office staff performance in universities in Rivers State
- There is not significant relationship between organizational objectives and office staff performance in universities in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between organizational values and office staff performance in universities in Rivers State.

### Literature Review Conceptual Clarification



*Fig. 1: Researchers' guide, 2023*

## **The Concept of Organizational Culture**

The different attributes of culture have been arranged on basis of norms, objectives set for itself and values which help in differentiating one firm from another. (Forehand and von Gilmer, 2008) The process of thinking helps in establishing one member from another on basis of cognitive thinking (Hofstede, 2008). The success guidance based upon different values and norm that makes culture effective (Schein, 2012). The set of beliefs, behaviours, norms and values helps in making culture most effective (Kotter and Heskett, 2012). The knowledge of culture have been gained through understanding and beliefs on basis of large groups.

The main idea of culture comes from sharing in learning processes that have been based upon systematic allocation of resources. (Titiev, 2021) The cognitive systems of human that helps in improving thinking and decision making were based upon organization culture. (Pettigrew 2012) The multifaceted set of beliefs, assumptions and values helps in presenting different level of culture by conducting business at an effective manner.

The normative glue based upon organization culture helps in holding overall management effectiveness (Tichy 2013). The concept of effective organization culture helps in improving business decisions. The survival of culture in an organization lies upon national and foreign culture differentiation in culture management. (Schein, 2008) The culture of organization has been affected by attitudes, norms and beliefs that lead to strong communication between office staffs.

Now a day's organization culture has generally been interrelated to management. (Kotter and Heskett, 2008). The two essential factors that lead to effective culture management include structural stability and integration of superior standard of organization culture. (Schein, 2011) Certain characteristics of organization culture have been established in which set of norms, values and beliefs helps in perfect association between them. (Hodgetts and Luthans, 2003) At different level of organization culture different background, ethics and racial differences impact upon performance. The similar organization culture with different backgrounds has common set of values and beliefs to be effected by organization systems.

(Robbins & Sanghi, 2007) The attraction of organization norms, values and beliefs have strong affect upon performance and sustainability. (Stewart, 2010) The norms of office staff impact upon sustainable performance and management of organization culture as it leads to attainment of profitability.

## **The Concept of Office Staff Performance**

The degree of an achievement to which an office staff fulfill the organizational mission at workplace is called performance (Cascio, 2016). Performance has been perceived differently by various researchers, but most of the scholars relate performance with measurement of transactional efficiency and effectiveness towards organizational goals (Stannack, 2008; Barne, 2012).

The job of an office staff is build up by degree of achievement of a particular target or mission that defines boundaries of performance (Cascio, 2006). Certain researchers have identified different thought, attitudes and beliefs of performance as it helps in measurement of input and output efficiency measures that lead to transactional association. (Stannack, 2012)

The capability of an organization to establish perfect relationship with resources presents effective and efficient management of resources. (Daft, 2000) In order to achieve goals and objectives of organization strategies have been designed based upon organizational performance. (Richardo, 2001) The equity based upon high returns helps in effective management of organization resources so that performance improves (Ricardo, 2001).

The performance measurement system helps in improving organization association to achieve goals and objectives at an effective manner. (Ololube, 2017) The strategic planning based upon development of goals and objectives help organization to focus non-financial or intangible assets. The quality, performance and services linked with customers have financial nature (Kaplan and Norton, 2001). The financial and non financial reward management systems enabled by measurement and evaluation of performance measurement system.

The traditional measurement of performance based upon strategic performance system. The translation and measurement of financial and non financial performance based upon SPMS leads to competitiveness (Chenhall, 2005). The measurement technique helps in increasing competitive advantage in organization based upon effective pressures. The multiple performance measures adopted by organization based upon non financial and financial measures helps in presenting uncontrollable events (Burns and McKinnon, 2008). The measurement technique adopted by organization helps in presenting positive association of services. The Balance Score card have been used to evaluate performance management of office staffs based upon perfect association between Key Performance Indicators (KPI) vis-à-vis culture (Kaplan and Norton, 2013). The strategies based upon rationality and design helps in making culture more effective.

### **Organizational Norms**

Norm is an essential aspect of organizational culture which implies the system of attitudes about the status quo ante obtainable in any organization. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to as every organisation is unique because of its history, mission and vision, strategies, approaches, members, organisational structure and management style and local culture/context in which it operates. Nevertheless, an organisational culture which expresses the values of the organisation in practice is key to drive the organisation forward in support of its mission, vision and strategy (Kpalan, 2013).

In this guide, five main criteria are proposed to assess norms supportive of monitoring, evaluation and learning in youth peace organisations:

- Dialogue and peaceful transformation of conflicts within the organisation
- Diversity

- Safety and responsibility
- Culture of learning
- Culture of sustainability

Guidance and proposals are offered on how to promote internal organisational evaluation, reflection and learning practices.

Conflict is natural part of life. Conflicts often arise within organisation at many levels: between individuals and between teams or units. If addressed constructively and cultivating dialogue, conflicts can be opportunities for personal and organisational learning and growth. Below are a few proposals which could contribute to an organisational culture based on dialogue and positive transformation of conflicts.

A code of Conduct is a set of conventional principles and expectations outlining a range of social norms, rules and responsibilities that are considered binding by the individuals that are part of an organisation or a group. Develop a Code of Conduct or ethical guidelines which show awareness and commitment to peace values applied to internal practices.

## **Organizational Objectives**

The fulcrum of any organizational culture is in its design to attain organizational objectives. Organizational objectives are short-term and medium-term goals that an organization seeks to accomplish. An organization's objectives will play a large part in developing organizational policies and determining the allocation of organizational resources. Achievement of objectives helps an organization reach its overall strategic goals. Setting objectives can involve many factors. You can set a single objective for your organization or multiple objectives. You set target deadlines for the accomplishment of objectives. Other critical factors include who controls the decisions that will affect objective achievement. The decision-makers must be committed to the objectives (Laplan, 2013).

Organizational politics will come into play, with differing interests supporting the advance of objectives that are best for them. This usually results in bargaining between various interest groups in the organization, which results in objectives that are satisfactory to the key organizational groups, such as sales, research and development, marketing, and production. You have to take into account factors that can hinder setting and achieving objectives, such as time, institutional, financial, and environmental constraints.

Objectives of the organization (business goals) are stated by management before any planning or decision making activities. Every organization is structured using all available resources prime among which is the office staffs in order to achieve objectives set by managers (Burns, 2012). They are an expression of associations and feedback with the environment. Objectives have a strong influence on the interaction with the environment. Environment affects the determination of the organization's objectives. Objectives should satisfy all the participants of the organization. Managers determine the basic objectives of the organization (one single direction of the organization), promote proper planning, they are a source of motivation for the members of the organization, provide an effective

mechanism for monitoring and evaluation (provide a basis for the formulation of standards).

The role of the manager is to identify priorities and concretization of goals. Objectives must be: Specific, Measurable Ambitious, Realistic, Timely (SMART). Every organization strives to achieve multiple objectives simultaneously, which form the so-called: targets beam. Size of targets beam, its composition and structure are dependent on many factors, but mainly from the object and mission of the organization that it has to fulfil for the participants and the environment.

### **Organizational Values**

Organizational values guide organization's thinking and actions pattern. Organizational values in terms of dimensions: pro-social, market, financial, achievement, and artistic. Values are organization's corporate culture. When it comes to culture and values, actions speak louder than words. To figure out organizational values, see what people spend their time on and what they talk about within the organization. Organizational values are abstract ideas that guide organizational thinking and actions. Organization values represent the foundation on which the company is formed and how the office staffs are expected to operate within the allowed values (Koplan, 2012). Defining an organization's unique values is the first and most critical step in its formation and development. In order to understand and identify the values of an organization and to gauge their influence on the company, managers must carefully examine how that organization operates (Burns, 2011).

While it may be helpful to listen to people describe what they believe the values of the organization are, it is far better to observe those people in their day-to-day activities. Note how office staffs spend their time, how they communicate within the organization and how they go about their daily job responsibilities and tasks. Although values are often difficult to define, they are usually revealed by office staffs' actions and thinking, how they set their priorities, and how they allocate their time and energy. An office staff's actions are more revealing than their words (Burn, 2013).

### **Methodology**

The research design adopted was the correlational research design. The study adopted 200 population including principal officers of Rivers State Universities and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni Port Harcourt. The sample size of 110 using the Stratified random technique. One hundred copies or 90% were duly completed and returned and that was used in the analysis. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation statistical tool. The Hypotheses were tested using regression model.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What are the various types of organizational culture in universities in Rivers State?

**Table 1:** Answer to Research Question 1

s/n Item	N=100	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
My institution's values are written in the offices of all the principal officers		2.7700	.48524	Agreed
My organization has a home grown work culture that is unique to us		2.6600	1.31518	Agreed
My institution's objectives are clear for all to understand		2.7900	1.10367	Agreed
My organization operates in norms and values that have not been altered over the years.		2.7300	1.51604	Agreed
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.73</b>	<b>1.11</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

From table 1 above, item 1 with mean score of 2.770 and STD .48524 which implies that the respondents agreed that their institution's values are written in the offices of all the principal officers. In item 2, mean score of 2.66 and STD 1.312 implies that the respondents agreed that their organization has a home grown work culture different from others. In item 3 mean score 2.79 and STD 1.104 implies that the respondents agreed that their institution's objectives are clear for all to understand. In item 4 mean score of 2.7 and STD 1.52 indicate that the respondents agreed that their organization operate in norms and values that have not been altered over a long time.

Thus, aggregate mean score of  $2.73 > 2.5$  showed that respondents agreed that there various types of organizational culture in educational institutions in Rivers State.

**Research Question 2:** What is the relationship between organizational norms and office staff performance in universities in Rivers State?

**Table 2:** Answer to Research Question 2

s/n item	N=100	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
My institution does not change in improved motivation techniques		1.3300	.47258	Disagree
My institution does not renege in finding new ways of doing things.		2.6100	1.14362	Agree
My institutions has policies that impact on the job positively		1.1700	.37753	Disagree
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>1.70</b>	<b>.664</b>	<b>Disagreed</b>

From table 2, above item 5 with mean score of 1.33 and STD .473 indicates that the respondents disagreed that their institution do not change in improved motivation techniques. In item 6 mean score of 2.61 and STD 1.14 indicate that the respondents agreed that their institutions do not renege in finding new ways of doing things. In item 7, mean score of 1.17 and STD .376 implies that the respondents disagreed that their institutions have policies that impact on the job positively.

Thus, aggregate mean score of 1.70<2.5 showed that respondents disagreed on the relationship between organizational norms and office staff performance in universities in Rivers State.

**Research Question 3:** What is the relationship between organizational objectives and office staff performance in educational institutions in Rivers State?

**Table 3:** Answer to Research Question 3

s/n item	N=100	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
My institution sets goals that are easy for staff to understand and carry out		2.6800	1.33730	Agree
Objectives are hardly known whether long, short or long term		2.8500	1.12254	Agree
My institution celebrates attainment of objectives by staff		2.0100	1.17632	Disagree
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>2.51</b>	<b>1.402</b>	<b>Agreed</b>

In table 3, item 8 mean score of 2.68 and STD 1.38 indicate that respondents agreed that their institution sets goals that are easy for staff to understand carry out. In item 9 mean score of 2.86 and STD 1.123 indicate that the respondents opined that objectives are hardly

known whether long, short or long term. In item 10 mean score of 2.01 and STD 1.18 shows that the respondents disagreed that their institution celebrates attainment of objectives by staff.

Thus, aggregate mean score of 2.51>2.50 showed that respondents agreed that there is a relationship between organizational objectives and office staff performance in educational institutions in Rivers State

**Testing of Hypotheses 1:** There is no significant relationship between organizational norms and office staff performance.

**Table 5:** Regression analysis of the significant relationship between organizational norms and office staff performance

Model Summary								
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate				
1	.579 <sup>a</sup>	.336	.315	.40160				
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>								
Model			Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F		
1	Regression		7.827	3	2.609	16.177		
	Residual		15.483	96	.161			
	Total		23.310	99				
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>								
Model			Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T		
			B	Std. Error	Beta			
	My institution's values are written in the offices of all the principal officers		.987	.110		8.978		
	My organization has a home grown work culture that is unique to us		-.062	.046	.169	739		
	My institution's objectives are clear for all to understand		-.027	.049	.062	.554		

	My organization operates in norms and values that have not been altered over the years.	.269	.044	.618	6.121	.000
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Table 5 above shows r-value of .579<sup>a</sup>, r-square value of .336, adjusted r-square value of .315 and sig. level of .000 <.05 shows that there is a significant relationship between organizational norms and office staff performance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

**Testing of Hypotheses 2:** There is no significant relationship between organizational objectives and office staff performance

**Table 6:** Regression analysis of the significant relationship between organizational objectives and office staff performance

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.738 <sup>a</sup>	.545	.535	.32214		
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression			12.044	2	6.022
	Residual			10.066	97	.104
	Total			22.110	99	
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error		
My institution does not change in improved motivation techniques	.617	.123		5.024	.000
	.311	.029	.739	10.768	.000
	.075	.086	.060	.878	.000

Table 6 above shows r-value of .738<sup>a</sup>, r-square value of .545, adjusted r-square value of .535, std error value of .32214 and sig level of .000 <.05 shows there is a significant relationship between organizational objectives and office staff performance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

**Testing of Hypotheses 3:** There is no significant relationship between organizational values and office staff performance

**Table 6:** Regression analysis of significant relationship between organizational values and office staff performance

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.704 <sup>a</sup>	.496	.485	.88784	
ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square
1	Regression	75.099		2	37.550
	Residual	76.461		97	.788
	Total	151.560		99	
Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
My organization has priority departments	.276	.233		1.183	.000
	.579	.080	.525	7.275	.000
	.514	.076	.489	6.773	.000

Table 6 above shows r-value of  $.704^a$ , R-square of  $.496$ , adjusted R square value of  $.485$ , std error estimate of  $.88284$  and sig. level of  $.000 < .05$  shows that that there is a significant relationship between organizational values and office staff performance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study are hereunder discussed:

#### Relationship between Organizational Norms and Office Staff Performance

From 5 above, hypothesis one shows f-value that there is a significant relationship between organizational norms and office staff performance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. The respondents were of the opinion that for office staff performance to be at its peak point, organizational norms is required. This affirms the position of Kpalan, (2013) stating that, an organisational culture which expresses the values of the organisation in practice is key to drive the organisation forward in support of its mission, vision and strategy.

#### Relationship between Organizational Objectives and Office Staff Performance

From table 6 above, hypothesis 2, shows there is a significant relationship between organizational objectives and office staff performance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. The respondents are of the opinion that organizational objectives does not lead to office staff performance. This could be traced to the nature of the institutions investigated as they are used to already established goals which is sub-consciously known to them. This contradicts (Laplan, 2013) stating that critical factors which include who controls the decisions that will affect objective achievement. The decision-makers and office staffs must be committed to the objectives.

## **Relationship between Organizational Values and Office Staff Performance**

Table 6, hypothesis three shows that that there is a significant relationship between organizational values and office staff performance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. The stance of the respondents was supported by (Koplan, 2012) by stating organization values represent the foundation on which the company is formed and how the office staffs are expected to operate represent the foundation on which the company is formed and how the office staffs are expected to operate.

## **Summary of Findings**

The findings of the study are hereunder itemized:

- Hypothesis one showed that there is a significant relationship between organizational norms and office staff performance.
- Hypothesis two result showed that there is a significant relationship between organizational objectives and office staff performance.
- Hypothesis three showed that there is a significant relationship between organizational values and office staff performance.

## **Conclusion**

Organizational culture is the hallmark of organizational conduct. It is very key for universities to establish norms, objectives and values that will drive their staff performance. The culture at universities sets expectations for how staff behave and work together, and how well they function as a team. In this way, culture can define the boundaries among teams, guide decision-making, and improve workflow and task delivery. Organizational culture is therefore required to direct staff performance towards attaining organizational goals.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations have been reached:

1. Administrators of university organizations in Rivers State should ensure that their organizational norms are maintained and made known to all staff since norms are related to office staff performance.
2. Administrators of universities in Rivers State should ensure that objectives set for organizational goal attainment are made known to staff from time to time to avoid over familiarity and monotony.
3. Organizational values should be seen topmost in the office staff performance roles. The values of the organizations should reflect on the office staffs.

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