INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT RESEARCH
P-ISSN: 1118-4256, E-ISSN:3034-4327
Vol. 5| No.1 | June 2024
Page No.: 1-25

FLEXIBLE TIME AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF ACADEMIC STAFF OF UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH NIGERIA

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Abstract
The study focused on the nexus between flexible time and communication skills of academic staff of universities in South-South region of Nigeria. The study employed the multi-stage sampling technique in selecting the samples. For the population, eighteen (18) universities made up the primary units, and the academic staff of the universities represented the secondary units which vary across the institutions under study, with a total population of 12,158. For the sample size, the Cochran's determination method was used to get a total sample size of 384. As a result, the 384 academic staff was proportionally allocated to the 18 universities using Bourley proportion allocation technique. With the aid of quantitative method (questionnaire), the data for the study were derived, where the said questionnaire was designed through google form and distributed through social media cum online. The Median and the spearman's correlation technique were used and the results showed that there is a high moderate positive significant relationship existing between flexible work and the self-development of the academic staff of universities in South-South Nigeria. And having met the condition of providing subsidized internet data bundle for staff, with policies for implementation, it was recommended that university authorities should ensure

a smooth and timely process of communication from one cadre to another and from one department to another for more flexibility with the use of social media platforms, so that staff wherever they are, will be well communicated and informed.

Key Words: Flexible Time; Communication Skills; Academic Staff; Universities.

1. Introduction

Flexible time usually refers to a scheduling programme for full-time employees which allows them to choose their starting and finishing time daily, provided they complete a stipulated number of hours (Thompson, Payne, Alexander, Gaskins & Henning, 2022).

An organization is never static; it evolves in response to its changing technological and business environment, and these alterations may lead to a change in work performed, the time and how employees' performance is obtained in the organization. As cited by Onyeizugbe, Nduka and Enaini (2019), Elke and Beblo (2004) opined that flexible time or flexible working hours are said to increase productivity and improve the international competitiveness of firms, job satisfaction and commitment of the employees. Onyeizugbe et al. (2019) further cited Njiru, Kiambati and Kamau (2015), and posited that flexible time or flexible hour is defined as the ability to choose the start and finish time of the working day within core hours.

Martin and Vandewalle (2020), citing Brown and Mcnamara (2011), and Golden (1998) opined that the flexibility of work time refers to programmes, policies and practices initiated by employers that allow workers, at least, some freedom of choice in adjusting the length or scheduling of the work time to meet their preference. Employees may be required to be present during certain 'core hours', which are usually fixed at a period between the latest permissible starting time and earliest permissible finishing time. Lutz (2012) opined that if a company has core hours between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m, the employees then have the choice to start anytime between 6:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.,

and the choice to leave anytime between 3:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., provided they work eight hours. Another variation has employees arrive at 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., have a minimum one and half hour lunch break between 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., and finish between 3:30 pm and 6:30 p.m., again provided eight hours are worked.

In the context of the study, communication skills formed the nexus to link flexible time with the academic staff of universities in South-South Nigeria, as the main focus of this study. It is as a result of the above explanation in the literature that gave rise for this study. Therefore, the objective of this study is to ascertain the extent to which flexible time relates to the communication skills of the academic staff of universities in South-South Nigeria. The hypothesis to be tested in this study, which is stated in null form (Ho), read as thus: No positive relationship between flexible time and the communication skills of the academic staff of universities in South-South Nigeria.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conceptual Review

Flexible Time

Kossek and Lautsch (2018), citing Allen, Johnson, Kiburz and Shockley (2013), defined flexible time as employment scheduling practices that are designed to give workers better work–life control over when and how continuously work is done.

Umukoro (2019) defined Flexitime as “any work schedule that gives employees daily choice in the timing between work and non-work activities”. Employees are required to work four hours of ‘core’ time. They are then free to choose their remaining four hours of work from among flexible time blocks.

Flexible working hours or 'flexitime' increases individual autonomy in work scheduling. Early risers may choose to come in early and leave at 4 pm, while late sleepers may choose to start at 10 am and leave at 6 pm. In between these two extremes are opportunities to attend to such personal affairs as dental appointments, home emergencies, visiting the bank and so on. There are several types of flexitime schedules which vary according to the amount of scheduling flexibility that is allowed. These include flexi-hour; gliding time; variable working hours; and maxiflex:

Flexi-hour: Workers choose starting and stopping times, which must be adhered to for a set period, from among lists provided by the organization.

Gliding time: Workers may vary their starting and finishing times daily, but must work a set number of hours per day.

Variable working hours: Workers are free to choose hours irrespective of core time, provided they contract a set number of hours with their supervisors.

Maxiflex: Workers have the freedom to vary their hours daily irrespective of core times. Maxiflex is similar to a compressed work week.

Like other alternative work scheduling systems, flexitime has both advantages and disadvantages. Workers found that the flexibility afforded them under flexitime systems increases the amount of time they can spend together with their families, allows the scheduling of work hours to avoid commuting difficulties and provides feelings of control over the working environment. For employers, flexitime provides ease of scheduling, reduced overtime costs, and higher productivity because of an increase in morale. It is an effective recruiting tool.

For employees, there seem to be few, if any, disadvantages of flexitime systems. Employers, however, sometimes found that overhead costs based on variation in hours increase, unions object to the decrease in overtime pay attributable to certain flexitime programmes (such as maxi-flex) and many supervisors experience difficulty in managing a flexitime workforce.

Lonnie (2011) cited in Golden (2012) opined that the economic crisis and the global jobs pact have put working-time issues back on the agenda; recent trends such as technological advancements enabling teleworking have contributed to the creation of a 24-hour organization where the separation line between work and non-work time is becoming increasingly indistinct. This has been coupled with a significant shift away from the normal or standard working week towards non-standard work schedules, it also considered the development of firms for the adjustment of actual working hours to market/customers' demands without diminishing work's well-being and practices not affecting firm performance (Hashim, Ullah & Khan, 2017).

Every Manufacturing company wants to break even with their products in the marketplace, wanting it to be consumed by all, producing quality products and making sure that these products are always available for their client on demand. These manufacturing firms operate in different kinds of flexible timing for their employees to work with so that production is not stopped or hampered for any reason. Flexible forms of work can help organizations to improve customer service by satisfying employees (Hashim et al., 2017). The performance of employees in a flexible working environment includes Productivity, customer satisfaction, job satisfaction, employee turnover, employee commitment and retention. Productivity is critical for the long-term competitiveness and profitability of the organization (Kipkoech 2018). In some

manufacturing firms, employees are to work round the clock for products to be available; the flexible time is made available for the employees at the time of employment. Employee performance is the record of outcomes achieved for each job function, during a specified period (Austin-Egole, Iheriohanma & Nwokorie, 2020).

Communication Skills

Communication is the extent to which information about the job is transmitted by an organization to its members and among members of the organization. Communication is needed to establish and disseminate the goals of the enterprise (Edewor, 2023).

In tertiary institutions, the competencies and skills university management possesses will enable academic staff to exhibit work behaviours appropriate and relevant to the performance of the job. It is further theorize that lecturers are likely to be more academically sound and productive if their performance is rewarded fairly and justly, assuming that the reward received has value to them, as argued by the expectancy theory of Victor Vroom in 1964. For academic staff of universities as social beings, communication skills have a vital role to play as they redirect all academic activities aimed at achieving the objectives of the university (Ogundipe, Adetayo, Bankole & Akinbowale, 2020).

Ansah (2020), citing Ada, Alver and Fatma (2008), asserted that effective communication skills improve the academic staff's positive perception of organizational justice which invariably improves academic performance, whereas poor communication skill among university management can lead to low commitment to performance among lecturers, especially when they lack informational justice on how rewards are allotted to individual lecturers irrespective of department or faculty.

Communication skill integrates different departments and functions in the institution, being the human activity that connects lecturers and management and creates relationship within and outside the university environment (Leask, 2015).

Traditionally, the Management of tertiary institutions spends a lot of time communicating in one form or another through face-to-face, mass meetings, faculty board meetings, memos, discussions, notice boards, public lectures, departmental meetings and lecturers' handbooks (Kilonzo, 2019). Recently, lecturers have found that more and more aspect of their academic job is centered on communication as it relates to organizational justice which is assumed to be the mutual exchange of understanding, which results in effective and efficient academic performance in the institution. It is the role of management to communicate with the academic staff on the day-to-day administration of the institution.

Effective communication skill between university management and academic staff is vital since lecturers need to know what is required of them. University management is expected to provide a clear job description for every academic staff which would give lecturers immediate access to the necessary tools to accomplish each course assigned to them. Informational justice determines the extent communication covers all activities that the management performs to improve academic staff performance (Ezati, Okurut & Sentamu, 2014; Phan & Dang, 2017; Tang, 2020).

Failure of heads, deans or entire management of any university to coordinate a perfect and smooth flow of communication interaction among academic staff and outside the university environment can create and facilitate low performance with a high sense of disarray and boredom on the part of lecturers (Trachtenberg, Kauvar & Bogue, 2016; Akafia, 2018). In tertiary institutions in Nigeria, there are unwanted interferences that

can distort a message and often remain a potential threat to effective communication since it can interfere with the accuracy of a message being communicated.

Nevertheless, communication skills involve listening and speaking as well as reading and writing. For effective teaching, a teacher needs to be extremely experienced in all these areas. Teachers with good communication skills always make things easier and more comprehensible (Freddie Silver). Effective communication skills are truly essential for a teacher in transmitting education, classroom management and interaction with students in the class. The teacher has to teach the students to have different thinking approaches. To teach following the ability and capability of the students, a teacher needs to adopt such skills of communication which motivate the students toward their learning process (Sng Bee, 2012). Good communication skills of a teacher are the basic needs for academic success of students, and professional success of life. Teacher communicates more instructions orally in the classroom to students. Teachers with poor communication skills may cause the failure of students to learn and promote their academics. Students need to understand what is right, and what is wrong and it depends upon the communication skills of teachers which they adopt in the classroom (Khan, Khan, Zia-Ul-Islam & Khan, 2017; Bambaeeroo & Shokrpour, 2017; Stronge, 2018). Good communications minimize the potential of unkind feeling during the process of teaching. For learning, the learner must be attentive toward their teacher during the lecture. It is, therefore, recommended that teachers communicate clearly and understandably. Communication is a dynamic process which needs the attention of mind and courage to face the other and effectively convey his/her message. The communication process is successful when we deliver the message clearly and understandably. Effective communicator needs to convey and accept his/her message in all kinds of situations and circumstances. Good communication is considered a strong tool `for effectiveness in the

teaching profession (Srivastava, NA) as a variety of skills are needed for good teaching (Sharma, 2016; Khan et al., 2017).

A study conducted by Ehindero and Ajibade, (2000) indicated that for effective teaching, a teacher requires good communication skills such as good communication, good classroom management, updating knowledge and maintaining personality (Ibrahim, 2019; Abiodun, Ogundeji & Asanre, 2020; Amadi, Edo & Ajeola, 2021). No one can teach effectively until having these basic skills of teaching (Sharma, 2016). Different studies showed that there is a significant correlation between communication skills and supervisor's perception of job performance (Khan et al., 2017). Furthermore, Student's character-building and academic background depends upon the professional attitude of teachers. If teachers adopt a positive professional attitude towards the students in their academic and as well as their social achievements, then students can easily promote their academic level. The teacher has the responsibility to teach and practically prepare students for the purpose that they can cope with all types of situations. It also comes under the responsibility of the teacher to behave as a role model to the students (Khan et al., 2017). Communication means the process which one adopts while sharing his / her views with others. For a teacher, it is necessary to have good communication skills for effective learning of the students. Teachers need good communication skills to facilitate the students' and achievement of professional goals. The effectiveness of teaching is not dependent on the teaching technicality alone but on the method adopted by the teacher while teaching to the students. Teachers need clear communication for a clear understanding of students. It is also needed for the teacher to understand first himself before teaching students (Sharma, 2016; Khan et al., 2017).

Flexible Time and Communication Skills of Academic Staff (Employees) Nexus

Communication skills involve listening and speaking as well as reading and writing. For effective teaching, a teacher needs to be highly skilled in all these areas. Teachers with good communication always make things easier and more understandable (Silver, 2018). Effective communication skills are really important for a teacher in transmitting education, classroom management and interaction with students in the class. The teacher has to teach the students to have different thinking approaches. To teach following the ability and capability of the students, a teacher needs to adopt such skills of communication which motivate the students toward their learning process (Sng Bee, 2012).

Generally, flexibility is introduced through negotiation, reflecting the embeddedness of trade unions in the sector, and most flexibility was managed internally. Management leads the way here, however, and ICTs have strengthened their position. It was also clear that where agreement could not be reached, management was prepared to seek other solutions. In particular, where sectoral agreements did not allow certain forms of working, such as night-time working, management bypassed those agreements through outsourcing. There was also some evidence that new workers were being employed on different (and less favourable) terms and conditions of service. There are national differences in this sector, but these relate to the pace of change rather than the overall direction. Regulatory differences lead to different management solutions. For example, light labour regulation allows management to introduce flexible systems internally. In other countries where regulation is relatively strong management bypasses these arrangements through outsourcing (Peters & Lam, 2015; Wilton, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Task Technology Fit (TTF) theory was proposed by Goodhue and Thompson (1995) and focused on analyzing and explicating the effectiveness of information technology. The theory argues that technologies are tools that can be used to carry out various functions by individuals. Therefore, technologies are actions that are taken by persons and help to convert inputs into outputs. The theory further shows the association between Task Technology Fit (TTF) and technology utilization as well as the association between TTF and individual performance. Goodhue and Thompson further indicated that ICT enhances individual performance and the performance of an organization if the functions of technology align with the features of the tasks to be done by the users within a firm. For technology to benefit a user in undertaking functions, TTF must exist. This theory therefore informs the independent variable which is flexible time, and universities that have invested in ICT can adopt it to enhance employees' performance.

This study therefore is anchored on this theory because it shows the association between Task Technology Fit (TTF) and technology utilization, as well as the association between TTF and individual performance. And the theory thus informs the independent variable which is flexible time and it enhances employee performance.

Empirical Review

Ma (2021) investigated telework triggered by an epidemic and effective communication improvement of telecommuting in workgroups during COVID-19. A study was done in the USA, which aimed to provide insights for organizations in terms of effective telecommuting communication. The study combined desk research with synthesized data from various sources. It revealed that managers and employees are encouraged to improve on their communication from several perspectives since telework

will probably be realized soon. At the same time, companies and organizations should take quick action as a response to the changing pattern of work.

Demirdag (2021) studied communication skills and time management as predictors of student motivation. Its objective was on free time management and communication skills as predictors of university students' motivation. The study used correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis. It was, therefore, found that there are positive and meaningful relationships between students' motivation and the subscales of communication skills and free time management. The regression analysis showed that students' motivation is predicted by their free time management and communication skills.

The eLearning Africa & EdTech Hub (2020) conducted a study on the effect of COVID-19 on education in Africa and its implications for the use of technology. It focused on the roles of technology in effective communication, with the use of descriptive survey design and graphs, as well as simple percentages to analyze the questionnaire; the study found that specific technologies and forms of social media are particularly helpful technological tools in effective communication during the COVID-19 pandemic. The recommendations apply to different stakeholders: government, educational institutions, staff, parents and students.

Onyeizugbe, Nduka and Enaini (2019) examined the flexibility of time and employee performance in manufacturing firms in Anambra State of Nigeria. It ascertained the extent of the relationship that exists between flexible timing and employee performance in manufacturing firms in Anambra State. And to ascertain the relationship between self-rostering and employee retention in manufacturing firms in Anambra State, the descriptive Survey Research Design, and Pearson moment

correlations co-efficient were used to source and analyze the data. The study revealed that there is a significant relationship between self-rostering and employee retention. And flexible timing has a significant positive relationship with employee performance. Therefore, management of the studied manufacturing firms should imbibe self-rostering as part of the flexible timing procedure: it tends to enhance the employees' commitment to their jobs which leads to their retention in the organization, and it brings about good quality products manufactured.

Shonubi and Akintaro (2016) investigated the impact of effective communication on organizational performance in South-West, Nigeria. The objective was to determine the impact of effective communication on organizational performance, reviewing existing journals, and the study validated the relationship of synergy between communication approach and efficient organizational performance. It showed that there can still be more room for improvement in larger firms.

Methodology

The study employed the descriptive research survey design in order to determine the relationship between the studied variables. For the population, the study is made up of the academic staff of eighteen (18) selected public and private universities in the South-South region of Nigeria, made up of a total of Twelve Thousand, One Hundred and Fifty-Eight (12,158) academic staff.

Table 1: Population of Academic Staff in Selected Public and Private Universities in South-South, Nigeria

S/N	Institutions	Year	State	Type	No. of Academic Staff	% to the Total
1.	University of Uyo	1991	Akwa-Ibom	Federal	1202	9.89
2.	University of Calabar	1975	Cross River	Federal	2293	18.86
3.	University of Benin	1970	Edo	Federal	1840	15.13
4.	University of Port Harcourt	1977	Rivers	Federal	1238	10.18
5.	Federal University, Otuoke	2011	Bayelsa	Federal	428	3.52
6.	Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun	2007	Delta	Federal	189	1.55
7.	Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Amassoma	2000	Bayelsa	State	954	7.85
8.	Delta State University, Abraka	1992	Delta	State	645	5.31
9.	AkwaIbom State University, IkotAkpanden	2010	AkwaIbom	State	488	4.01
10.	Cross River State University of Technology, Calabar	2004	Cross River	State	444	3.65
11.	Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma	I980	Edo	State	534	4.39
12.	Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt	1977	Rivers	State	717	5.90
13.	Obong University, Obong Ntak	2007	Akwa-Ibom	Private	109	0.90
14.	Novene University, Ogume Kwale	2005	Delta	Private	179	1.47
15.	Igbinedion University, Okada, Benin City	1999	Edo	Private	451	3.71
16.	Benson Idahosa University, Benin City	2002	Edo	Private	193	1.59
17.	Rhema University Obeama Asa	2009	Rivers	Private	76	0.63
18.	Arthur Javis University, Akpoyubo	2016	Cross River	Private	178	1.46
	Total				**12,158**	100.00

Source: *Nigerian University System Statistical Digest 2019. Retrieved in November 2023*

Statistically, the sample size of the total population of 12,158 academic staff selected from the 18 Universities, through Cochran (1963) method, as the second stage sampling, determined the sample size of the study as follows:

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2\, pq}{(e)^2} \quad (1)$$

Where

n_0 = Desired Sample size

Z^2 = the abscissa of the normal curve that cuts off an area

e = desired level of precision

p = the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population. This can be assumed as p=0.5

q = 1 – p

the value of Z form the normal distribution table is 1.96, we assume p to be 0.5 and q = 1-0.5 =0.5, and e = 0.05

$$n_0 = \frac{1.96^2\,(0.5)(0.5)}{(0.05)^2} = 384.16$$

n_0= 384

Table 2: Sample Size of Academic Staff in Selected Public and Private Universities in South-South, Nigeria

S/N	Institutions	Year	State	Type	Sample Size	% to the Total
1.	University of Uyo	1991	Akwa-Ibom	Federal	38	9.90
2.	University of Calabar	1975	Cross River	Federal	72	18.75
3.	University of Benin	1970	Edo	Federal	58	15.10
4.	University of Port Harcourt	1977	Rivers	Federal	39	10.16
5.	Federal University, Otuoke	2011	Bayelsa	Federal	14	3.65
6.	Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun	2007	Delta	Federal	6	1.56
7.	Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Amassoma	2000	Bayelsa	State	30	7.81
8.	Delta State University, Abraka	1992	Delta	State	21	5.47
9.	AkwaIbom State University, IkotAkpanden	2010	AkwaIbom	State	15	3.91
10.	Cross River State University of Technology, Calabar	2004	Cross River	State	14	3.65
11.	Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma	I980	Edo	State	17	4.43
12.	Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt	1977	Rivers	State	23	5.99
13.	Obong University, Obong Ntak	2007	Akwa-Ibom	Private	3	0.78
14.	Novene University, Ogume Kwale	2005	Delta	Private	6	1.56
15.	Igbinedion University, Okada, Benin City	1999	Edo	Private	14	3.65
16.	Benson Idahosa University, Benin City	2002	Edo	Private	6	1.56
17.	Rhema University Obeama Asa	2009	Rivers	Private	2	0.52
18.	Arthur Javis University, Akpoyubo	2016	Cross River	Private	6	1.56
Total				**384**		

Source: Field Survey (2023)

Method of Data Collection

The primary method of data collection was used to for the designed questionnaire and distributed online through google form to the various academic staff (respondents) in their respective universities. And they were constrained to choose from only the prearranged answers. In the questionnaire designed, there were two sections, that is, Section A, which is based on the bio-data information of the academic staff

(respondents), while the Section B is made up of the questions about the dependent and independent variables set-up in a five-point Likert scale, also known as forced-response category with a structured pattern, and it ranges from Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Disagree (3), Strongly Disagree (4) and Undecided (5).

In line with the selected sample size, totalities of 384 copies of the structured questionnaire, typed in Google form, were distributed to the academic staff (respondents) of the universities online, and were duly responded to. This was made possible due to the ever-present usage of information and communication technology (ICT) tools.

From the analysis of the generated data from the field, the results are herein presented, with the responses analyzed in line with the median response to each of the Likert item.

Result and Discussion

Table 3: Results and Decisions from the Descriptive analysis of the Likert Items

S/No	Variables	N	Median	SD	Decision
A.	**Flexible Time**				
1	I am satisfied with working at home and space	**384**	**2**	**0.992**	**Agree**
2	I have the freedom in my work to schedule my tasks	**384**	**2**	**1.002**	**Agree**
3	I have the opportunity to make arrangements and compress (Expedite) my week to have time off my work	**384**	**2**	**1.212**	**Agree**
4	As an academic staff, I am allowed to do my tasks away from the university premises	**384**	**2**	**1.357**	**Agree**
5	Working in my space and time has increased my interaction with my student's research work.	**384**	**2**	**0.627**	**Agree**

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B.	**Communication Skills**				
6	It has facilitated and brought about a high level of interaction skills	**384**	**2**	**0.794**	**Agree**
7	Lecturers are often updated by the management on every event in the institution	**384**	**2**	**0.801**	**Agree**
8	The absence of an information gap enhances the lecturer's performance in the institution	**384**	**2**	**0.932**	**Agree**
9	There is a high level of understanding between management and staff due to the management's manner of appealing to lecturers while at meetings.	**384**	**2**	**1.077**	**Agree**
10	Lecturers are often informed on time on matters before decisions are taken	**384**	**2**	**1.072**	**Agree**

Source: Author's Computation, 2023

From the above table, the results showed that the average answer for each of the construct is AGREE. This implies that that there is a positive relationship between flexible time and communication skills of academic staff in selected public and private Universities in South-South region of Nigeria. Even though the positive relationships are is not high enough due to the level of agreement generated as a result of the study.

Test of Hypothesis

H_0: There is no positive relationship between flexible time and the communication skills of the academic staff of universities in South-South Nigeria.

Table 4: Correlations

			Flexible_Time	Communication_Skills
Spearman's rho	Flexible_Time	Correlation Coefficient	1	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	
		N	384	
	Communication_Skills	Correlation Coefficient	.246**	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	.
		N	384	384

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS 29 Output, 2023

The results in the table above showed a correlation value of 0.246, and this implies that there is a low positive relationship between flexible time and the communication skills of the academic staff of universities in South-South Nigeria. From the above result, since the computed p-value (0.001) is less than the critical p-value (0.05), there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative hypothesis.

Looking at the findings of this study therefore, the result showed that there is a low positive relationship between flexible time and the communication skills of the academic staff of universities in South-South Nigeria.

Conclusion and Recommendation

With the objective of this study seeking to determine the degree of relationship that exists between flexible time and communication skills of academic staff of universities in South-South Nigeria. Looking at the data generated for the hypothesis formulated, and with the statistical method employed, the objective of this study was consequently achieved. The result of this study has therefore added to the existing body of academic

knowledge on flexible time, even though the existing knowledge were not from universities and it brings out the contemporary nature of the study being the first to be applied in the relationship between flexible time and communication skills of academic staff of universities in South-South Nigeria. Lastly, this study equally showed that there is a low positive relationship between flexible time and the communication skills of the academic staff of universities in South-South Nigeria.

Having met the condition of providing subsidized internet data bundle for staff, with policies for implementation, it is therefore recommended that university authorities should ensure a smooth and timely process of communication from one cadre to another and from one department to another for more flexibility with the use of social media platforms, so that staff wherever they are, will be well communicated and informed.

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