

Effect of University Regulations on Research Performance of Tertiary Institutions in Enugu State

Kenneth Ogomegbunam Obodoagu

Department of Business Administration, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu State

Abstract

The study on the effect of University Regulations on Research Performance of Tertiary Institutions in Enugu State, explores the impact of university regulations on research outcomes in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study highlights the importance of regulations in fostering order and quality assurance within tertiary educational institutions. However, the actual influence of these regulations on research performance remains unclear. The research aims to assess the relationship between regulatory frameworks and various aspects of research, including academic staff engagement, student safety, and ethical research conduct. The study also examines the challenges posed by restrictive regulations, bureaucratic barriers, and potential loopholes compromising research integrity. By identifying these issues, the research seeks to propose strategies for policy reforms that optimize regulatory structures while nurturing a conducive environment for academic research and ethical practices. The study's significance lies in its potential to inform policymakers, university administrators, and academic researchers in refining regulations, aligning institutional policies with research goals, and ultimately enhancing research productivity and innovation in Enugu State's tertiary education sector.

Keywords *University Regulations; Research Performance; Tertiary Institutions; Research Productivity; Enugu State*

Citation Obodoagu, K. O. (2024). Effect of University Regulations on Research Performance of Tertiary Institutions in Enugu State. *Global Journal of Education and Humanities*, 6(1), 1-14
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.12577444>



Introduction

Regulations are fundamental to the way institutions and people function. It helps to foster order in the community at large. The impact of university regulations on the research performance of tertiary institutions in Enugu State is a critical area warranting investigation (Chikezie, Dibua and Chima, 2016). Generally, tertiary educational institutions operate within a framework of regulations governing research practices, funding allocation, academic autonomy, and administrative policies (Kazoka & Wema, 2020). While designed to provide structure and quality assurance, the actual influence of these regulations on research outcomes remains unclear.

Worldwide, research is considered as fundamental venture that is used to generate practical knowledge and theories. Similarly, research is viewed and recognized as a process that is used in arriving at dependable solutions to problems facing communities. On the other hand, Chikwe, Ogidi, & Nwachukwu (2015) argue that research is directed towards the discovering of the relationships that exist among the phenomena of the world in which we live. Understanding the intricate relationship between these regulations and research performance is crucial (Ebong & Gilbert, 2018; Olokundun, et al., 2019). It involves assessing how regulatory frameworks impact the creative freedom of faculty members, their active engagement in research activities, and the overall productivity of scholarly output. Moreover, the influence of regulations on student safety within research environments and the ethical conduct of research also requires scrutiny (Tingo & Mseti, 2022).

Unique institutional structures and regional dynamics necessitate a focused examination of the alignment between existing regulations and the practical needs of researchers (Kazoka & Wema, 2020). This assessment includes an analysis of institutional support mechanisms, potential barriers hindering research performance, and opportunities for refining regulatory frameworks to foster a conducive research environment (Chikezie, Dibua and Chima, 2016). A comprehensive investigation into the effect of university regulations on research performance aims to offer insights crucial for policy reforms and institutional strategies (Olokundun, et al., 2019). By identifying gaps, challenges, and opportunities within the regulatory landscape, this study seeks to contribute to the enhancement of Enugu State's tertiary education system, nurturing a culture conducive to robust academic research and ethical scholarly practices.

Statement of the Problem

Enugu State's tertiary institutions face a myriad of challenges intertwined with regulatory frameworks impacting research performance. This study endeavors to dissect these challenges within the context of existing regulations, aiming to identify critical issues influencing the research landscape. Foremost among these challenges is the restrictive nature of regulatory frameworks. The rigidity in research funding allocation mechanisms and publication guidelines often hampers the creative professional freedom of academic staff. These regulations might inadvertently stifle innovation and limit the exploration of unconventional yet promising research avenues, thereby hindering the institutions' research output.

Additionally, there exists a palpable disconnect between regulatory compliance and academic staff engagement in groundbreaking research endeavors. The bureaucratic barriers imposed by administrative policies might deter enthusiastic participation and collaboration among faculty members, affecting the institutions' overall research productivity and impact. Moreover, the nexus between regulatory structures and student safety within research environments poses a substantial concern. Insufficient alignment between research practices guided by regulations and comprehensive student safety protocols might expose students to potential hazards, raising ethical and safety issues within the institutions.

Furthermore, ethical considerations in research practice are often influenced by these regulatory frameworks. The current regulations may inadvertently create ambiguities or loopholes that compromise ethical research conduct, leading to concerns regarding the integrity and credibility of research outcomes. Addressing these issues demands a critical evaluation of the existing regulatory frameworks in Enugu State's tertiary institutions. By pinpointing the stifling elements and identifying areas of improvement within these regulations, this study aims to propose actionable strategies for reform. The goal is to optimize regulatory structures, striking a balance between compliance and fostering an environment that nurtures creative freedom, robust academic engagement, student safety, and ethical research practices within Enugu State's tertiary education landscape.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to evaluate the effect of university regulations on research performance of tertiary institutions in Enugu State. The specific objectives were to;

- i. Examine the effect of creative professional freedom on academic staff engagement of tertiary institutions in Enugu State.
- ii. Evaluate the effect of maintaining student safety on research practice of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

- i. What is the effect of creative professional freedom on academic staff engagement of tertiary institutions in Enugu State?
- ii. What is the effect of maintaining student safety on research practice of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Enugu State?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study;

- i. Creative professional freedom has no significant effect on academic staff engagement of tertiary institutions in Enugu State.
- ii. Maintaining student safety has no significant effect on the research practice of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Enugu State

Significance of the Study

The study holds paramount significance for government bodies, university administrators, and academic researchers alike. It offers insights crucial for policymakers to refine or adapt existing regulations, potentially steering the academic sector toward greater research productivity and innovation. For administrators, these insights enable informed decision-making in aligning institutional policies with research goals, optimizing resources, and advocating for adjustments where needed. Academic researchers benefit by understanding how regulations influence their scholarly pursuits, strategically navigating constraints, or leveraging policies to enhance research outcomes within the institutional framework, ultimately fostering an environment conducive to elevated research quality and impact in Enugu State's tertiary education sector.

Scope of the Study

This study examines how regulations in Enugu State's tertiary institutions impact research productivity. The focus is on the relationship between these regulations (independent variable) and research performance (dependent variable). It analyzes the influence of regulations on research practices, funding, and academic freedom within these institutions to understand their effects on research outcomes.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

University Regulations

Following worldwide legislative reforms in the 1980s-1990s favoring the valorization of research results (Fini and Grimaldi, 2017), universities introduced internal mechanisms such as organizational procedures, incentives, and regulations to foster and support academic entrepreneurship in its different forms. University regulations encompass a broad spectrum of rules and guidelines that govern various aspects of academic life within an institution. These regulations are typically designed to maintain order, ensure academic integrity, create a safe and conducive learning environment, and uphold ethical standards. The introduction of university regulations has contributed to the professionalization of activities that encourage the exploitation of research results in various forms. University regulations have raised the overall awareness that universities can play an active role in technology transfer, including licensing, patents, university-industry collaborations, the pursuit of research contracts with companies, and academic spin-offs (Walter et al., 2016).

Creative Professional Freedom

Creativity can be explained as production of new ideas; a creative employee is one who can come up with new suggestions/ideas for the services to be constructed, the flood of the communication and understanding it in the same way which would affect the work done by the employee during his working hour (Siddiqi and Qureshi, 2016). Agi (2010) classified professional freedom as one of the major working conditions. The expert opined that in the teaching and learning setting, work conditions are defined or measured in terms of professional freedom. Professional freedom is a concept that represents the academic staff desire to take control over his responsibility and role within the context of schooling and understanding the perceived capacities and knowledge (Ebong and Gilbert, 2018). Professional freedom goes beyond just only having control over teachers' role within defined borders of the workplace. The academic background and professional training of the academic staff are two factors that enable them to make decision that requires little or no managerial over bearing.

Student Safety

Safety is a particularly pressing issue in urban public schools, in part because community factors such as crime and poverty play a strong role in shaping the climate of schools. A number of studies have shown that neighborhood characteristics, including crime and poverty, influence the social and educational development of children and the climate of schools (Salahudeen, Abraham and Gebreyohannes, 2018). School safety has been included as a dimension of educational quality in several school climate models, including the Child-Friendly/Girl-Friendly Schools initiative by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2012). School safety not only focuses on factors within the school but also involves social factors which are in constant interaction with one another, school safety can be viewed as having four main dimensions student safety, family safety, school building safety and social safety (Schneider, 2015).

Research Performance

Performance refers to the degree to which an achievement is being or has been accomplished (Ugwu, Umar and Mbah, 2021). Performance related to research can be defined as the quality of a paper that allows knowledge gained through the research to be visible and passed on (performed) to others (Bazeley, 2010). To date, no common agreement exists among writers on a specific term to be used in describing academic research. Specifically, the concept of research performance refers to the act of submitting an article for publication in an academic or professional journal; publishing an article in an academic or professional journal; publishing or editing, individually or in collaboration, a book or monograph; publishing a book review; or delivering a paper at a professional meeting (Aydin, 2017). Furthermore, Harris cited in Aydin (2017) used four related but different measurements for explaining and evaluating research performance, which include impact, quality, importance, and quantity. Impact is defined as a measure of the influence of research and is evaluated by using the number of citations made to it by other scholars. Importance and quality are defined as expert value judgments, which are typically delivered via peer reviews.

Staff Engagement

Employee creative engagement refers to the harnessing of employee inputs to their work roles not only in psychological, cognitive and physical aspects but also in creative expression of themselves during role performances (Li & Sandino, 2018). Employee engagement relates to employees’ opinions and views about the organization, its management and working conditions (Aslam, 2017). The psychological aspect relates to employees’ perception of each of these four factors and whether they have positive or negative attitudes toward the organization and its management (Contreras et al., 2017). The physical characteristic of employee engagement relates to the exertion of physical energies by employees geared towards accomplishing their roles. Employee engagement in cognitive terms also connotes intellectual and mental involvement in the performance of organizational roles (Contreras et al., 2017). However, beyond the aforementioned, an important aspect of employee engagement is the expression of creativity that lends to originality, ingenuity, and inventiveness in the performance of work roles (Olokundun et al., 2017). Therefore, harnessing employee inputs and also fostering creativity in the workplace can be better achieved through employee creative engagement (Nawaz et al., 2014).

Research Practice

Research practice, a cornerstone of academic and scientific inquiry, involves a meticulous and systematic investigation into diverse subjects or issues aimed at uncovering new insights, validating existing theories, or solving pertinent problems. This multifaceted process comprises a range of methodologies, approaches, and ethical considerations that guide the systematic pursuit of knowledge (Smith, 2018). Methodology forms the backbone of research practice. It encompasses the design, planning, execution, and analysis of research endeavors. Researchers meticulously define their inquiries, select appropriate methodologies, and outline the systematic process through which they aim to collect, analyze, and interpret data. This involves employing various techniques such as surveys, experiments, interviews, observations, or literature reviews, depending on the nature of the study (Johnson et al., 2019).

Conceptual Framework

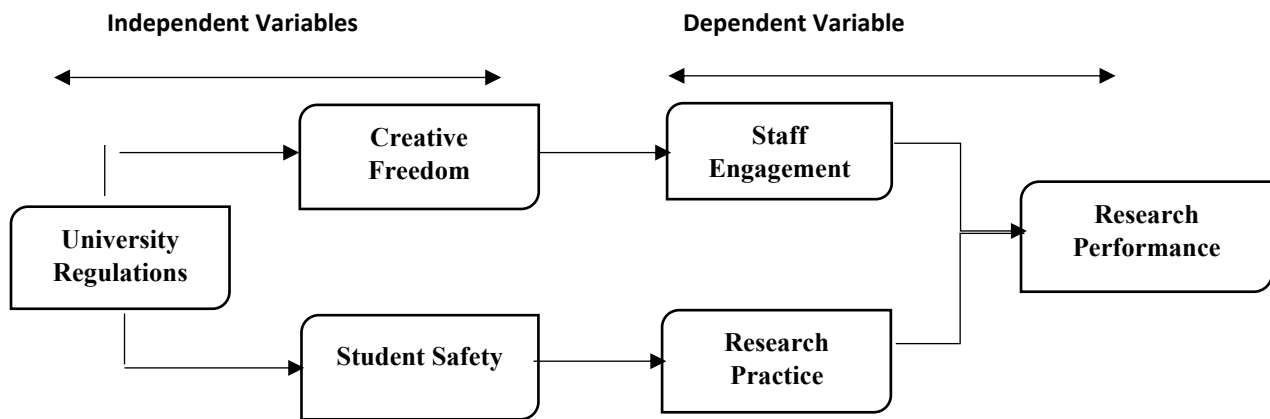


Figure 1: Conceptual Diagram

The diagram above shows the interlinkages between the various components of the independent and dependent variables of the study. It shows how the effects flow from university regulations, through creative freedom and student safety to research performance, in the form of staff engagement and research practice. The diagram is a channel of how the effect of the independent variables are felt in the dependent variable.

Theoretical Framework

The study reviewed two theories in relation to the broad objective of the study. However, the study is anchored on the Institutional Theory, which explains the use of norms and regulations by institutions and establishments to gain legitimacy and create order. The theories reviewed by the study are;

- i. Institutional Theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983)
- ii. Resource-based View Theory (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978)

Institutional Theory

Institutional theory, pioneered in the 1970s and expanded upon by scholars like DiMaggio and Powell in the 1980s, asserts that organizations, including universities, are profoundly influenced by their institutional environments (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). This theory suggests that organizations conform to established norms, values, and practices within their environment to gain legitimacy and acceptance. In the context of tertiary institutions in Enugu State, these organizations are subject to various regulations imposed by the university system, government bodies, and funding agencies. Institutional theory implies that these institutions might adhere to these regulations to gain legitimacy and acceptance within their institutional environment. The assumptions of institutional theory include the idea that organizations seek legitimacy and stability by conforming to prevailing institutional norms. Furthermore, it suggests that organizational actions are influenced not solely by efficiency or effectiveness, but also by the need for legitimacy and acceptance within their environment. In the study context, tertiary institutions might adhere strictly to university regulations, aiming to legitimize their research practices, attract funding, and enhance their reputation within the academic community.

Resource Dependence Theory

Resource Dependence Theory, proposed by Pfeffer and Salancik in the late 1970s, emphasizes organizations' reliance on external resources for survival and success (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). It suggests that organizations actively seek resources from their external environment and must manage these dependencies strategically to ensure viability. In the case of tertiary institutions in Enugu State, these organizations rely on external sources for funding, support, and legitimacy, which are crucial for their research performance (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). This theory assumes that organizations are interdependent with their external environment and must navigate these dependencies effectively. Tertiary institutions might leverage compliance with university regulations as a means to secure funding, attract researchers, and gain support from government bodies or funding agencies. They may strategically manage their dependencies on external resources by aligning with regulatory frameworks to enhance their research performance and access to vital resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).

Both Institutional Theory and Resource Dependence Theory provide valuable frameworks for understanding how Enugu State's tertiary institutions navigate regulatory environments, seek legitimacy, and manage their external dependencies to enhance their research performance within the broader institutional landscape. These theories offer lenses through which to analyze how these institutions respond to regulatory pressures and strategically align with regulations to secure essential resources and bolster their research endeavors (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Empirical Review

Creative Professional Freedom and Academic Staff Engagement

Chikezie, Dibua and Chima (2016) explored the relationship between conflict management and performance of some selected tertiary institutions in Enugu State, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to find out the extent to which arbitration enhances academic proficiency, and to ascertain how dialogue can reduce incessant closure of selected tertiary institutions in Enugu state. The study employed survey research design. Primary and secondary sources of data were used for this study. Pearson's product moment correlation was used to test the hypotheses. Findings revealed that effective conflict management has significant effects on performance of tertiary institutions in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study concluded that effective conflict management is a necessity for optimal performance of tertiary institutions in Enugu state, Nigeria.

Ebong and Gilbert (2018) investigated the relationship between Internal Cohesion, Professional Freedom and Academic Staff Performance in Public Universities in Rivers State. The study adopted the correlational design, using 671 academic staff as sample size, from the population of three public universities in Rivers State which comprised of 2,582 academic staff. The instruments for data collection were Internal Cohesion and Professional Freedom Scale (ICAPFS) and Academic Staff Performance Scale (ASPS) which were validated by experts. Reliability of the instruments was determined through Cronbach's Alpha statistic of 0.82 and 0.90 respectively. All research questions

were answered with Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) while all hypotheses were tested with test of significance of correlational coefficient (r) with special zr -test at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that there was a positive and high relationship between: internal cohesion and academic staff performance; professional freedom and academic staff performance. Conclusively, there was a positive and high relationship between internal cohesion, professional freedom and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State.

Olokundun, et al. (2019) examined the role of creative culture of an organization in influencing employee creative engagement. To achieve this objective, a total of 89 staff drawn from the academic and non-academic staff of Covenant University in Ogun State, Nigeria, was sampled. The data collected were analysed using regression analysis. The result showed that creative culture has positive significant effect on employee creative engagement. Based on the findings of the study, the implication for management of organizations is that there is a need to ensure that a creative culture is incorporated and embedded as an organizational policy geared towards fostering employee creative engagement

Hamid, Ramid and Ab Hamid (2020) examined the effect of creative self-efficacy on employee creativity and as a moderator for the relationship between creative-relevant process and employee creativity. The study employed a quantitative approach by distributing questionnaires to employees who are working in public/private service sectors in Malaysia and 250 employees had responded. The study hypotheses were tested using PLS structural equation modeling. The results of the study showed that there is (a) a significant relationship between full-autonomous and consultative participation in the creative-relevant process; (b) a non-significant relationship between semi-autonomous and creative-relevant process; (c) a significant relationship between creative-relevant process and employee creativity; (d) a significant relationship between creative self-efficacy and employee creativity, and (e) a non-significant moderated relationship of creative self-efficacy.

Tingo and Mseti (2022) examined the influence of employee independence on employee performance specifically on job involvement, minimal supervision, work team autonomy and access of information a case of a non-governmental organisation in Tanzania. The study was quantitative in nature which adopted a survey design. Through the use of a structured, self-administered, closed questionnaire; data was collected from 135 respondents out of 203 employees who were the targeted population, that were selected using a stratified and simple random sampling technique. Both descriptive and inferential data analysis were done through the computerized statistical software IBM - SPSS Statistics 21.0 and the data was presented in form of frequency, percentages, mean, standard deviation, correlation and regression coefficients that was later used to interpret the findings. The study revealed that employee independence had the strong significance and positive influence to employee performance.

Student Safety and Research Practice

Jahan, et al. (2018) explored factors that may affect the quality of research as well as some possible ways for promoting quality research and understanding barriers for doing quality research. A cross sectional study was carried out at Oman Medical College (OMC) on Medicine and Pharmacy faculty. Data was expressed in frequencies from the questionnaire responses which were calculated for all the variables as numbers and percentages. Independent sample t -test was used to compare differences between the two groups using Parametric data. Faculty experience about generating research idea on their own was 57% whereas proposal writing was 54%. Minimum experience in grant proposal writing was 59% whereas experience in publishing was 54% and scholarly presentation was 49%. Institutional factors affecting research were statistical support (51%), formal supervision and training (47%) ($p = 0.147$; 95% CI -2.89-18.51). Significant difference was seen with previous research training (mean rank score 24.63) and without any previous research training (mean rank score 16.41) responses ($p < 0.035$). Teacher researcher showed positive perception and importance of research in effective teaching and practice.

Ajayi (2019) examined employee performance among selected tertiary institutions: evidence from intrinsic reward system. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised the selected universities staff in Ado-Ekiti. A total of 360 structured questionnaires were administered to elicit information from the target respondents. Data gathered were analyzed using hierarchical regression models. The result showed that consultative participation significantly affects institutional stability as it was significant on institutional stability ($t=-1.303$, $t=5.429$, $t=2.108$, $t=6.365$ and $t=3.078$, $p<0.05$) Thus, in conclusion, it was shown that

all the constructs of the explanatory variable were significantly and positively related to employee performance of selected university in Ado-Ekiti.

Andriani, Purwana and Susita (2020) analyzed the factors that influence the productivity of lecturers producing international scientific articles at Private Universities using Structural Equation Modeling. The data used are primary data by conducting surveys with a total of 310 respondents, and the analysis used includes validity, reliability, multiple linear regression, multiple tests, and hypothesis testing. The results showed that the positive direct effect of transformational leadership style and communication on lecturer productivity. Both of these exogenous variables, transformational leadership style has a path coefficient value of β_1 of 0.201 and CR (tcount) of 3.715, while the communication variable proves to be the most dominant influence on productivity as an endogenous variable, 5,132.

Thondhlana, Mawere and Weda (2020) sought to find out undergraduate students and research supervisors' views on factors affecting the completion of research projects by Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU) students. Student, supervisor and institutional related factors were the focus of the study. Descriptive survey method was used in the study due to the normative nature of the data collected. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data. The sample of the study comprised 50 students who had failed to complete their research projects on schedule as well as 24 research project supervisors. Findings were that the time given to students to do their research project was inadequate. Lack of library, Internet and typing facilities as well as instance for travelling to and from the supervisor hampered students' research progress. The study concluded that student and institutional factors contributed to failure by students to complete their research projects on schedule. The study recommends that the university should allow students more time to do research projects; over three semesters.

Kazoka and Wema (2020) examined factors influencing efforts towards developing research capacity in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Tanzania. A mixed research approach (quantitative and qualitative) was employed in the study. Accordingly, a cross-sectional survey using questionnaires and semi-structured interview was used to collect primary data from simple randomly and purposively selected academic staff. The study findings show that competences, knowledge, and experiences in conducting research are the attributes that faculty members acquire through short training aimed to enhance competences in conducting research. Factors promoting research capacity development include presence of research policy and awareness of it, motivation to conduct research, availability and adequacy of research funds. Challenges faced were insufficient research skills, poor collaboration between senior and junior academic staff, and lack of pro-activeness and commitment in conducting research

Summary and Gap in Empirical Review

The current empirical studies within tertiary institutions highlight specific facets like faculty proficiency, institutional support, and conflict management's impact on academic performance, yet a significant gap exists in synthesizing these facets into a cohesive understanding. There's a need for comprehensive research that interconnects these elements, delineating how creative professional freedom, student safety, and other institutional resources collectively shape academic success. Moreover, while these studies shed light on challenges, they lack comprehensive exploration of effective solutions or systemic approaches. Closing this gap requires holistic investigations that offer both insights into challenges and actionable strategies, examining systemic perspectives and tracking the sustained impact of interventions to foster a thriving academic ecosystem within tertiary institutions.

Methodology

The study was limited to five (5) states universities in the South East of Nigeria. The universities include: Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Ebonyi State University, Imo State University, Anambra State University of Science and Technology, and Abia State University Uturu, Okigwe. The population of the study is three thousand two hundred and fifty (3250) which consists of selected lecturers both male and female of different carders in the selected universities.

The area of the study was selected Pharmaceutical manufacturing firms in Enugu state, Nigeria. The study used the descriptive survey design approach. The primary source of data was the administration of questionnaire. The population of the study consisted of three hundred and twenty five (325) management and senior staff. The whole

population was used due to small number. Two hundred and forty nine (249) staff returned the questionnaire and accurately filled. That gave 77 percent response rate. The validity of the instrument was tested using content analysis and the result was good. The reliability was tested using the Pearson correlation coefficient (r). It gave a reliability co-efficient of 0.820 which was also good. Data was presented and analyzed by mean score and standard deviation using Sprint Likert Scale. The hypotheses were analyzed using Z - test statistic tool.

Data Presentation

The effect of creative professional freedom on academic staff engagement of tertiary institutions in Enugu State

Table 1: The effect of creative professional freedom on academic staff engagement of tertiary institutions in Enugu State

		5	4	3	2	1	ΣFX	-	SD	Decision
		SA	A	N	DA	SD		X		
1	The ability to think outside the box improves work culture of the institutions	470 94 35.1	80 20 7.5	288 96 35.8	76 38 14.2	20 20 7.5	934 268 100%	3.39	1.300	Agree
2	Able to be creative reduces turnover in the institutions	765 153 57.1	80 20 7.5	117 39 14.6	70 35 13.1	21 21 7.8	1053 268 100%	3.93	1.395	Agree
3	Efforts to take risks increases productivity of the university.	580 116 43.3	80 20 7.5	234 78 29.3	50 25 9.3	29 29 10.8	973 268 100%	3.63	1.393	Agree
4	To create something from personal feelings builds better work.	650 130 48.5	236 59 22.0	99 33 12.3	46 23 8.6	23 23 8.6	1054 268 100%	3.93	1.314	Agree
5	Innovating something from experience affects performance of the university	825 165 61.6	148 37 13.8	66 22 8.2	52 26 9.7	18 18 6.7	1109 268 100%	3.14	1.295	Agree
Total Grand mean and standard deviation								3.60 4	1.339 4	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1, 114 respondents out of 268 representing 42.6 percent agreed that the ability to think outside the box improves work culture of the institutions with mean score 3.39 and standard deviation of 1.300. Able to be creative reduces turnover in the institutions 173 respondents representing 64.6 percent agreed with mean score of 3.93 and standard deviation of 1.395. Efforts to take risks increases productivity of the university 136 respondents representing 50.8 percent agreed with mean score of 3.63 and standard deviation of 1.393. To create something from personal feelings builds better work 189 respondents representing 70.5 percent agreed with mean score of 3.93 and 1.314. Innovating something from experience affects performance of the university 202 respondents representing 75.4 percent agreed with a mean score of 3.14 and standard deviation 1.295.

The effect of maintaining student safety on research practice of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Enugu State

Table 2: The effect of maintaining student safety on research practice of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Enugu State

		5	4	3	2	1	ΣFX	-	SD	Decision
		SA	A	N	DA	SD		X		
1	The ability to think outside the box improves work culture of the institutions	555	280	54	92	23	1004	3.75	1.372	Agree
		111	70	18	46	23	268			
		41.4	26.1	6.7	17.2	8.6	100%			
2	Able to be creative reduces turnover in the institutions	615	328	57	30	29	1059	3.95	1.316	Agree
		123	82	19	15	29	268			
		45.9	30.6	7.1	5.6	10.8	100%			
3	Efforts to take risks increases productivity of the university.	770	292	54	12	17	1145	4.27	1.110	Agree
		154	73	18	6	17	268			
		57.5	27.2	6.7	2.2	6.3	100%			
4	To create something from personal feelings builds better work.	665	368	39	36	12	1120	4.18	1.090	Agree
		133	92	13	18	12	268			
		49.6	34.3	4.9	6.7	4.5	100%			
5	Innovating something from experience affects performance of the university	420	420	39	92	20	991	3.70	1.279	Agree
		84	105	13	46	20	268			
		31.3	39.2	4.9	17.2	7.5	100%			
Total Grand mean and standard deviation								3.97	1.2334	

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 2, 181 respondents out of 181 representing 67.5 percent agreed that the ability to think outside the box improves work culture of the institutions with mean score 3.75 and standard deviation of 1.372. Able to be creative reduces turnover in the institutions 205 respondents representing 76.5 percent agreed with mean score of 3.95 and standard deviation of 1.316. Efforts to take risks increases productivity of the university 227 respondents representing 84.7 percent agreed with mean score of 4.27 and standard deviation of 1.110. To create something from personal feelings builds better work 225 respondents representing 83.9 percent agreed with mean score of 4.18 and 1.090. Innovating something from experience affects performance of the university 189 respondents representing 70.5 percent agreed with a mean score of 3.70 and standard deviation 1.279.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: Creative professional freedom has no significant effect on academic staff engagement of tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Table 3: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for Hypothesis 1

		The ability to think outside the box improves work culture of the institutions.	Able to be creative reduces turnover in the institutions.	Efforts to take risks increases productivity of the university.	To create something from personal feelings builds better work.	Innovating something from experience affects performance of the university.
N		268	268	268	268	268
Uniform Parameters ^{a,b}	Minimum	1	1	1	1	1
	Maximum	5	5	5	5	5
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.351	.571	.433	.485	.616
	Positive	.075	.078	.108	.086	.067
	Negative	-.351	-.571	-.433	-.485	-.616
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		5.742	9.346	7.086	7.941	10.079
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
a. Test distribution is Uniform.						
b. Calculated from data.						

Decision Rule

If the calculated Z-value is greater than the critical Z-value (i.e $Z_{cal} > Z_{critical}$), reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis accordingly.

Result

With Kolmogorov-Smirnon Z – value ranges from $5.742 < 10.079$ and on Asymp. Significance of 0.000, the responses from the respondents as display in the table is normally distributed. This affirms the assertion of the most of the respondents that creative professional freedom had significant positive effect on academic staff engagement of tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Decision

Furthermore, comparing the calculated Z- value ranges from $5.742 < 10.079$ against the critical Z- value of (2-tailed test at 95 percent level of confidence) the null hypothesis were rejected. Thus the alternative hypothesis was accepted which states that creative professional freedom had significant positive effect on academic staff engagement of tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Hypothesis Two: Maintaining student safety has no significant effect on the research practice of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Enugu State

Table 4: One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test for Hypothesis 2

		The ability to think outside the box improves work culture of the institutions.	Able to be creative reduces turnover in the institutions.	Efforts to take risks increases productivity of the university.	To create something from personal feelings builds better work.	Innovating something from experience affects performance of the university.
N		268	268	268	268	268
Uniform Parameters ^{a,b}	Minimum	1	1	1	1	1
	Maximum	5	5	5	5	5
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.425	.515	.597	.590	.455
	Positive	.086	.108	.063	.045	.075
	Negative	-.425	-.515	-.597	-.590	-.455
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		6.964	8.430	9.774	9.651	7.452
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
a. Test distribution is Uniform.						
b. Calculated from data.						

Decision Rule

If the calculated Z-value is greater than the critical Z-value (i.e $Z_{cal} > Z_{critical}$), reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis accordingly.

Result

With Kolmogorov-Smirnon Z – value ranges from $6.964 < 9.774$ and on Asymp. Significance of 0.000, the responses from the respondents as display in the table is normally distributed. This affirms the assertion of the most of the respondents that maintaining student safety had significant positive effect on the research practice of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Decision

Furthermore, comparing the calculated Z- value ranges from $6.964 < 9.774$ against the critical Z- value of (2-tailed test at 95 percent level of confidence) the null hypothesis were rejected. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was accepted which states that maintaining student safety had significant positive effect on the research practice of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

Discussion of Findings

Effect of creative professional freedom on academic staff engagement of tertiary institutions in Enugu State

From the result of the hypothesis one, the calculated Z- value ranges from $5.742 < 10.079$ against the critical Z- value of 0.000 which implies that Creative professional freedom had significant positive effect on academic staff engagement of tertiary institutions in Enugu State. In the support of the result in the literature review,

Effect of maintaining student safety on research practice of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

From the result of the hypothesis two, the calculated Z- value ranges from $6.964 < 9.774$ against the critical Z- value of 0.000 which implies that maintaining student safety had significant positive effect on the research practice of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Enugu State. In the support of the result in the literature review,

Summary of the Findings

- i. Creative professional freedom had significant positive effect on academic staff engagement of tertiary institutions in Enugu State, $Z(95, n = 268), 5.742 < 10.079, P. < .05$.
- ii. Maintaining student safety had significant positive effect on the research practice of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Enugu State $Z(95, n = 268), 6.964 < 9.774, P. < .05$.

Conclusion

The study concluded that Creative professional freedom and Maintaining student safety had significant positive effect on the academic staff engagement and research practice of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Enugu State.

References

- Ajayi, M. O. (2019). Employee Performance among Selected Tertiary Institutions: Evidence from Intrinsic Reward System. *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development*, 10(4), 117-122.
- Andrani, D., Purwana, D., & Susita, D. D. (2020). Key Factors Affecting Lecturer Productivity to Conduct Research. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*, 8(7), 433-454.
- Aslam, S. (2017). Psychological empowerment on creativity among employees of IT sector: The mediating role of creative process, engagement and intrinsic motivation. *Canadian Social Science*, 13(6), 11-34.
- Chikezie, O. M., Dibua, E. C., & Chima, A. E. (2016). Conflict management and performance of selected tertiary institutions in Enugu State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Advanced Research*. [Online]. Retrieved from <https://www.journalijar.com/article/12664/conflict-management-and-performance-of-selected-tertiary-institutions-in-enugu-state,-nigeria/>
- Chikwe, C. K., Ogidi, R. C., & Nwachukwu, K. (2015). Challenges of Research and Human Capital Development in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 6(issues) No.28.
- Contreras, F., Juan C. E., Utz D., & Yonni A. C. A. (2017). Leadership and employees' innovative work behavior: Test of a mediation and moderation model. *Asian Social Science*, 13(9), 9-25.
- Ebong, U., & Gilbert, S. D. (2018). Internal cohesion, professional freedom and academic staff performance in public universities in Rivers State. *African Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 11(2), 192-202.
- Hamid, R. A., Rahid, M. R., & Ab Hamid, S. N. (2020). The effects of employee participation in creative-relevant process and creative self-efficacy on employee creativity. *Malaysian Journal of Society and Space*, 16(2), 179-191.
- Jahan, F., Siddiqi, M., Zai, K., Rfmai, R., & Ahuja, A. (2018). Factors influencing quality of academic research: perception of faculty researchers at Oman Medical College. [Online]. Retrieved from <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Factors-influencing-quality-of-academic-research%3A-Jahan-Siddiqui/d8b828162116cefef0d18604b3bba5688d55de07>
- Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Turner, L. A. (2019). Toward a definition of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 1(2), 112-133.
- Kazoka, J. E., & Wema, E. (2020). An Analysis of the Factors Influencing Research Capacity Developments in Higher Education Institutions in Tanzania. *University of Dar es Salaam Library Journal*, 15(1), 45-66.
- Li, S. X., & Sandino, T. (2018). Effects of an information sharing system on employee creativity, engagement, and performance. *Journal of Accounting Research*, 56(2), 713-747.

- Nawaz, M. S., Hassan, M., Hassan, S., Shaukat, S., & Asadullah, M. A. (2014). Impact of employee training and empowerment on employee creativity through employee engagement: Empirical evidence from the manufacturing sector of Pakistan. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 19, 593-601.
- Olokundun, M., Falola, H., Ibidunni, S., Ogunnaike, O., Peter, F., & Kehinde, O. (2017). Intrapreneurship and innovation performance: A conceptual model. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*, 17(2), 1-5.
- Olokundun, M., Ibidunni, S., Moses, C., Olowokore, E., Omotoyinbo, C., & Ogueyungbo, O. O. (2019). The effect of creative culture on employee creative engagement in an organization. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*, 18(4), 12-24.
- Salahudeen, L. A., Abraham, O. A., & Gebereyohannes, H. M. (2018). Effect of School Safety on Students' Academic Performance Case Study: Public Secondary School Students in Lagos State, Nigeria. *Iconic Research and Engineering Journals*, 2(5), 146-155.
- Schneider, T., Walker, H., & Sprague, J. (2015). Safe school design: A handbook for educational leaders- Applying the principles of crime prevention through environmental design. [Online]. Retrieved from <http://www.jsc.montana.edu>
- Siddiqi, H., & Qureshi, M. (2016). The Impact of Employees' Creativity on the Performance of the Firm. *Research Issues in Social Sciences*, 1, 1-12.
- Smith, A. (2018). *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners*. SAGE Publications.
- Thondhlana, S., Mawere, D., & Weda, Z. (2020). Factors Affecting Completion of Research Projects by Students: A Study of Three Zimbabwe Open University Regions. *Zimbabwe International Journal of Open and Distance Learning*, 1(1), 21-30.
- Tingo, J., & Mseti, S. (2022). Effect of Employee Independence on Employee Performance. *International Journal of Engineering, Business and Management*, 6(2), 1-11.
- Ugwu, F. I., Umah, S. S. and Mbah, P. C. (2021). Effect of Macro-Environmental Factors and the Performance of Small-Scale Enterprises in South East, Nigeria. *Contemporary Journal of Management*, 3(5); 27-41
- UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) (2012). Basic education and gender equality: Child-friendly schooling approach. Available at http://www.unicef.org/education/bege_61717.html