An Assessment and Reporting of Research Performance Institution that is Compatible with the Implementation of the Strategic Plan and its Profound Impact on Academic Work and the Funding Institution

Abstract: This paper discusses the assessment and reporting of research performance and its profound impact on academic work and the funding institution. Performance assessments are crucial for any institution that wishes to flourish in a competitive edge. Research work is dependent on skills and competencies as well as the quality by which students' performance is evaluated. Research funding is vital in order to manage the costs emanating from natural sciences, technology and social sciences. Importantly, government research can take the form of supporting itself or through grants to academic and other researchers outside the government influence. Government sponsored research results in the research outcomes being publicly shared with the community while those of privately funded research are controlled by a single group. The paper discusses how the strategic plan needs to be pursued so that it can pave way for the institution to stick to its operations in a way trying by all means to achieve the targeted goals and objectives it wishes to be identified with.It is vital that potential conflicts of interests to guarantee credibility should be transparent. Furthermore, it should be established here that when the research is funded by the same agent; the results are biased.

Keywords: Task-centred assessments; Construct-centred assessments; Performance assessments; Government research; Biased research results; Government-funded research; Privately funded research; Funding influence on research

1.1 Introduction

This paper addresses the assessment and reporting of research performance and its profound impact on academic work and the funding institution. The paper explores how the strategic plan needs to be pursued so that the institution sticks to its operations in order to achieve its targeted goals and objectives. The paper is tailor-made to extensively discuss performance assessments, the categories of performance assessments, research funding, government and privately-funded research, and concludes with the influence of funding on the research.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Performance assessments were supposed to have been dependent on skills and competencies and the criteria by which the quality of students is evaluated, but it does happen that students are not aware of tasks expected of them that must be assessed. What is observed is that lecturers are the ones that determine student performance at the university by basing their assessments on internalized frameworks that are compatible with the quality for their university. Lecturers are not regularly concerned in taking notes regarding students' in-class speaking, reading, and listening behaviours and later analyse them in order to plan for future instructional activities that need to be accomplished by those students. Institutions are not aware of the categorisation of performance assessments in order to maximise the results contained therein. Research funding is not concerned with funding the needs relating to natural sciences, technology and social sciences which could be more useful for the institution. Government-funding, which is aimed at supporting the activities of government is viewed as biased, because it will be influenced by the needs and demands of government. On the other hand, privately-funded research works are driven by profit and profit incentive influences the researchers to focus their work on projects that are viewed as likely generating profits. Institutions fail to disclose potential conflicts of interests in order to ensure the guarantee that is credible and transparent in scientific research processes. It has been noted with great concern that research funded by the same agent can yield biased results.

1.3 Orientation of the Paper

This paper is intended to shed more light on the assessment and reporting of research performance and its profound impact on academic work and the funding institution. Assessing performance is the only way that paves direction for any institution that wishes to be rated as one of the best in the world. It is also crucial to take note that performance take skills and competencies and quality as measurements by which students' performance is evaluated.Funding research is essential in order to manage the costs that are incurred from natural sciences, technology and social sciences research works. Potential conflicts of interests always results

and it is important that transparency is maintained to guarantee credibility. A research carried by an institution that supports itself can be biased and this should be averted in as much as possible.

2   Literature Review

2.1 Performance Assessments

Performance assessment on research works is primarily dependent on skills and competencies and criteria for evaluating the quality of student performance. Lecturers are the ones that determine student performance at the university and are basing their assessments upon internalized frameworks of what constitutes quality for their university. What happens in some cases could be that students are not aware of what tasks to expect which must be assessed. The problems encountered here in most cases are that lecturers do not regularly take notes on students' in-class speaking, reading, and listening behaviours and analyse them later to plan for future instructional activities.

2.2 Performance assessments can be categorised into two, viz.

Task-centered assessments: performance assessments that are primarily geared to tap into and evaluate specific skills and competencies. In this case, the process of performance assessments is through evaluating task-centred performance in relation to a set of explicitly stated criteria, the quality of the communicative performances elicited from learners as part of goal-directed, meaning-focused language use requiring the integration of skills and knowledge (Brindley, 1994: 74).Interestingly, performance is attributed to such factors regarding the alignment of task-based assessment with task-based instruction, positive 'washback' effects of assessment practices on instruction, and the limitations of discrete-skills assessments (Long and Norris, 2000). The task-centred performance assessments consist of tasks that allow little student control and specific scoring for judging student performance on the assessment tasks. This kind of assessment has tasks that may allow a fair amount of student control. In this kind of assessment, it has been discovered that student-centred learning environments is more effective in higher education (Wright, 2011:93-94).

Construct-centered assessments: performance assessments that are intended to tap into and sample from a domain of skills and competencies. In higher education, this is defined as both a mind-set and a culture within a given educational institution and as a learning approach broadly related to, and supported by, constructivist theories of learning. Students of such institutions are characterised by innovative methods of teaching which aim to promote learning in communication with teachers and other learners and which take students seriously as active participants in their own learning and foster transferable skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and reflective thinking (Attard, Iorio, Geven, Koen& Santa, 2014; Hoidn, 2017).

The policy which people work on and are evaluated with is the one that determines their behaviour and priorities on any targeted performance. Management should try to modify standards for promotion and the tenure of individuals in positions if they want to redirect the academic priorities of the faculties of the institutions. If one has to make even small changes in this setup, you will have to require agreement and assistance of people in positions and departmental heads as well as those to whom this change is directed regardless of them being ordinary workers or students. The anticipated redirection can only be realised and cost effective if new criteria are tailor-made to ensure that they are related to outcomes that are supported by the academic establishment across all levels. It is vital that new priorities that are engineered should not be viewed as imposed but that they are coming as a result of mutual agreement although this could not be done in all disciplines (Julius, Baldridge&Pfeffer, 1999).

It is impossible that the goals of the institution are realized without a strategic plan being pursued. It is therefore vital that the leadership and management should demand answers to the right questions in the envisaged plan in order to steer the institution in the right direction. It is important that the institution go through the process of reviewing those key priorities and concomitant strategic planning issues with their senior team in the institution before they could think of implementing them. The institution should now work on directing the team to address issues such as defining short-term and long-term objectives, and whether a strategy had been adequately developed (Julius, Baldridge&Pfeffer, 1999).

Furthermore, the institution should go on identifying the key assumptions that underlie the strategy it wants to pursue. It is also necessary to be aware of the evidence the institution is relying on to ensure assumptions are valid and meet the targeted outcomes. The action plan should be feasible given the constraints and opportunities that are inherent with the situation at hand. The action plan should be more realistic given the institution's sources of power at its disposal. The institution should ensure that constraints that concern

statistical characteristics of tasks, to increase measurement precision, or that concern non-statistical considerations such as content, format, timing, complexities, cross-item dependencies and so on are identified and clearly defined (Berger & Veerkamp, 1996).The impact of the action plan should be fully assessed and established to be ethical and aimed at benefitting the institution. The institution should also be cognizant of trade-offs, or who they think would be directly and indirectly affected by the plan being pursued. It is also vital that the risks of the plan are analysed and all contingencies planned are flowing simultaneously without affecting the main purpose and goal as planned. Mechanisms that are devised and put into place to ensure the plan is periodically evaluated should be viewed as the ones driving or steering the process. Where necessary, it should also be established whether the plan can be modified to meet the challenges being experienced while implementing the plan. The institution should as well assess the timing and sequence of decisions and events falling into place at every stage in so doing, differentiating between urgent and less important matters (Julius, Baldridge&Pfeffer, 1999).

It is incumbent upon the institution to ensure that the plan contains incremental steps and that early steps are perceived to preclude future alternatives as the process advances. The institution should be able to reflect on and communicate successes or failures with overarching plan objectives that might surface during the implementation plan. It is commonplace that institutions' administrators know how to manage the development of elaborate plans (or "mission" statements) but they normally fail to understand that unless those statements revolutionize the nature in which work is accomplished or the actual behaviour of individuals responsible for merging fiscal and academic priorities are well pursued and accomplished, otherwise, these plans on documents will remain abstract concepts and flounder without cause or effect (Julius, Baldridge&Pfeffer, 1999).

For the institution to implement a functioning strategic plan, it requires to ensure that it pursues issues andactions that are inherent with achieving its goals, comply with the interests of its stakeholders, employees and other relevant influential fraternities and authorities in its operations.

The institution should work on the process of assuming the identification of participants and recognise accountability matters,institutional goals and objectives, and the timing and sequence ofimplementation of its objectives and aim to achieve its intended goals. It is imperative for the institution to understand how new initiatives or programs could be introduced in different functional units, if the goal is to achieve more of its plans and targets. The person who is at the focal point of implementing a strategic plan should be able to ascertain how he or she will approach the management known to be resistant in the institution. The plan should also seek ways how resources required will be solicited or sourced out. The researchers' published opinions can be associated with their financial relationships, obtaining non-commercial funding and can as well be more essential to maintaining objectivity than disclosing personal financial interests (Levine, Gussow, Hastings &Eccher, 2003). Coordination of the plan is also essential and someone to coordinate this plan should be found. Importantly, everyone should be able to know when the plan is going to become an integral partof the values and mission of the organization that are intended.

A full assessment of the steps that need to be taken in each institutional unit to reflect integrationin the way decisions are made, relationships are maintained,and services are provided should be ascertained beforehand. The institution should trigger measures on how to respond to any decrease in thewill to sustain implementation of the plan. In simpler terms, the institution should be able to ascertain what would be the appropriateresponse to loss of motivation and support by the stakeholders and the degree of minimumsupport that will be needed in order to proceed with all operations that are aimed at achieving the best in the organisation. The institution should be more focused on ensuring that the plan is going to enhance the function, efficiency, and productivityof others in the long end. There should be actions that need to be pursued in order to inform the institution of the plan and its purpose for effective operations.

Furthermore, the institution should lay out the issues relating to actual impacts of the plan on people, functions,and so forth and as well knowing when everyone has possessed requisiteknowledge and skills that are necessary for the achievement of the strategic plan at most. The institution should also pave ways of understanding and mitigating the consequences of the plan that has been identified and assessed when the strategic plan was drawn and put into action. The most beneficial aspect of the working strategic plan is when the behavioural and process changes that are expected of employees are also seen in advance and engineered within the whole strategic plan in order to reap the best results.

At most, the plan of a good and working strategic plan when implemented can result into developing new standards ofproductivity, compensation, performance, or evaluation that can reflectdesired changes or mitigate unacceptable actions or reactions from employees and stakeholders. It is imperative that the institution is capable of demonstrating the value of the strategic plan and whether it connects with the performance and productivity of the employees and their institution. Importantly though, the point of operations in the process will depend on whether individuals and units expected toadopt new behaviours are getting along in those operational aspects so that at the end, the strategic plan is gaining success at all levels.

In most organisations, behaviours and achievements of employees are not rewarded and it is advisable that institutions acknowledge andreward outstanding performance. The institution should be able to find ways how formal and informal rewards could be managed and care taken to prevent the process of acknowledging and rewardingfrom being misinterpreted by others in the institution across the board. The institution should avoid those challenges caused by compensation systems that are not compatible with rewarding competence and merit, instead,it is imperative that the institution measure the quality and quantity of change professionally to avoid bottlenecks in so doing. It is at this point in time that the kind of information needed should be clearly sought and applied prowessly. This information by the institution should be acquiredto determine the quality of changes that influence the organisation and then find ways on how to address such changes in a thoughtful manner.This change should be reviewed and quantified to ensure the institution is steered in a continuing process toward achievingits intended targets and goals. The strategic plan has to lay out aspects such as agreed upon elements, functions, and services that remain integral part to the success of the strategic plan and how these should be measured to avoid bottlenecks in the process. Lastly, it is worthwhile to ensure that benchmarking is applied and met and that alternate strategies or assessments of benchmarks are developed and implemented continually in order to achieve more results of the strategic plan(Martinson, Anderson & De Vries, 2005).

2.3 Research Funding
Research funding is meant to cover for scientific research in areas of both "hard" science and technology and social science. This funding is obtained through a competitive process, in which potential research projects are evaluated and only the most promising ones receive funding. A process of this nature is run by government, corporations or foundations in allocating scarce resources and funding. In most cases, research funding comes from two major sources and these are corporations (through research and development departments) and government (primarily carried out through universities and specialised government agencies). In the cases of smaller amounts of scientific research, these are out or are funded by charitable foundations, especially in relation to the development of cures for diseases such as cancer, malaria and HIV/AIDS.According to OECD, more than 60% of research and development in the fields of scientific and technical fields is carried out by industries, and 20% and 10% respectively by universities and government (OECD, 2015, p. 156).

2.4 Government-funded research
Government research can be either carried by itself, or through grants to academic and other researchers outside the government. The advantage of government sponsored research is that the results are publicly shared, whereas with privately funded research the ideas are controlled by a single group. Government sponsored research can result in mass collaborative projects that are far beyond the scope of isolated private researchers(Davidoff et al., 2001). According to Fang (2011) a theoretical model is established, whichimplies that peer review and over-competitive research funding foster mainstream opinion to monopoly in the operations of an institution.Scholten, Clarke &Hetherington(2005) observe that government funded-research worksaim at providing compiled scientific evidence to aid well informed institutional decisions by way of conducting systematic reviews of randomized controlled trials of those operational interventions and ensure that they try to disseminate the results and conclusions derived from such operation.

2.5 Privately funded research
Research works that are funded by private companies are mainly motivated by profit. Private companies will less likely fund research projects solely for the sake of knowledge. The profit incentive causes researcher to concentrate their work on projects that are perceived as likely generating profits. Private funding for research is mainly done by philanthropists, private companies, non-profit foundations, and professional organizations (Giles, 2012;Broad, 2014*).*

2.6 Funding influence on research
Disclosure of potential conflicts of interests to guarantee credibility and transparency of the scientific research process is crucial. When research is funded by the same agent that can be expected to gain from a

favourable outcome, there is a potential for biased results and research shows that results are indeed more favourable than it would have been expected from a more objective view of the evidence of the research(Wahls, 2018). It is more likely that those very members who conduct research for food companies normally receive funding from such food companies, in which case, it is corruptible. Even with government sponsored research works, such things can happen. Philanthropists and foundations spend millions of dollars into a wide variety of scientific investigations; these are in the fields of basic research discovery, disease cures, particle physics, astronomy, marine science, and the environment. Various large technology companies spend billions of dollars on research and development each year to gain an innovative advantage over their competitors although only about 42% of this funding goes towards projects that are considered substantially new, or capable of yielding radical breakthroughs (Giles, 2012).

3   Research Methodology

The purpose of research methodology is the reason whythe study is being conducted, or simply indicating the goal of the study. In most research areas, the goal of a study is to identify or describe a concept or toexplain or predict a situation or solution to a situation that indicates the type of study to be conducted (Beckingham, 1974).

It is imperative that a researcher becomes familiar with the researchmethods that are used by an area of study which allows him or her to understand it more effectively. Since there are many different types of research designs that can be used, it is vital that the benefits of conducting research be compatible with expanding understanding and knowledge of the researcher's academic field of study. This is done in order for the researcher or an academic to define his or her academic, career, and personal interests in a specified field of study.Research methodology helps the researcher to gain academic experiences which will help him or her to expand his or her knowledge and this could be through presenting at research conferences, publishing, and working with a research team.

Research is important for the researchers, because it helps them to have a detailed analysis of everything that they want to research on. When the researcher has a proper in-depth analysis on any topic, the result comes out to be fruitful and also the knowledge is enhanced in that particular area. The researcher would want to explore how he or she would come to understand something and the process of researching an idea under study. The purposes of research are categorised into three approaches, viz. exploratory, descriptiveand explanatory.

It is vital that the researcher understands that the broader aim of the research process is to produce new knowledge or deepen understanding of a topic or issue under study. Exploratory research helps the researcher to identify and define a problem or question that he intends to study.

It is essential to note that research improves services and treatments not just for the researcher but also for future generations that wish to explore the studies that were previously undertaken by some researchers in the past and how they relate to the new body of knowledge currently under way. Furthermore, research helps to develop new tests for diagnosis, treatments and processes that could help other people, institutions and their stakeholders.

When a research is conducted, especially when one is concerned about the performance of the organisation, the facts and figures of operations through proper accounting and financial systems can be used to help in making decisions on the feasibility and growth of the institution.Furthermore, research enables management to sustain the operations of the institution and allows it to survive in its business.

4   Findings

Performance assessments were discovered as not dependent on skills and competencies of the institutional workers. The quality of students, employees and stakeholders is evaluated, but it does happen that students, employees and stakeholders are aware of tasks expected of them that must be assessed. Research funding although vital in order to manage the costs emanating from natural sciences, technology and social sciences is not flowing well due to biasness. It has been discovered that government research take the form of supporting itself or through grants to academic and other researchers outside the government influence. There are bottlenecks in that government sponsored research results in the research outcomes are being publicly shared with the community while those of privately funded research are controlled by a single group. It has surfaced that potential conflicts of interests to guarantee credibility are not transparent, especially in government funding. Furthermore, it has been established that when the research is funded by the same agent; the results are biased.

5   Recommendations

Performance assessments should be inherent and should depend on skills and competencies of the students, employees and stakeholders of the institution. The quality of students and employees should be evaluatedand assessed and then made aware of the different tasks that are expected of them.The institution should ensure that research funding is regarded as vital and that the institution should be able to manage the costs that emanate from natural sciences, technology and social sciences.Government research that takes the form of supporting itself or through grants to academic and other researchers outside the government influence should be well assessed and directed to ensure that the institution achieves its goals and objectives. The bottlenecks resulting from government sponsored research and the outcomes thereof should be publicly shared with the community while those of privately funded research should also be controlled and exposed to the stakeholders and not where they are controlled by a single group. For potential conflicts of interests that are resultant as a consequence of the operations of the institution, these should be regarded as flaws and specific measures should be put in place to guarantee credibility and transparency, especially in government funding. The institution should ensure that research funded by the same agent should in the long end come up with the results that are not biased.

Conclusion

The paper discussed the assessment and reporting of research performance and its profound impact on academic work and the funding institution. The paper addressed performance assessments that are regarded as crucial for the survival of any institution that aspires to compete with other institutions in a competitive edge. The paper extensively discussed performance assessments, the categories of performance assessments, research funding, government and privately-funded research, and concludes with the influence of funding the research. The strategic plan was explicitly discussed to pave way for ensuring that the institution needs to stick to its operations in order to achieve the targeted goals and objectives it intends to be identified with. The discussions in the paper also described that research work depends on skills and competencies and that quality by which students, employees and stakeholders are bound to exhibit in terms of performance should be evaluated. The paper further explored the importance of research funding in order to allow the institution to manage the costs emanating from natural sciences, technology and social sciences. The discussions of the paper stated thatgovernment research that takes the form of supporting itself or through grants to academic and other researchers that are outside the government influence should be scrutinized and aligned to the strategic plan. It was further observed that government sponsored research results in the research outcomes being publicly shared with the community while those of privately funded research are controlled by a single group, which in itself limits the goals of being transparent to the institution and its stakeholders. The paper further noted that potential conflicts of interests to guarantee credibility should be transparent and that the research, which is funded by the same agent; yields biased results, which should not be the case.

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