

## **INFLUENCE OF ACADEMIC STAFF SELECTION AND RETENTION PRACTICES ON QUALITY SERVICE DELIVERY IN PUBLIC TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE**

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**Abstract:** The study investigated, “Influence of Academic Staff Selection and Retention Practices on Quality Service Delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State”. The study was guided by three (3) research objectives, three (3) research questions and three (3) hypotheses. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study was one hundred and ninety-nine (199); 16 Deans and 104 Heads of Departments from Rivers State University, 7 Deans and 42 Heads of Departments from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and 9 Deans and 21 Heads of Departments from Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic. The census method was used. The instrument used for data collection was a self-structured questionnaire titled “Academic Staff Selection and Retention Practices for Quality Service Delivery Questionnaire” developed on a four-point rating scale of Very High, Extent (VHE=4), High Extent (HE=3 points), Low Extent (LE=2points) and Very Low Extent (VLE=1point). The questionnaire was analyzed for reliability using Cronbach Alpha method. The reason was to establish the internal consistency of the instrument. The test yielded reliability coefficients of 0.85, 0.83 and 0.82 with some overall reliability coefficients of 0.83 which showed the instrument was reliable. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while one-way ANOVA analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. From the analysis done the study found that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments on the extent to which selection criteria, eligibility tests, oral interview and provision of staff welfare schemes influence staff selection practices on quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The study concluded that effective academic staff selection and retention practices are vital for quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. It was recommended among others that Oral interviews should be conducted professionally, with a focus on evaluating candidates’ teaching, research skills, and communication abilities and Institutions should provide comprehensive welfare packages, including competitive salaries, health insurance, housing allowances.

**Keywords:** Eligibility Test, Oral Test, Welfare Schemes, Quality Service Delivery and Tertiary Institutions.

## **Introduction**

Public tertiary institutions are educational organizations for acquiring higher education, these institutions include universities, polytechnics and colleges of education. They are saddled with the responsibility of providing post-secondary education to the populace in different areas of specialization. In Rivers State there are about six main public tertiary institutions owned and managed by the River State Government. They include the River State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Ken Saro Wiwa Polytechnic, Rivers State School of Nursing, Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic and Rivers State College of Health.

Government all over the world underscore university education because of how valuable it is to the growth and development of a Nation's economy (Amie-Ogan & Epelle, 2023). Here in Nigeria, the Federal Republic of Nigeria in her National Policy on Education (2014), outlined the goals of public tertiary education which include: contribute to national development through high level relevant man power training; develop the intellectual capability of individuals to understand and appreciate their local and external environment: acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society; promote and encourage scholarship and community service; forge and cement national unity; and promote national, international understanding and interaction. In achieving these goals public tertiary institutions ought to focus on hiring individuals who do not only possess the necessary qualifications and expertise but also align with the public tertiary education mission, values and goals. Therefore, conducting thorough interviews, reference checks and assessments should be mandatory to ensure that the selected candidates are the right fit for the institutions of tertiary education.

Retaining academic staff is equally as important as selecting the right individuals. In order to achieve its goals, public tertiary institutions should focus on creating a positive work environment which offers competitive compensation and benefits, provides opportunities for professional development and recognizes and rewards personnel achievements. Managing the public tertiary institutions just like any other formal organization is not an easy task. According to Tamunomiebi and Wobodo (2018), amongst all organizational resources, employees are the life blood of any organization as its success and failure depends largely on their performance and commitment to its mission. It is therefore necessary that institutions progressively acquire the right pool of academic staff who have the necessary qualification, technical skills, competence and experience to deliver quality education to it's students. This could be achieved through proper selection and retention practices which public tertiary institutions could employ to retain better a workforce over their competitors. Selection is the process of identifying through a screening procedure the best recruitees suited for vacant positions or job in an organization (Amie-Ogan, 2023).

Eligibility tests on quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions has been a subject of scholarly discourse, particularly in the context of academic staff selection and retention. Eligibility tests serve as a fundamental mechanism for ensuring that only competent individuals are recruited into the academic workforce. These tests

assess candidates' knowledge, skills, and overall suitability for teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities. The rationale behind implementing eligibility tests is to have a more effective and efficient academic staff selection, resulting in better service delivery and improved outcomes (Adedeji, Walter & Adeniji 2020).

According to a study conducted by Castillo-Medina & Lopez-Valcarcel (2017) staff development programmes have been shown to improve employee job performance and commitment resulting in higher levels of retention in the workplace. Staff who are trained and given opportunities to enhance their skills find it difficult to resign from their workplace as it makes them feel valued and supported by their institution leading to a strong sense of loyalty and dedication to their work. Furthermore, staff developments can also help employees stay current with the latest trends and best practices in their field enabling them to provide high quality services to students and stakeholders. Staff selection and retention practices play a crucial role in the overall quality of service delivery in public tertiary institutions. The ability of universities to select and retain the best academic staff correlates with the quality of education provided for the students and the overall reputation of the institution. Today there's a fierce competition among public tertiary institutions and quality education delivery as well as global acceptance of which public tertiary institutions in Rivers State are not exempted. This is in a bid to achieve quality education delivery in public tertiary institutions by prioritizing effective selection and retention practices is key in 21st century. Based on the background the study hopes to investigate influence of academic staff selection and retention practices on quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in River State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the importance of academic staff selection and retention practices, public tertiary institutions in Rivers State are faced with challenges in attracting, selecting and retaining well qualified and seasoned academic staff of no mean repute. In recent times this gross challenge emanates from the fact that staff selection and retention practices are highly compromised in the 21st century. Originally, the criterion for the selection of academic staff was based on merit which ensured employment of highly qualified academic staff into public tertiary institutions. Recently there has been a decline in proper selection practice which has been sacrificed on the altar of ill practices such as political affiliations, lack of university autonomy, nepotism, tribalism, bribery and corruption. (Kerr & Okowa as cited in Amie-Ogan & Epelle 2023). It was opined that despite the laws establishing the universities, the government and external forces are exercising more and more authority over the administration of the university. The encroachment of government powers on universities are visible in different aspects of university governance whereby selection of lecturers and appointment of principal officers are the most affected.

The appointment of Vice Chancellors have become controversial, resulting on the position being zoned to indigenes of the locality where the governor comes from thereby sidetracking competence, merit and intellectual savy. (Olaniyan, & Ojo, 2015). Secondly there is lack of clear and standardized selection process in selecting academic staff in the universities. The method used in attracting eligible candidates for job offers during recruitment and selection processes have been below tertiary rating standards of the 1970's, 80's and 90's. This

has led to underqualified and unprepared individuals who do not possess the necessary skills and knowledge to teach and do research in public tertiary institutions. This happens to be the gap the present study hopes to fill through an empirical study. Hence the study hope investigated perceived influence of Academic Staff Selection and Retention Practices on Quality Service Delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

### **Eligibility Test of Academic Staff Selection**

Eligibility tests are pivotal in ensuring that candidates meet the minimum academic and professional standards required for academic positions. According to the study by Amie-Ogan and Epelle (2023), eligibility tests help identify candidates who are academically capable and suited for the rigorous demands of teaching and research. These tests assess candidates' qualifications and suitability, ensuring that only the most qualified individuals are selected. The findings from the study highlight that eligibility tests significantly influence the selection of academic staff, with results showing that they are crucial for maintaining high standards of service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State (Adedeji, Walter & Adeniji, 2020). A key benefit of such tests is that they standardize the selection process, reducing biases such as nepotism or political influence, which are prevalent in some recruitment practices.

### **Oral Interviews Used for Academic Staff Selection**

Oral interviews serve as an essential tool for evaluating candidates' communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and teaching potential, which are not easily assessed through written tests alone. The study indicates that oral interviews are commonly used in academic staff selection processes and have a significant influence on the quality of service delivery (Amie-Ogan & Epelle, 2023). Respondents from the institutions surveyed expressed that oral interviews allow them to better assess the suitability of candidates by evaluating not only their technical knowledge but also their ability to communicate effectively and engage with students. This is especially important in academic environments where interaction with students is a daily part of the job. The study supports the notion that oral interviews contribute to ensuring that selected candidates are not only qualified but also fit the institution's goals and values (Adeyemi, 2019).

### **Provision of Staff Welfare Schemes**

The provision of staff welfare schemes is another crucial aspect of the staff selection and retention process. A supportive work environment, which includes comprehensive welfare packages such as health insurance, housing allowances, and professional development opportunities, significantly impacts staff retention and their overall performance (Ali & Yusuf, 2020). The study found that the welfare schemes provided by institutions in Rivers State played a critical role in enhancing the quality of service delivery. Respondents from various institutions indicated that welfare schemes such as medical services, transportation, and pensions contributed to their decision to remain in their roles, thereby improving their job satisfaction and productivity. Furthermore, as noted by Ibrahim and Adamu (2022), such schemes foster a sense of belonging and loyalty among staff, which is essential for maintaining a stable and effective academic workforce.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The aim of this study was to investigate perceived influence of academic staff selection and retention practices on quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Ascertain the extent to which eligibility test of academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
2. Determine the extent to which oral interview used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
3. Determine the extent to which provision of staff welfare schemes used for staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study

1. To what extent does eligibility test of academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does oral interview used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
3. To what extent does provision of staff welfare schemes used for staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

## **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which eligibility test of academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which oral interview used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which provision of staff welfare schemes used for staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

## **Methodology**

The descriptive survey research design was used in the investigation. Population of the study consisted of 199 academic staff. Comprising of 16 Deans and 104 Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, 7 Deans and

42 Heads of Departments of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and 9 Deans and 21 Heads of Departments of Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic. The sample size for the study was one hundred and ninety-nine 199 respondents which comprised of 32 Deans of Faculties and 167 Heads of Departments in the three public tertiary institutions. The census method was used. The self-structured questionnaire titled: “Perceived Influence of academic staff selection and retention practices on quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions” (PIASRPQSDTIQ) was used to elicit responses for analyses. The instrument was made up of two sections (A and B). Section A had demographic information while section B elicited information on the variables of the study. The response format that was used was a four point scale of Very High Extent (VHE=4), High Extent (HE=3 points), Low Extent (LE=2points) and Very Low Extent (VLE=1point). The instrument was face and content validated by two experts from the Department of Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation in Rivers State University. To establish the reliability of the instrument, 30 copies of the instrument were given out to 7 Deans and 13 Heads of department from public tertiary institutions in Bayelsa State. The instrument was analyzed for reliability using Cronbach Alpha method. The reason was to establish the internal consistency of the instrument. The test yielded reliability coefficients of 0.86, 0.85, and 0.88 with the overall reliability coefficients of 0.86 which showed the instrument was reliable. The researcher administered 199 copies of the instrument to the respondents in their institutions with the help of 2 research assistants who were properly educated and guided on their roles. The instrument was retrieved within a maximum time lag of 2 weeks. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested with one-way Analysis of variance (ANOVA) at 0.05 level of significance

## Results

**Research Questions 1:** To what extent does eligibility test of academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

**Table 1: Mean Scores of Respondents on the Extent to Which Eligibility Test Used for Selection of Academic Staff Influence Quality Service Delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.**

| S/N | Items                                                                                                                       | Rivers State Ignatius Ajuru University<br>(n =120) |      |      | Education (n = 49) |      |      | Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic (n = 30) |      |      |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------|------|--------------------|------|------|-------------------------------------------|------|------|
|     |                                                                                                                             | $\bar{X}$                                          | SD   | Rmks | $\bar{X}$          | SD   | Rmks | $\bar{X}$                                 | SD   | Rmks |
| 1   | Eligibility tests are utilized in the selection of academic staff for quality service delivery.                             | 2.94                                               | 1.05 | H E  | 2.98               | 0.94 | HE   | 2.90                                      | 1.19 | H E  |
| 2   | Eligibility test scores accurately reflect the potentials imbed in prospective academic staff for quality service delivery. | 2.82                                               | 0.87 | H E  | 2.89               | 0.95 | HE   | 2.84                                      | 1.03 | H E  |

|                                                               |                                                                                                                                |             |             |     |             |             |    |             |             |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----|-------------|-------------|----|-------------|-------------|-----|
| 3                                                             | Eligibility test plays a significant role by enhancing the quality of applicants that are selected.                            | 2.79        | 0.92        | H E | 2.86        | 0.94        | HE | 2.80        | 0.86        | H E |
| 4                                                             | Eligibility tests accurately assesses the competence and qualification of prospective academic staff.                          | 2.82        | 0.96        | HE  | 2.86        | 0.85        | HE | 2.76        | 1.01        | H E |
| 5                                                             | Applicants who passed the eligibility test are selected based on merit.                                                        | 3.13        | 0.92        | H E | 3.10        | 0.82        | HE | 3.02        | 1.08        | H E |
| 6                                                             | Lack of standardized Eligibility tests negatively impacts on the selection of academic staff for quality service delivery.     | 3.15        | 0.96        | H E | 3.17        | 0.96        | HE | 3.05        | 1.02        | H E |
| 7                                                             | Some candidates who were selected despite their poor performance in the eligibility test provide quality service when engaged. | 2.73        | 0.86        | H E | 2.80        | 1.01        | HE | 2.83        | 0.86        | H E |
| <b>Mean (<math>\bar{X}</math>) for Different Institutions</b> |                                                                                                                                | <b>2.91</b> | <b>0.93</b> |     | <b>2.95</b> | <b>0.92</b> |    | <b>2.89</b> | <b>1.01</b> |     |
| <b>Grand Mean</b>                                             |                                                                                                                                | <b>2.92</b> |             |     |             |             |    |             |             |     |

#### Source: Field Survey (2024)

Results on Table 1 showed the mean scores of the respondents (Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic) on the extent to which eligibility test used for selection of academic staff influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Table 1 showed that the mean scores of 2.91 for respondents in Rivers State University, 2.95 for Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and 2.89 for Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which eligibility test used for selection of academic staff influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State with a grand mean score of 2.92 for the three public tertiary institutions in Rivers State which is higher than the criterion mean of 2.50. This infers that eligibility test used for selection of academic staff influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State to a high extent.

**Research Questions 2:** To what extent does oral interview used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

**Table 2 Mean Scores of Respondents on the Extent to Which Oral Interview Used for Selection of Academic Staff Influence Quality Service Delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.**

| S/N                                                           | Items                                                                                                                  | Rivers University (n = 120) |             |      | State Ignatius University of Education (n = 49) |             |      | Ajuru of Captain Amadi Polytechnic (n = 30) |             |      | Elechi (n = 30) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|------|---------------------------------------------|-------------|------|-----------------|
|                                                               |                                                                                                                        | $\bar{X}$                   | SD          | Rmks | $\bar{X}$                                       | SD          | Rmks | $\bar{X}$                                   | SD          | Rmks |                 |
|                                                               | Only applicants who passed the oral interview are selected for employment.                                             | 3.36                        | 0.91        | H E  | 3.13                                            | 0.99        | H E  | 2.84                                        | 0.88        | H E  |                 |
| 8                                                             | Not all applicants selected for employment are interviewed.                                                            | 2.71                        | 0.87        | H E  | 2.84                                            | 1.22        | H E  | 2.86                                        | 0.85        | H E  |                 |
| 9                                                             | Applicants who are interviewed provide better quality service compared to those who are not.                           | 2.88                        | 0.95        | H E  | 2.95                                            | 1.11        | H E  | 3.10                                        | 0.91        | H E  |                 |
| 10                                                            | Oral interviews allow the evaluation of a candidate's ability to communicate effectively,                              | 2.73                        | 0.99        | H E  | 2.89                                            | 0.96        | H E  | 2.86                                        | 0.97        | H E  |                 |
| 11                                                            | Oral interview is purely based on merit devoid of external Influences to mar the credibility of the selection process. | 2.77                        | 0.92        | H E  | 2.79                                            | 0.90        | H E  | 2.81                                        | 0.95        | H E  |                 |
| 12                                                            | Oral interview gives a clearer perspective of the quality of applicants that are to be selected.                       | 3.12                        | 0.86        | H E  | 2.76                                            | 1.16        | H E  | 2.99                                        | 0.90        | H E  |                 |
| 13                                                            | Some applicants who are not interviewed still provided quality service.                                                | 2.76                        | 0.86        | H E  | 2.91                                            | 1.04        | H E  | 2.81                                        | 0.82        | H E  |                 |
| 14                                                            | Oral interview to a large extent helps the institution to employ the best fit for job positions.                       | 2.79                        | 1.01        | H E  | 2.78                                            | 0.96        | H E  | 2.99                                        | 1.04        | H E  |                 |
| 15                                                            | Only applicants who passed the oral interview are selected for employment.                                             | 2.95                        | 0.88        | H E  | 2.81                                            | 1.02        | H E  | 2.82                                        | 0.96        | H E  |                 |
| <b>Mean (<math>\bar{X}</math>) for Different Institutions</b> |                                                                                                                        | <b>2.90</b>                 | <b>0.92</b> |      | <b>2.87</b>                                     | <b>1.04</b> |      | <b>2.90</b>                                 | <b>0.92</b> |      |                 |
| <b>Grand Mean</b>                                             |                                                                                                                        | <b>2.89</b>                 |             |      |                                                 |             |      |                                             |             |      |                 |

**Source: Field Survey (2024)**

Table 2 showed the mean scores of the respondents (Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic) on the extent to which oral interview used for selection of academic staff influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Results in Table 2 showed that the mean scores of 2.90 for respondents in Rivers State University, 2.87 for Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and 2.90 for Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which oral interview used for selection of academic staff influence quality service delivery in public tertiary

institutions in Rivers State with a grand mean score of 2.89 for the three public tertiary institutions in Rivers State which is higher than the criterion mean of 2.50. This infers that oral interview used for selection of academic staff influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State to a high extent.

**Research Questions 3:** To what extent does provision of staff welfare schemes influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

**Table 3: Mean Scores of Respondents on the Extent to Which Provision of Staff Welfare Schemes Influence Quality Service Delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.**

| S/N | Items                                                                                                                                               | Rivers State University (n = 120) |      |      | Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (n = 49) |      |      | Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic (n = 30) |      |      |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------|------|-------------------------------------------------|------|------|-------------------------------------------|------|------|
|     |                                                                                                                                                     | $\bar{X}$                         | SD   | Rmks | $\bar{X}$                                       | SD   | Rmks | $\bar{X}$                                 | SD   | Rmks |
| 16  | Good Work Environment encourages academic staff members to remain on the job and deliver quality service.                                           | 2.85                              | 1.01 | H E  | 2.88                                            | 1.09 | H E  | 2.82                                      | 0.96 | H E  |
| 17  | Provision of accommodation makes academic staff remain and deliver quality service.                                                                 | 2.78                              | 0.90 | H E  | 2.86                                            | 0.97 | H E  | 2.81                                      | 0.94 | H E  |
| 18  | Provision of health insurance scheme for academic staff increases their desire to stay on the job and deliver quality service.                      | 2.72                              | 1.01 | H E  | 2.86                                            | 0.90 | H E  | 2.67                                      | 0.99 | H E  |
| 19  | Provision of medical services for academic staff leads to retention and delivery of quality service.                                                | 2.71                              | 1.04 | H E  | 2.95                                            | 0.98 | H E  | 2.95                                      | 0.96 | H E  |
| 20  | Provision of transportation service or car loan for academic staff enhances quality service delivery.                                               | 2.67                              | 0.95 | H E  | 2.76                                            | 1.01 | H E  | 2.70                                      | 0.98 | H E  |
| 21  | Pension and gratuity paid to academic staff as at when due encourages them to remain on the job.                                                    | 2.73                              | 0.90 | H E  | 2.88                                            | 0.96 | H E  | 2.69                                      | 0.96 | H E  |
| 22  | Academic staff Work load which are compressed to create work life balance ensures continuity and stability in service delivery.                     | 2.86                              | 1.01 | H E  | 2.90                                            | 0.98 | H E  | 2.83                                      | 1.02 | H E  |
| 23  | Maternity leave granted to academic staff boosts their decision to stay on the job.                                                                 | 2.77                              | 1.04 | H E  | 2.88                                            | 0.98 | H E  | 2.72                                      | 0.97 | H E  |
| 24  | Leave of absence granted to academic staff influences their decision to stay on the job, with an intent of coming back for quality service delivery | 2.71                              | 0.92 | H E  | 2.64                                            | 0.96 | H E  | 2.82                                      | 0.90 | H E  |

|                                                               |                                                                                                           |             |             |     |             |             |     |             |             |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----|-------------|-------------|-----|-------------|-------------|-----|
| 25                                                            | Good Work Environment encourages academic staff members to remain on the job and deliver quality service. | 2.64        | 1.06        | H E | 2.82        | 0.95        | H E | 2.91        | 1.16        | H E |
| 26                                                            | Provision of accommodation makes academic staff remain and deliver quality service.                       | 2.76        | 0.88        | H E | 2.79        | 0.82        | H E | 2.78        | 1.04        | H E |
| <b>Mean (<math>\bar{X}</math>) for Different Institutions</b> |                                                                                                           | <b>2.75</b> | <b>0.97</b> |     | <b>2.84</b> | <b>0.96</b> |     | <b>2.80</b> | <b>0.99</b> |     |
| <b>Grand Mean</b>                                             |                                                                                                           | <b>2.80</b> |             |     |             |             |     |             |             |     |

Results on Table 3 showed the mean scores of the respondents (Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic) on the extent to which provision of staff welfare schemes influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Table 3 showed that the mean scores of 2.75 for respondents in Rivers State University, 2.84 for Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and 2.80 for Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which provision of staff welfare schemes influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State are with a grand mean score of 2.80 for the three public tertiary institutions in Rivers State which is higher than the criterion mean of 2.50. This infers that provision of staff welfare schemes influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State to a high extent.

### Test of Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which eligibility test used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

**Table 4: Summary of F-Ratio Showing the One-Way Analysis of Variance on the Extent to Which Eligibility Test Used for Selection of Academic Staff Influence Quality Service Delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.**

| Source         | Sum of Squares | DF  | Mean Square | F-cal | $\alpha$ | F-crit | Decision |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|----------|--------|----------|
| Between Groups | 3.71           | 2   | 1.87        | 11.54 | 0.05     | 3.04   | Sig.     |
| Within Groups  | 31.690         | 197 | 0.162       |       |          |        |          |
| Total          | 35.401         | 199 |             |       |          |        |          |

**Source: Field Survey, (2024)**

Table 4 presents the summary of One-Way Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) of the mean scores of Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which eligibility test used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Results on Table 4 showed that at 0.05 significance level and degrees of freedom (DF) = (197), F-cal = 11.54 and F-crit = 3.04. Since the F-cal

(11.54) is greater than the critical value (3.04), the calculated value is statistically significant at 0.05 significance level ( $F_{\text{cal}} = 3.04$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis which is stated that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which eligibility test used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State was rejected and the alternative is upheld. This implies that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which eligibility test used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which oral interview used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

**Table 5: Summary of F-Ratio Showing the One-Way Analysis of Variance on the Extent to Which Oral Interview Used for Selection of Academic Staff Influence Quality Service Delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.**

| Source         | Sum of Squares | DF  | Mean Square | F-cal | $\alpha$ | F-crit | Decision |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|----------|--------|----------|
| Between Groups | 2.904          | 2   | 1.452       | 7.68  | 0.05     | 3.04   | Sig.     |
| Within Groups  | 37.055         | 197 | 0.189       |       |          |        |          |
| Total          | 39.959         | 199 |             |       |          |        |          |

**Source:** *Field Survey, (2024)*

Table 5 presents the summary of One-Way Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) of the mean scores of Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which oral interview used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Results on Table 5 shows that at 0.05 significance level and degrees of freedom (DF) = (197),  $F_{\text{cal}} = 7.68$  and  $F_{\text{crit}} = 3.04$ . Since the  $F_{\text{cal}}$  (7.68) is greater than the critical value (3.04), the calculated value is statistically significant at 0.05 significance level ( $F_{\text{cal}} = 7.68$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which oral interview used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State was rejected and the alternative upheld. This implies that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi

Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which oral interview used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which provision of staff welfare schemes influence quality service delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

**Table 6: Summary of F-Ratio Showing the One-Way Analysis of Variance on the Extent to Which Provision of Staff Welfare Schemes Influence Quality Service Delivery in Public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.**

| Source         | Sum of Squares | DF  | Mean Square | F-cal | $\alpha$ | F-crit | Decision |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|----------|--------|----------|
| Between Groups | 2.652          | 2   | 1.362       | 9.144 | 0.05     | 3.04   | Sig.     |
| Within Groups  | 28.615         | 197 | 0.145       |       |          |        |          |
| Total          | 31.267         | 199 |             |       |          |        |          |

**Source: Field Survey (2024)**

Table 6 presents the summary of One-Way Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) of the mean scores of Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which provision of staff welfare schemes influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Results on Table 6 shows that at 0.05 significance level and degrees of freedom (DF) = (197), F-cal = 9.144 and F-crit = 3.04. Since the F-ratio (9.144) is greater than the critical value (3.04), the calculated value is statistically significant at 0.05 significance level (F-cal = 9.144). Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which provision of staff welfare schemes influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State was rejected and the alternative upheld. This implies that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which provision of staff welfare schemes influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

**Discussion of Findings**

The findings for Research Questions 1 on Table 1 showed that eligibility test used for selection of academic staff influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State to a high extent with a grand score of 2.92 for Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic. This finding is in line with the work of Okwudili and Chigozie

(2021), who asserted that structured eligibility tests play a crucial role in enhancing the selection process by ensuring that candidates possess the necessary qualifications for effective service delivery.

Hypothesis 1 on Table 4 showed that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which eligibility test used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State with F-cal (11.54) which was greater than the critical value (3.04). This finding also corroborated with the work of Okafor and Nwachukwu (2019) who asserted that institutions that used rigorous eligibility tests had higher quality academic staff who were more engaged in research and teaching activities which in turn led to better outcomes for students and improved overall service delivery. These findings also align with the work of Adedeji, Walter and Adeniji (2020) who opined that institutions that used transparent and merit based eligibility tests had a more effective and efficient academic staff selection process, resulting in better service delivery and improved outcome for students.

The findings for Research Questions 2 on Table 2 showed that oral interview used for selection of academic staff influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State to a high extent with a grand mean score of 2.89 for Dean of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic. This finding is in line with Onyekachi and Okechukwu (2020), emphasized the importance of rigorous selection processes in enhancing the quality of academic staff, thereby positively impacting service delivery in higher institutions. Hypothesis 2 on Table 5 showed a significant difference in the mean scores of Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which oral interview used for academic staff selection influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State with F-ratio (7.68) which was greater than the critical value (3.04). Furthermore, the finding resonates with the work of Adeyemi (2019), who argued that structured oral interviews do not only help identify qualified candidates but also promote transparency and meritocracy in the selection process. This aligns with the perception among respondents that oral interviews allow for a better evaluation of candidates, thereby ensuring that the most suitable individuals are selected for academic positions.

The findings for Research Questions 3 on Table 6 showed that provision of staff welfare schemes influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State to a high extent with a grand mean score of 2.80 for Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic. This finding is in line with Ibrahim and Adamu (2022), who noted that institutions that prioritize staff welfare are better positioned to meet their educational objectives. Hypothesis 3 on Table 6 also showed that there is a significant difference in the mean scores of Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments of Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic on the extent to which provision of staff welfare schemes influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State with F-cal (9.144) which was greater than the critical value (3.04).

Furthermore, Ali and Yusuf (2020) supported this finding, highlighting that effective staff welfare programmes contributed not only to improved job satisfaction but also to higher levels of productivity among academic staff. Respondents indicated that welfare schemes enhance their ability to deliver quality services, reflecting their views that a supportive work environment is integral to staff performance.

### **Conclusion**

This study revealed that effective academic staff selection and retention practices such as eligibility test, oral interviews and provision of staff schemes to a high extent influence quality service delivery in public tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Institutions should use rigorous eligibility tests, including proficiency and aptitude assessments, to evaluate the capabilities of academic staff. This will help identify candidates with the necessary competencies for quality teaching and research.
2. Oral interviews should be conducted professionally, with a focus on evaluating candidates' teaching, research skills, and communication abilities. A standardized and transparent interview process will ensure the selection of well-rounded academic staff capable of contributing to the institution's goals.
3. Institutions should provide comprehensive welfare packages, including competitive salaries, health insurance, housing allowances, and professional development opportunities. Giving such incentives will motivate academic staff, increase retention, and lead to improved service delivery.

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