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ADOPTION OF 360 DEGREE STAFF ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUE: AS A VALUE TEST FOR LECTURERS IN NIGERIA TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS REVIEW OF CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract
This qualitative study reviews the 360-degree assessment technique, as a value test for lecturers in Nigeria tertiary institutions. The current traditional performance assessment technique is no longer valuable because of its non-inclusion of certain fundamental assessment criteria that make it level inappropriate to determine the competencies required and exhibited by the lecturers. Lecturers are rated high on paper qualifications, copy and paste conference papers and publications which in most cases cannot attract any value to the institutions and students. No attention is paid to professional training, development and community service which is one aspects of lecturing job. The paper is aimed at conveying to employees and management an awareness of 360-degree assessment technique as a very distinctive type of performance assessment technique that is based on psychological factors like personal development, self-motivation, constructive criticism, and holistic feedback. Though the technique is challenging if not well designed, implemented, sometimes results to feelings of distrust and uncertainty between employees and co-managers or heads of various departments. It is administratively expensive and time-consuming. However, it creates opportunity that will involve students and lecturers in the assessment process of lecturers on their duties outside paper qualifications, publications, conferences attended and lecturers' performances in classroom. It provides a broader view of lecturers' capabilities, if they are meeting their objectives, targets, or basic job requirements and relationship with people. The 360-degree assessment technique can be applied to recruitment process and for optimum result, it should be used together with traditional performance evaluation method and not interchangeably.

Keywords: Adoption, 360 Degree, Assessment Technique, Value Test, Lecturers in Tertiary Institutions.

Introduction
One of the major concerns of management of tertiary institutions in Nigeria is how to measure the performances of lecturers even though some measures have been provided by the regulators of tertiary education. These measures are often more effective when used for lecturers' compensation and promotions. However, lecturers have been growing in their careers through promotions and appointments, it can be observed that the quality of tertiary education today has dropped and is till dropping when compared to the quality in the past. As appraisals are tied to salary raises and promotion opportunities, the objectives may skew the results if trust and integrity is compromised. Parents, students, and lack of funds has been attributed to the causes of dwindling fortune of tertiary education. The problem however, could be that lecturers in the tertiary institutions are not doing their jobs effectively and unfortunately, the current

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performance evaluation method used for measuring lecturers' performance in my view, has become too weak to detect lecturers' inadequacies and unprofessional conducts which some lecturers have been found guilty of in recent times. It is of note that, in the name of collaboration that some lecturers do not do research and write papers; they only pay money to add their names to articles written by other lecturers and use such articles for promotion and advancement. The question that deserves an urgent answer is; why do publications or journal articles bearing several people names, some unknown to the institution be used for assessment and the promotion of a lecturer in tertiary institutions? It is obvious that some lecturers appear not to have capacities for active lecture deliveries rather they soar round passively during lecture delivery and cannot carry out qualitative empirical research to attract research grants to their institutions. This is evidenced in the analysis of the quality of proposals submitted by lecturers to Nigeria Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TetFund) for award of research grant for the period (2012 – 2019) which showed that out of 3,356 proposals submitted by faculties, only 241 or 0.07% of them scaled through TetFund's Screening Panel due mainly to poor articulation and presentation of research proposals (TetFund' NRFS & MC, 2020). Onuoha (2020) has argued that promotion and appointment to positions in tertiary institutions in Nigeria are no longer based on competencies ascertained through performance evaluation; it is now based on favoritism, nepotism and subservient sycophancy. To the best of my knowledge as a lecturer, the evaluation system pays too much emphasis on paper qualifications, publications and conferences to the detriment of other variables that make quality teaching and learning possible. It could also be observed that some lecturers do not have the fundamental academic and professional background and training relevant to the field they teach; and the slogan is, as long as one attended a tertiary institution and can google it up, there is nothing he/she cannot teach in Nigeria. Some do not even dress neatly and appropriately except only when going to attend a conference or academic board meetings. Also, it can be argued that some lecturers have become semi-gods harassing and intimidating students and sometimes colleagues. Some form themselves into cabals to seat on their fellow lecturers' progress, equally, interpersonal conflicts and unhealthy rivalries amongst lecturers are also noticeable. Interpersonal communication among co-lecturers and students are in some cases not cordial.

Students who are critical stakeholders in the tertiary institution do not have any input in the evaluation system; yet, they are the ones who receive the brunt of lecturers' inefficiencies, ineffectiveness, harassment and sometimes victimization and high-handedness. This state of affairs (current evaluation system in polytechnics) cannot continue in the face of more effective techniques like the 360-degree method which has been acclaimed to be more encompassing and objective when compared to the traditional evaluation methods (Umukoro & Nwoko, 2017; Armstrong, 2009, Torrington, et al 2008, Adomii, 2007). 360-degree appraisal plays a vital role in its ability to provide structured, in-depth information about the current performance and the requirements of an employee in future to enable detailed and relevant development plans to be formulated (Baroda et al., 2012). It is now imperative to experiment with new evaluation technique that is elaborate enough to detect lecturers' strength and weakness. Though so many tertiary institutions have various methods to choose from when selecting techniques for performance assessment, but one technique that has gained popularity in developed countries is the 360-Degree performance evaluation Technique. 40% of America companies used the technique in 1995 but by year 2000 this has jumped to 65% (Alexander, 2006 cited in Umukoro & Nwoko, 2017). Nevertheless, the 360-Degree evaluation technique is not yet popular in Nigeria tertiary institutions even when the technique has been described as more encompassing

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and objective (Armstrong, 2009, Torrington, Hall, & Taylor, 2008).

Tertiary institutions in Nigeria today are employing thousands of lecturers to research, teach, and render community service in line with national and institutional mandate. These lecturers are growing in their careers through promotions and appointments. Observations show that the quality of tertiary education today has dropped and is till dropping when compared to the quality in the past. The problem however, could be that lecturers in the tertiary institutions are not doing their jobs effectively and unfortunately the current performance evaluation method for measuring lecturers' performance in my view, has become too weak to detect lecturers' inadequacies and unprofessional conducts which some lecturers have been found guilty of in recent times. This performance measurement technique does not provide a broader view of lecturers' capabilities and cannot be used to understand whether they are meeting their objectives, targets, or basic job requirements; neither does it involve consulting with multiple people and are often more effective when used for promotion and salary increment. Therefore, it is an issue of urgent important for Management of tertiary institutions to adopt the 360-degree assessment technique which is all-inclusive to enhance better planning and effective management of human resources.

Conceptual Review

One method for managing performance is the use of performance evaluations or appraisals. Performance evaluations can be utilized for a variety of purposes, so it is important that appropriate evaluations be used for the desired outcomes: pay, promotability, need for development, and employee success. Performance management includes the collection of appropriate data to analyze and inform the intended purposes. Data collected could be tied to employee's goals and objectives, as related to the duties and performance outcomes for the performance cycle. Multirater feedback is one of several methods used for data collection in recent years. Multirater feedback refers to any performance feedback system in which two or more people provide feedback to an individual employee (McLean, 2006). This approach has become one of the most popular methods for organizations that want to improve the performance appraisal system and make the data collection process more robust (Burke, 2008; Cummings & Worley, 2009; McLean, 2006).

Performance evaluations help managers provide feedback to individual employees for any number of purposes. Performance evaluations can serve as feedback systems that align employee performance to an organization's values and priorities and help link performance to reward (Cummings & Worley, 2009). Additionally, the process of conducting performance evaluations aids strategic human resource departments in pay and performance decisions, planning and organizational/workforce development, and providing necessary information about performance improvement needs and/or excellence among employees (Cummings & Worley, 2009).

In the work place performance is taken as how well or badly an employee or groups of employees do something well or poorly (Ata, Chafik, Razane, & Elalami, 2016). From this point of view, Bhat (2020) defined performance evaluation as the management technique used to measure employees' work and results using their jobs' descriptions as benchmark. Alexander (2006) in Umukoro & Nwoko (2017) see performance evaluation as a management process which involves evaluating employees to see how they are performing or have been performing their jobs based on their job duties as benchmarks with a view to providing feedback to them. It

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is a measurement process of measuring employees' job performance by comparing actual results with desired outcomes with a view to remedying lapses observed. For its functions, (Irby, 1978, Armstrong, 2009, Gareth & George, 2003) have discussed the functions of performance evaluation in organizations but this study aligned with Nor's (2018) view that every performance evaluation policy is designed to provide an appropriate, clear, and consistent framework for the assessment of employees' performance within the context of work improvement; self-evaluation and development planning. Nor further opined that it ensures that managers fairly and equitably review the performance of employees to encourage employee to deliver high quality service to stakeholders and treating colleagues with dignity and respect.

Objectives of the Study

The major objective of this study is to introduce the 360-degree assessment technique as an approach to improve the competencies, skills, and behaviors of lecturers and staff of tertiary institutions.

The specific objectives are to:

i. Review the 360-degree assessment technique and how it can improve the competencies, skills, and behaviors of lecturers and staff of tertiary institutions.
ii. Determine the challenges and prospects of the 360-degree evaluation technique in tertiary institutions.
iii. Appraise the 360-degree assessment technique template developed by Umukoro & Nwoko (2017).

Theoretical Framework

This study is rooted on three theories:

The Kuler-Rose Change Theory; which recognizes that business leaders often approach changes logically and neglects how people react emotionally to change. This theory emphasized that changes bring feelings of denial and angers people, but through bargaining, depression is removed after that acceptance of the change.

Victor Vroom's Expectancy theory; which suggests that individuals are motivated to put in efforts when they believe their effort will lead to performance improvement and that improved performance will be rewarded.

Maslow's Esteem and Self Actualization theory of needs; this recognizes and reward achievement, offers opportunities for advancement to take on more responsibility.

Empirical Review

The 360-Degree technique was developed by Marshall Goldsmith in 1949. General Electric of America was the first organization to use the technique but today Torrington et al (2008). It is being used by Crompton Greaves, Wipro, Infosys, Reliance Industries, and other organizations in India, America and Europe (Verma, 2015). Its popularity is such that 40% of America companies used the 360-Degree Technique in 1995 but by year 2000 this jumped to 65% (Alexander (2006).

Bacal and Fredrick (2000) did a comparative study using one of the traditional technique and the 360-degree method. The results showed that the later yielded more reliable, objective and consistent results. Also, when students were requested to evaluate their teachers using the 360 degree techniques, the outcomes were more revealing when compared to previous evaluations

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with traditional methods (Ece & Cemal, 2015). Furthermore, Marris and Rosemary (2016) reported that since the inception of the 360-degree techniques in Kumasi Polytechnic in Ghana, performance increased consistently. In a recent study (Sok-Foon, Sze-Yin, Yin-Fah, 2012) where students were requested to evaluate their lecturers and tutors, the outcome showed that, generally, the students agreed that their lecturers and tutor fulfilled their job scope and were willing to provide guidance (98.0%). Lecturers and tutors start the class within first five minutes (75.3%); lecturers and tutors were well prepared for each class session (81.2%); class session was well organized (74.0%); lecturers and tutors spoke clearly (72.0%); they provide a fair and clear assessment (73.6%); and they were willing to offer individual help (73.0%). Students' evaluation is now included in the key performance index for lecturers in staff appraisal and teaching effectiveness in most institutions in Europe and America (Griffin, 1999; Liaw & Goh, 2003).

Research Questions

The research questions below guided the study:

i. Can the 360-degree assessment technique improve the competencies, skills, and behaviors of lecturers and staff of tertiary institutions?
ii. Are there challenges and prospects of the 360-degree assessment technique to tertiary institutions?
iii. Is the 360-degree assessment technique Template developed by Umukoro & Nwoko (2017) relevant to tertiary institutions?

Current Traditional Staff Assessment Technique in Nigeria Tertiary Institutions

In Nigerian, the current assessment technique especially for lecturers, could be counterproductive as key resources to carry out adequate teaching, research, or publication, as well as community service, are either insufficient or not available at all. The challenges ranges from financial to inadequate technology. Nevertheless, the line managers and the institution's authority use these same inconveniences as criteria for performance appraisal. The objectivity of the performance appraisal has been called into question (Nurse, 2005) as a result of the authoritarian and punitive pattern in its approach, as well other elements like favoritism-minded, and control driven process.

The process starts with distribution of Annual Performance Appraisal (APA) Forms where lecturers fill in their personal data, qualifications, journals and book published where applicable; conferences attended, etc. The completed forms are then submitted to lecturers' HODs/Deans who also have portions to complete in the form and thereafter all duly completed APA are forward to higher authorities (Igbojekwe & Ugo-Okoro, 2015). This appraisal method is usually carried out by the Head of Departments, who reviews everything from the lecturers' performance through to the goals ensuring they're in line with the Institution's objectives. This method has been used for a very long time without modification or improvement.

However, this method has been criticized by Adoni, 2007; Armstrong, 2009 Umukoro & Nwoko, 2017 it is carried out on lecturer every three or four years and it is for promotion purpose only; whereas performance evaluation exercise is usually aimed at identifying workers' areas of strengths, weaknesses, and encourage improvement. It does not evaluate the actual behaviour of lecturers; Lecturers interpersonal communication or relationship with co-lecturers and students

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are not considered. According to Adomi 2007; Ugbojekwe & Ugo-Okoro, 2015; Umukoro & Nwoko, 2017 students who are direct consumers of lecturers' services are not formally involved in the evaluation of their teachers. The system has also been corrupted because many lecturers have been found to have submitted plagiarized papers and falsified records (Onuoha, 2020). Furthermore, the number of research grants attracted and community services rendered by lecturers are left out yet these are main duties of academics and the current evaluation technique covers what is been done by the lecturers and not what they doing. Generally, performance evaluation focuses on traits, behaviour and results. The types of evaluation are therefore categorized as follows: (1) trait appraisal, (2) behaviour appraisal and (3) results appraisal (Gareth & George 2003, Torrington et al, 2008; Armstrong, 2009). Based on psychological and biological sciences, trait evaluation measures the degree to which employees exhibit a particular trait in relation to jobs while behavioral appraisal looks at specific actions related to a job result evaluation focused on outcomes (Burch, 2018). For it is a management style that receives feedback from more than one source (Smither & Walker, 2004) and from those who knew the worker or instructor best, which could include students, subordinates, bosses, supervisors, peers, and themselves. Mello (2010, p.439) stated that "organizations need broader measures of employee performance to ensure performance deficiencies are addressed in a timely manner...employees' behaviors are being channeled in the appropriate direction toward performance of objectives that are consisted with the work unit…and employees are provided with appropriate and specific feedback". In this paper, academic institutions or public organizations are challenged to move away from the longstanding top-down approach style of performance appraisal to what is all-encompassing, detailed, focused, and always yielding unbiased results that are not usually contested which allows the person being evaluated to chat an all-round corrective measure for him or herself.

The 360 Degree Staff Assessment Technique as a Value Test for Lecturers in Nigeria Tertiary Institutions

Competition is one of the major threats of business and to be competitive, an institution needs to help adapt and evolve its human resource to the highest possible extent. This is because financial resources, latest technology and even the best strategy, does not guarantee effectiveness and efficiency of an institution, rather the degree of how well it is using its committed, inspired and competent employees. The knowledge of how its employees' are currently performing and if there is any necessity to change matters. The 360-degree feedback is playing a vital role in its ability to provide structured, in-depth information about the current performance and the requirements of an employee in future to enable detailed and relevant development plans to be formulated (Baroda et al., 2012). The 360-degree staff assessment technique is a holistic employee review process. It involves gathering the anonymous views and opinions of colleagues, managers, and direct reports, which is used to give an employee well-rounded and constructive feedback. It takes into account all the inadequacies inherent in the traditional evaluation methods by evaluating trait, behaviours and outputs simultaneously (Seldin, 1980; Peiperl, 2001; Alexander, 2006; Akinyele, 2010 cited in Umukoro & Nwoko, 2017). Like other techniques, the 360-degree appraisal method is a formalized process whereby employees are evaluated by multiple raters who regularly interact with the employees but differ from other methods because most of the time the raters are anonymous and the feedbacks are usually more objective (Armstrong, 2009).

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In tertiary institutions at the end of semester, the lecturers and instructors could find students' evaluating their work or teaching (alone in the classroom) freely and anonymously commenting on their overall observation of the supervisor. It could result from peers or supervisor's direct report and one's beneficiaries such as one's immediate students, this approach provides a complete reliable, richer, and open picture of feedback. The 360-degree appraisal technique is team oriented, as it involves a multi-rater (e.g., peers, students, secretaries, clerks, subordinates, managers, customers or clients, and oneself) approach, and involves feedback from anonymous persons. While some of the comments could be very touching or even hurtful it makes one better as the feedback is coming from those who really know the person at the center of the evaluation (Tyson & Ward, 2004). It is all-encompassing, detailed, focused and allows the person being evaluated to chat an all-round corrective measure for him or herself. When 360-degree feedback is applied on a work team it helps in achieving the team goals by fulfilling the individual goals as here each and every individual in the team is given importance and they play a major role in deciding of the team goals Hurley (1998).

From the point of psychology this type of performance feedback could be highly intuitive, subjective, and open to personal bias or halo effect, whereby a rater may have one negative or positive characteristic of the person which influences his total rating of the employee. Edwards (1996). It increases the performance of the employees as it gives a variety of career development opportunities. It is possible to have better performance because 360 degree provides a strong motivation, enhances information quality, increases the staff knowledge, and supports continuous learning.

Umukoro & Nwoko (2017) 360 Degree Assessment Technique Template:
This template was developed to be used to evaluate lecturers in tertiary institutions in Nigeria based on the philosophy and tenets of the 360-Degree assessment method.
Table 2 below presents this template and it shows;

i. **Who is** to do the evaluation
ii. **What** lecturers are to be to evaluated on and
iii. The specific **matrices** to evaluate in the learner.

Table 1.
Who Evaluates, *What* to Evaluate and the *Metrics* to evaluate using the 360-degree technique for lecturers.

Who Evaluates	What to Evaluate	Evaluation Metrics
HODs/Deans/ Rectors	Qualifications and other Variables	1. Qualification (Academic and Professional) 2. Teaching/lecturing experience. 3. Academic publications and conferences attended. 4. Administrative assignment. 5. Loyalty to dept/faculty/institution. 6. Dressing* 7. Temperament*.

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Lecturers Colleagues	Behaviour/Conduct	1. Quality of interpersonal communication. 2. Quality of contribution at department's/committee's meetings. 3. Level of discipline. 4. Dressing* 5. Temperament*.
Students	Behaviour/Conducts	1. Clarity in lecture delivery. 2. How well they teach. 3. Regularity/Punctuality in class. 4. How helpful to students. 5. Moral standing. 6. Dressing*. 7. Temperament*
Employers/Stakeholders/ Society	Quality of Graduates	1. Performance at interview. 2. 2. Performance on the job.

Source: Adapted from Umukoro & Nwoko (2017, p. 165).
"Re-designing performance evaluation technique of lecturers for higher performance", *Management Science Review (8)*1, * *Dressing* and *temperament* could be evaluated by all raters simultaneously.

Using Table 1 above,
Lecturers' immediate bosses (HODs) can rate them on qualifications and other variable, co-lecturers could rate them on interpersonal communication, quality of contributions at meetings, integrity, etc. Students can evaluate them on regularity/punctuality in classes; clarity and how well they understand their lecturers, etc. Dressing and temperament could be evaluated by all raters. The feedback from these multiple raters will then be aggregated, analyzed, summarized, and relayed to the lecturers in an unobtrusive manner. Thereafter, action plan for training/development can be designed and implemented. The development can take the form of coaching, counseling and outright training by resource persons either from within the organization or by external consultants (Alexander, 2006; Armstrong, 2009).

Challenges of the 360-Degree Staff Assessment Technique
Some of the challenges of 360-degree assessment technique are;

i. When it is not well designed and implemented, resulting in feelings of distrust and uncertainty between employees and among co-managers or heads of various departments.
ii. 360-Degree Staff Assessment Technique is time-consuming and costly in terms of administration and addressing many characteristics of an employee; some employees might view this system as a threatening evaluative tool as it could lead to personal attacks. According to Baroda et al., 2012, anonymity and privacy breach may become a major issue since multiple parties are involved in the 360-feedback process. In some cases, evaluators may discuss an employee's appraisals openly and violate his/her privacy.
iii. Feedback providers tend to be less likely to give honest, impartial and fair feedback if they know that it might affect someone's pay or promotion, they are close to. For

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example, in case of upward feedback, implicit or even explicit deals may be struck with subordinates to give high ratings in exchange for high ratings and such manipulation is less likely when feedback is provided strictly for developmental purpose. Maylett, 2009 has it that as many organizations and managers operate in poor feedback environments, the first exposure to this method may be accompanied by some degree of anxiety on the part of both organization and employee.

iv. When employees can anticipate that feedback, they receive will be used purely for their own developmental benefit they tend to be more receptive to the feedback provided. Rather than receiving the feedback from a defense posture, they are more apt to accept the feedback as a "gift" from those they influence.

Prospects of 360-degree Staff Assessment Technique

Though the 360-degree assessment technique has been criticized by many but its benefits outweigh the criticism. It is a deviation from the traditional way in which an employee is being assessed by one person (e.g., one's Head of Department or immediate Supervisor). It is team oriented. Design and implementation of 360-degree feedback is critical and when it is done in a proper and systematic way it has a variety of positive effects Hurley (1998). A proper constructed 360-degree appraisal technique benefits remain profound and serves important purposes in a public setting like tertiary institutions by;

i. Recognizing lecturer's weakness and strengths and helps facilitate appropriate development.

ii. Addressing issues of competencies by providing answers to the 'how' as well as the 'what' to evaluate at the same time allow lecturers and their colleagues to see things from a different perspective, thereby address issues relating to team work, communication skills, and leadership.

iii. It will enable lecturers to identify new potential areas for development, improve working relationships and enhance lecturers' self-awareness and encourage better behavior. It increases the performance of the employees as it gives a variety of career development opportunities; provides a strong motivation, enhances information quality, increases the staff knowledge, supports continuous learning Edwards (1996).

iv. It will help a lecturer or staff member understand how he or she is viewed by others, enhances and improves communication following the identification of certain problems. 360-degree feedback helps individuals in many ways such as improving performance, structuring competencies etc; it is flexible and friendly and is more appreciated than conventional method Pollitt (2004)

v. To determine appropriate rewards and compensations, in the form of promotions, wages, merit pay bonuses, retention identify specific training needed to correct a lecturer's deficiencies.

vi. Management using it in raising an employee's motivation through understanding of one's personal and developmental direction to plan one's career path.

vii. Finally, it provides a broader view of lecturers' capabilities and better understanding of whether they are meeting their objectives, targets, or basic job requirements, relationship with people and the feedback obtained may be used to identify opportunities for improvement, after which an action plan can be established. The action plan could incorporate short and long-term goals with professional development milestones attached. By so doing, the lecturers can receive training that helps with their individual growth and

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career development and the new skills acquired from training and development will also add value to the students and the institution.

Conclusion

Competition is one of the major threats of business and to be competitive, an institution need to help adapt and evolve its human resource to the highest possible extent. This is because financial resources, latest technology and even the best strategy, does not guarantee effectiveness and efficiency of an institution, rather the degree of how well it is using its committed, inspired and competent employees. The knowledge of how its employees are currently performing and if there is any necessity to change matters. The 360-degree feedback is playing a vital role in its ability to provide structured, in-depth information about the current performance and the requirements of an employee in future to enable detailed and relevant development plans to be formulated (Baroda et al., 2012).

The 360-degree assessment techniques can accommodate a good number of categories of raters with academic grading of effectiveness (A to D). It permits a "grade point" interpretation of every item and item cluster; allow for a comprehensive summary of essential strengths and key limitations; and permit all- embracing, sketchy comments as they help provide added insight of understanding. It needs academic leadership's support in order for it to fully proof excellent practices and results. If adopted, it can gradually result in a more academic environment on campuses as well as sustained outcomes and well-defined changes in tertiary educational system in Nigeria. It reduces the usual, inexcusable nature of tertiary institutions in term of student-instructors or administrators-lecturers' relations thereby enhance the overall wellbeing of the tertiary institutions. Other than appraisal and development, the process can also be applied to recruitment with its challenges and prospects. They should not be used interchangeably. To get the optimum result, tertiary institutions in Nigeria should use both 360-degree assessment technique and traditional performance assessment technique together.

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