

The Impact of Human Resource Development on Performance of Academic Staff in Nigerian Universities: A Study of Selected Universities in Bayelsa State of Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the impact of human resources development on performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities in Nigeria. The study involved a survey of two Universities in Bayelsa State. Data were obtained from the annual reports of the Federal University, Otuoke and Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island both in Bayelsa State selected for the period 2010-2014. The relevant data were subjected to statistical analysis using the multiple regression technique. The results of the study revealed that Human Resource Effectiveness (HUREE) and Human Resource Certification (HUREC) have positive and significant relationship with Performance of Academic Staff (PAS) in Nigerian Universities. It was also empirically verified that Human Resource Promotion (HUREP) and Performance of Academic Staff (PAS) have significantly negative relationship. The researchers recommended that training and human resource development relevant to organizational goals should be provided to employees and recipients provided with an enabling environment to perform tasks that will lead to excellent staff performance.

Keywords: Human Resource Development, Performance, Academic staff, Effectiveness, Certification and Promotion.

1. Introduction

The most important roles of the university system in any society apart from teaching are development of new knowledge, research work and community services. These cannot be achieved without proper planning of human resource development. New employees are often uncertain about their roles and responsibilities, hence, job demands and employees capabilities must be balanced through human resource development (Riley & Baldrige 1977).

Building a solid academic staff program influences the realization of the university mission statement. Employee development refers to the human resource programs designed to enhance the value of employee after they have joined the organization. It includes employee training and orientation, which involves giving employee experience designed to foster learning geared towards proper preparation for job performance. The Nigerian University system significantly emphasizes research and dissemination of knowledge as part of their mission statement. This was made obvious in the ordinance passed by the Nigerian Legislative Council in 1948, which stated that the mission of funding their first university (University of Ibadan) was to advance learning and research and to provide instruction in all branches of liberal education (Mellamby 1974).

Good conditions of service relates strongly with stable working environment. The 1954 ordinance also identified the need to promote research and advancement of science as one of the main objectives of the university education (Mellamby 1974). This implies that research and dissemination of relevant research results remain one of the cardinal parameters for assessing performance of the university systems, on-going trends in technological advancement as well as economic development. Therefore, development efforts enable the university to assume these roles and greater responsibilities. Human resource development improves the skill of the individuals in the said role and prepares them for future responsibility. Development pays dividends to the employee and the organization; the personal and career goals of the staff are advanced, adding to their abilities and values to the employer, which further the achievement of the university education.

It is true that knowledge is not static, but dynamic, hence knowledge acquired today can become obsolete tomorrow, thus, development becomes imperative. In the same vein (Fasanmi 1982) pointed out that development helps to recharge the teacher's intellectual battery with new electrolytes of knowledge and ideas. After a lecturer has been given necessary training in an educational institution where he is employed, he develops on the job in order to acquire new knowledge, skills and abilities which ensure their continued

usefulness to the organization and at the same time meeting personal desire for advancement (Jessin 1978).

Prioritizing academic staff work load influences the faculty productivity index. The building of sound and effective manpower for the achievement of organizational objective has been the utmost concern of the human resource department of an organization. The essence is to reduce obsolescence to the barest minimum. Hence development programs are used productively. Workers who are aware of current development in their profession including new knowledge acquisition are positively in position to boost their productivity index. In fast changing and highly technological fields such as engineering and medicine, obsolescence can occur quickly. The academic staff of such departments such as sociology, psychology and other behavioural science disciplines may not notice obsolescence until inappropriate attitudes and poor performance become obsolete (Green 1997).

Increase in FTE equivalence influences the promotional frequencies of academic staffs, rapid changes in technology required university academic staff to engage in continuous research work in order to remain current with technology to carry out these functions. Not all the lecturers have the ability and the technical skills required for dissemination of new knowledge, hence, the need for lecturers' development. The training of lecturers is done by different educational institutions. This gives room for inequalities in background training. It is development programmes that can compensate for the inequalities created by the background training. It improves the competency of members of staff; the achievement of learners are maximized and their overall growth is enhanced. In principle, universities all over the world, especially those in the developed world are completely independent and free to investigate issues of interest, and are free to determine the different programs to offer to students. The provision of such programs depends on the needs of society. Since the society is dynamic, it creates the need for academic programs. The relevant of development of academic staff of the university cannot be overemphasized; staff developments have been hindered by lack of adequate funds for the running of universities. In Nigeria, the funding of universities has been the sole responsibility of government and this has deteriorated greatly since the 1980's due to the establishment of more universities for political reasons (Matheson 1994).

The institutions are underfunded, staff unpaid, teaching and research suffer due to lack of funds to ensure staff development and continuity of research activities in the universities. The dwindling rate of teaching and research in university is due to lack of development results in the loss of quality of university education. Lack of funds for effective human resource development has made some departments such as medicine and allied disciplines to be understaffed. This is because training in these areas are expensive hence just a few individuals could sponsor themselves for further improvement (training and development).

Financial incentive is not a direct correlate of lecturers' promotion. (Thom-Otuya 1998) asserts that personnel development enables employees to learn to do their job in a manner that fits the employer's specification. Decision-making, management of students, management of classroom activities, communication, research and research reporting, all demand specialized skills which makes an experienced lecturer different in the profession, hence the need for development of lecturers in order to make them highly experienced professionals in their fields of specialization. This will help each of the lecturers to be competent in their area of specialization and thus will offer qualitative teaching.

In Nigerian schools, two groups of personnel are employed; they are the trained and untrained human resource. Managing human resource in the schools is not an easy task. For a staff to be able to give learning instruction efficiently and effectively for a desired output, he or she must have the teaching skills, knowledge and teaching methods. Not following the required teaching methods, one may leave some gaps in the accepted teaching procedures, hence, to guide the investigation.

The broad objective of this study is to examine the impact of human resource development on performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To examine the relationship between human resource effectiveness and performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities.
- ii. To examine the correlation between human resource certification and performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities.
- iii. To examine the relationship between human resource promotion and performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

In order to achieve the objective of the study, the following hypotheses were formulated. They are stated in the Null (Ho) forms.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between human resource effectiveness and performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between human resource certification and performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between human resource promotion and performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Human Resource Development

Before discussing human resource development there is the need to explain the word “human resource”. Human resource may refer to latent force which is inherent in a person (www.thefreedictionary.com/manpower). When such resource or inherent power is developed through education, training and health, the individual would be in a better position to make contribution to the group and or the society he or she belongs. Furthermore, “human resource” means the power of human physical strength. Also, it refers to power in terms of the workers available to a particular group or required for a particular task in any organization, be it educational, service or industrial organization. In economic terms, it means the labour force in a nation, including both men and women. If there are more people than available jobs, it is called human resource surplus: if available people are fewer than jobs, it becomes human resource deficit. (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/manpower>).

Development of human resource is undertaken through formal and non-formal education in order to make workers useful to themselves and the group they are working for (Okotoni & Erero 2005). The emerging challenge of developing organizational cultures not only support the acquisition, sharing and management of the knowledge that currently resides in individuals in an organization, but also the creation and application of the knowledge for improving business practices and processes (Cedefop 2002). Meanwhile, human resources development refers to the improvement in knowledge, skill, attitude and endowment of labour force so as to bring about sustained economic growth. In the past, much emphasis was laid on capital and material resources development. However it has now been recognized that access to capital and material resources can only be achieved if human resource is adequately developed. Besides, it has also been realized that human beings are the active agents used in accumulating capital, tapping natural resources, building social, economic and political organization, and for national development.

In view of the recent trend in information and communication technology and free market economy, the nature of manpower development programme being provided has also changed. For instance, the (World Bank 2003) advocates knowledge-based economy which relies primarily on the use of ideas and application of technology. Thus, preparing workers to compete in a knowledge economy requires a new mode of education and training, a mode of life-long learning that encompasses learning throughout the life cycle of an individual. It includes formal, non-formal and informal education and training. According to the (World Bank 2003), a knowledge economy rests on four pillars:

- i. A supportive economic and institutional regime which can provide incentives for the efficient use of existing and new knowledge.
- ii. Educated and skilled population who can create, share and use knowledge.
- iii. A dynamic information infrastructure which can facilitate the effective communication dissemination and processing of information.
- iv. An efficient innovation system of firms, research centres, universities, consultants and other organizations that can tap the growing stock of global knowledge, assimilate and adapt it to local needs, and create new technology.

An increasing number of tertiary institutions, including newly approved universities, polytechnics and colleges of education in Nigeria are offering part-time evening, weekend and sandwich courses/programmes to meet the educational needs of working adults in all sectors of the economy. Besides, the National Teachers Institute (NTI) is graduating more teachers every year through its distance learning programme. Many universities and polytechnics are encouraging their workers, academic and non-academic staff to obtain further education or pursue post graduate programmes in various disciplines. These institutions also sponsor their academic staff for local and international conferences/workshops in order to keep them fit for academic work. The non-academic workers are not left behind in conference and workshop attendance. They are motivated to join professional groups and from time to time, they are sponsored to take part in one workshop or the other with a view to exposing them to new ideas, knowledge and skills. Apart from obtaining further education through the formal educational approach, one other way is non-formal education and training. An aspect of this is distance education which offers more flexible learning opportunities for workers.

Using distance education system, workers may rely on correspondence from provider institutions. Beside prepared materials obtained through printed or electronic means or internet or CD, learners may also benefit from face to face teaching in the institution where the programme is taking place. Examples of this model are those of University of Ibadan, University of Lagos and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria to mention just a few.

2.2 Objectives of Human Resource Development in Tertiary Institutions

The following are some of the objectives of human resource development in tertiary institutions in Nigeria:

- i. To improve present performance of workers on the same job
- ii. To improve future performance of employees on the same job
- iii. To upgrade and update competence of workers for future job assignments

- iv. To raise productivity of workers
- v. To produce workers that are ready to take up new challenges brought about by changes in technology

3. Methodology

The research methodology of this study is survey design. The design matrix of this research study is framed up with human resources development and the performance of academic staff of universities in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. Human resource development is the independent variable while performance of academic staff of universities is the dependent variable.

The target populations for this research investigation are the two universities in Bayelsa State of Nigeria. The Federal University, Otuoke and Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island (a state owned University). This population was chosen as a result of the peculiarity of human resource challenges and the investigators research interest in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

The data for this study were collected from the annual reports of the Universities under study for the period 2010-2014.

3.1 Variables of the Study

Performance of Academic staff (PAS) is the explained (dependent) variable. It is measured by number of graduates turned out at both post-graduate (PG) and undergraduates (UG) in Nigerian Universities.

Three elements of the independent variable (human resource development) were identified and employed in the study. They are:

- i. Human resource effectiveness (HUREE): this means the competence of academic staff to train and graduate students in their study disciplines on record time.
- ii. Human resource certification (HUREC): this measures the level of academic staff qualifications to train and turn out graduates in terms of first, master and doctoral degrees in Nigerian universities.
- iii. Human resource promotion (HUREP): this measures promotional frequencies of academic staff that leads to increase in financial incentives or benefits.

3.2 Model Specification

We developed a regression model of the following form to capture the interrelationships between Human Resource Development (HRD) and Performance of Academic Staff (PAS) in Nigerian Universities.

$PAS = f(HUREE, HUREC, HUREP) \dots$ Model 1

To make the model easy for empirical verification, we transform it into a multiple linear regression equation.

$PAS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 HUREE + \beta_2 HUREC + \beta_3 HUREP + \mu \dots$ equation 1

Where:

β_0 = the constant of the equation

$\beta_1, \beta_2,$ and β_3 = coefficients of the independent variables to be estimated

$HUREE$ = Human resources effectiveness

$HUREC$ = Human resources certification

$HUREP$ = Human resources promotion

μ = the error term

The multiple regression analysis was used for data evaluation. The merit of multiple regression analysis is that it allows researchers to utilize more of the information available to estimate the dependent variable. It also presents the unique qualities of un-biasness, consistency and efficiency. The statistics tested for in the regression equation for the variables includes the coefficient of determination (R^2), T-test, F-test and Durbin Watson (DW) statistics. The statistical computer software (SPSS 20) was used to run the analysis.

Where:

The coefficient of determination (R^2) test measure of the explanatory power of the independent variables on the dependent variable; Student T-test measures the individual significance of the estimated independent variables; and F-test measures the overall statistical significance of the regression model. It is used to generalize the hypotheses. The Durbin Watson (DW) statistics test for auto-correlation in the regression.

4. Findings and Results

Table 1: Average values of performance of academic staff and human resource development of 2 selected universities (Federal and State) in Bayelsa State for the period 2010-2014

| Year | Dependent Variable PAS (No. of Graduates Turned Out) | Independent Variable | | |
|------|--|----------------------|-------|--------|
| | | HUREE | HUREC | BHUREP |
| 2010 | 3207 | 410 | 405 | 394 |
| 2011 | 3468 | 496 | 467 | 420 |
| 2012 | 3945 | 540 | 510 | 480 |
| 2013 | 4880 | 680 | 575 | 565 |
| 2014 | 6450 | 769 | 670 | 728 |

Source: Annual reports of selected universities for the period 2010-2014 as computed by the researchers.

4.1 Interpretation

The table above depicts the average values of graduates turned out expressed in thousands, level of academic staff qualifications expressed in hundreds, study discipline of lecturers for service delivery and human resources promotional frequencies expressed in hundreds for both universities for the period 2010-2014.

Table 2: Results of regression analysis on the variables (PAS, HUREE, HUREC, HUREP); Analysis of the relationship between human resource development and performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities. Dependent variable: PAS (Performance of Academic Staff)

| Model | Un-standardized Coefficients | | Standard Coefficient | T | Sig |
|----------|------------------------------|-----------|----------------------|--------|------|
| | B | Std Error | Beta | | |
| Constant | 19.986 | .797 | | 31.845 | .000 |
| HUREE | 75.783 | 5.152 | 3.589 | 25.906 | .076 |
| HUREC | .563 | .324 | 2.472 | 4.592 | .037 |
| HUREP | -.348 | .255 | -.654 | -.343 | .859 |

F-Value = 89.702
 F- probability = 0.000
 $R^2 = .974$
 DW $R^2 = 97.4\%$
 DW = 1.752

Source: SPSS version 20

4.2 Discussion of Research Findings

The coefficient of determination R^2 shows that the explanatory variables explained approximately 97% of the relationship between Human resources development and performance of academic staff in Nigeria Universities. Human Resources Effectiveness (HUREE) has statistically significant positive relationship with performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities. This result supports prior empirical evidence that building a solid academic staff program for the university mission statement yielded a significant result on performance of academic staff.

Human Resources Certification (HUREC) has a positive and significant relationship with performance of academic staff. This result supports prior empirical evidence that personnel development and employee performance are positively related (Thom-Otuya, 1998). A unit increase in HUREC would lead to 56.3% increase in performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

Human Resources Promotion (HUREP) has a negative and significant relationship with performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities.

This result conforms to prior empirical evidence that academic staff promotion does not significantly influence performance of academic staff in terms of graduates turned out at the post-graduate schools (Jessin, 1978). A unit increase in Human resources Promotion will lead to .348 unit decrease in performance of academic staff (PAS) in Nigerian Universities.

4.3 Conclusion

The study established that significant and positive relationship exists between human resource development and performance of academic staff in Nigerian universities.

The results of the study support both theoretical and empirical evidence of prior studies that human resources effectiveness and certification impact positively on the performance of academic staff (Thom-Otuya 1998).

Descriptively, the result of these research findings indicates that the universities in Bayelsa State are

constantly engaged in human resource development planning just for the purpose of building a very strong academic staff system.

Also, the researchers concluded that Human Resources Promotion without the relevant training would negatively affect the performance of academic staff in Nigerian Universities. This result agrees with the findings of (Jessin 1978).

4.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

- i. The management of tertiary institutions are enjoined to formulate policies on training and human resource development programmes for their academic staff because of its positive influence on their organizations.
- ii. The personnel departments of Universities in Bayelsa State of Nigeria should be very emphatic with greater priority in considering the application of the variables in this study in molding a very strong and productive academic staffing programme.

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