
ASSESSMENT OF THE ADEQUACY OF HUMAN RESOURCE IN UNIVERSITIES IN THE SOUTH EAST STATES OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the adequacy of human resource in universities in the South East States of Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey design and the population comprised 567 Deans of Faculties and Heads of Departments. Two objectives two research questions and one hypothesis guided the study. The instrument for data collection was a 16-item researcher developed questionnaire titled 'Adequacy of University Personnel Questionnaire (AUPQ) with modified four point Likert-type scale. It was validated by experts in Educational Management and planning and educational measurement and evaluation. A reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained by Pearson-Product Moment correlation statistic. Mean score was used in answering the research questions while Z-test was used for testing the hypothesis. The result revealed that the number and quality of academic and non teaching (support) staff in Universities in the South-East States of Nigeria is inadequate. And there is no significant difference between the opinions of Deans and Heads of Department on this inadequacy of personnel. Based on these findings, it was recommended that more qualified personnel should be employed and the existing ones that are not qualified should be retrained or sponsored to acquire higher certificates. The paper also concluded that the inadequacy of personnel has negative consequence on the service delivery in these universities. And so, urgent steps be taken to remedy the problems.

Keywords: University, adequacy, academic, teaching, resource, assessment.

INTRODUCTION

The belief in the efficacy of education as an instrument for national development has made many nations of the world to commit much of their wealth to the establishment of educational institutions. In Nigeria, many of such institutions have been established by government since the colonial era. After the take off of Yaba Higher College as the first tertiary institution in Nigeria

in 1948 which was later up graded to the status of a university, many other universities have been established within the last ten decades.

According to National Universities Commission (2013) there are 124 universities operating in Nigeria, comprising 37 Federal, 37 states and 50 private universities. In spite of this large number of universities and the number of graduates they turn out every year, they seems to have only a marginal impact on the national social, economic and technological development. Ajibola (2011) observed that the current standard of university education which appears to be dwindling has great consequence on our national development. There seem to be a disconnect between what goes on in the universities and the world of work which stimulates national development.

The ability of any university to carry out its legitimate functions to the society effectively is hinged on the availability and adequacy of resources in the university. A resource is a source of supply from which benefit is derived. According to Azikwe (1994), resources may include all forms of information, materials and persons that are used to promote, encourage and enhance teaching and learning activities.

In the context of university management, resources may refer to human (personnel), funds, information, infrastructure and equipment (materials) without which effective teaching and learning cannot take place. And of all the resources available to the university, human resource (personnel) is the most important. The university personnel include all the teaching and non teaching (support) staff of the university (Okunamiri, 2002). Similarly, Mgbekem (2004) opined that the university personnel or human resource in any university comprises all academic and non academic (support) staff of the University. They include lecturers, administrative staff, librarians, technologists/laboratory scientist, university staff school personnel, staff of the health centre, artisans etc.

The National Universities Commission (NUC) provides the official standards for the resources required for running universities in Nigeria. It is a parastatal under the Federal Ministry of Education. The NUC benchmark (2014) stipulates that the minimum qualification for a university lecturer is a PhD certificate. However, individuals with good Masters Degree certificates may be employed as assistant or trainee lecturers. It also provides that only those lecturers with PhD who are on the senior lecturer and professorial cadre are qualified to teach and supervise post graduate students. The document as well indicates that the academic staff structure in any department should have 20% of lecturers in the Professorial cadre, 25% in the senior lecturer cadre and 55% in the lectureship grade I, II and Assistant lecturer. This human resource or personnel available to any university must be adequate in terms of number and quality in order to ensure the smooth running of the system and maintenance of academic standards.

According to Asiabaka and Odionye (2010), the attainment of the objective of any educational institution especially the university depends to a large extent on the adequacy of number and qualification of its academic staff. They observed that statistical figures have consistently shown that there is an inadequate number of all categories of academic staff in Nigerian Universities. The problem of academic staff shortage in Nigeria universities may be traced back to the early years of university education in Nigeria. Mgbekem (2004) indicated that, since 1963 till date, the rate of student enrolment in Nigerian Universities has been growing rapidly without a corresponding growth in the number of academic staff, leading to poor standards. Ivowi (2006) opined that one of the major causes of the growing shortage of academic staff in Nigeria universities is brain drain syndrome. He observed that the issue of brain drain has complicated the problem of shortage of academic staff. According to him, many high profile academics have left the shores of Nigeria to overseas countries for gainful employment.

Ajibola (2011) contended that inadequate academic staff both in quality and numerical strength is a major contributing factor to the problem of falling standard of university education in Nigeria. He observed that engineering departments in most universities usually have problems during accreditation due to shortage of academic staff. And to worsen the situation, young engineering graduates with good honors degrees prefer jobs in other sectors of the economy to university lecturing. He revealed that many of such graduates are in construction companies, banks and even politics, all in a bid to enjoy attractive salaries and other conditions of service. The views of Ayodele and Abiodun-Oyebanji (2010: 145-148) corroborate the above authors when they decried the inadequacy of academic staff as one of the major causes of the problem of quality assurance in Nigeria universities. They deposed that

Recent development in the Nigerian University system seems to indicate that all is not well as expected with the quality assurance in Nigerian university system. The scenario appears very worrisome when viewed against the background that Nigeria served as the hub of University education in the West African Sub-region.

According to Edemobi (2008) the structure of academic staff in faculties of education, in Universities in the South-East zone of Nigeria do not conform to the NUC benchmark. He observed that these faculties have a structure that is bottom heavy. Most of them have less than 10% each on the professorial and senior lecturer cadre and over 80% on the lectureship grade I, II and Assistant lecturer cadre. Olugbile and Alechanu (2013: 11) corroborated the above when they observed that the teaching staff distribution in Nigeria Universities both by qualification and rank, indicates that Nigeria University system is in crisis of man power, they stressed that,

instead of having 100 percent academics with PhD degree as recommended by NUC, only about 43 percent do so, which is counterproductive.

Anyim (2012: 8) also revealed that

There are 37, 504 academic staff in our public universities. Out of this number, only 28,128 (75%) are employed on fulltime basis. This means that 9,376(25%) are engaged as visiting, adjunct, sabbatical and contract staff. 23, 030 (61%) are employed in federal universities while 14, 474 (39%) teach in state universities. In terms of their academic qualifications more than 57% of these lecturers have no PhD degrees.

He also indicated that the ratio of lecturer to student in our universities is very high, up to 1: 100 students or more especially in Arts, education and humanities departments.

Aside the quality of academic staff, the adequacy of non teaching (non academic) staff have a lot to contribute to the quality of service delivery or otherwise of Nigeria universities. The non teaching staff of the Nigerian university system may refer to those lines of staff who are not directly involved in teaching both at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. They may also be referred to as administrative, technical and support staff who are not directly involved in university teaching. These groups of staff may include career administrators, engineers and technicians in works unit, laboratory scientists/technologists, Doctors and Nurses in the University Clinics, teachers and other staff in the staff school, clerks, Artisans, Librarians, security personnel, messengers and cleaners etc (Mgbekem, 2004).

These groups of staff make-up the largest percentage of university staff population in Nigeria universities. However, a critical look at this group of staff in terms of certificate qualification may reveal something different. Apart from career administrators and teachers in the university staff school, over 80% of non teaching staff in various departments/ units have no university degree. A good number of these staff poses first school living (Primary) and SSCE/GCE (Secondary) certificates (NUC 2014).

The report further revealed that in most universities, the Health Centre has one or two medical doctors and pharmacists as well as few nurses to cater for the health of a large population of students and staff on campus. Similarly, at physical planning and work units, only a few engineers and one or two surveyors and Architects are found in most universities. Also, at the various university laboratory units, only a few staff especially the heads of units is a university graduate. The situation is worst at the security unit where most universities do not have even one graduate as a staff and so on. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004), in her National Policy on Education charged the university with the responsibility of producing individuals (graduates)

who are both worthy in character and learning to contribute to our National economy and over all development. Unfortunately, the glaring deficiencies of quality staff in some of these key units in these universities may be the hidden factors contributing to the falling standards.

Banjo (2004), lamenting over the menace of secret cults in Nigerian campuses, decried the ineffective nature of the university security personnel. According to him, the security personnel on ground, on these campuses cannot match the intellectual capacity as well as weapons with which cultists execute their unwholesome plans. These security personnel are deficient both in strategy and equipment to fight crime on university campus. Adebayo (2011) commented on the rampant cases of collapse buildings in the country. He observed that the causes of these collapse structures may not be far from the problems of inadequate number of construction specialists such engineers, architects etc and their attitudes to work. This scenario may not be different from what obtains in the university system.

The university has the basic function of teaching, research and community service. At the early stages of university education in Nigeria, the standard was very high. Graduates from Nigeria universities were sought for and respected all over the world. The human and material resources provided by the government were very adequate. The number and quality of university personnel were adequate and the staff very committed to duty. Unfortunately, in the 1980's when enrolment increased astronomically without a corresponding increase in funding, the standard of university education began to decline. Highly qualified academic and non teaching staff abandoned the universities for oversea jobs, oil companies, banks and other sectors of the economy. Expatriates personnel were no longer found in Nigerian Universities. The situation at present may even be the worst because, employers both within and outside the country are no longer sure of the credibility of certificates awarded by Nigerian universities.

The problem of this study therefore derives from the inadequate number and quality of personnel leading to poor standard of university education. The study therefore sought to find out the level of adequacy of personnel available in universities in the south- East states of Nigeria.

This study will be beneficial to the government and policy makers, university administrators, staff, students and the general public.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Assess the level of adequacy of qualified academic (teaching) staff in universities in the South- East states of Nigeria?

2. Determine the level of adequacy of qualified non-teaching staff in universities in the South-East states of Nigeria?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of adequacy of qualified academic (teaching) staff in universities in the South- East states of Nigeria?
2. What is the level of adequacy of qualified non-teaching staff in universities in the South-East states of Nigeria?

HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of Deans and Heads of departments on the level of adequacy of staff (personnel) in universities in the South- East states.

METHOD

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study comprises five hundred and sixty seven (567) respondents from the ten government owned universities in the South-East States of Nigeria (Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States).The South-East States is a geopolitical zone which is predominantly made up of the Ibo people of Nigeria. The occupation of the people is mainly business of buying and selling and civil service. However, a few of them are farmers and Artisans. They have a very rich culture. Statistics from the office of the Registrars in these universities gave a total number of 92 Deans of Faculties and 475 heads of Departments. The study adopted the entire population of 567 respondents without sampling because of its small nature. A four point modified Likert type Adequacy of University Personnel Questionnaire (AUPQ) was used for the study. The questionnaire was made up of sixteen (16) items that elicited information from the respondents. The items have a response scale of Very Adequate (VA) Adequate (A), Inadequate (IA) and Very Inadequate (VA) respectively. The questionnaire was validated by experts in Educational Administration and Planning and Educational Measurement and Evaluation. It was also subjected to a test re-test method of reliability, using Product-Moment reliability statistic after being administered to Deans and HODs in Universities in the South-South States of Nigeria. A reliability coefficient of 0.78 was determined. Copies of the questionnaire were administered by hand with the help of three research assistants to the respondents. A total of 558 questionnaire copies were received from the respondents and the data analyzed with mean, standard deviation and pooled mean. The hypothesis was tested with z-test at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: What is the level of adequacy of qualified academic staff in universities in the South-East States?

Table 1: Mean Score of Respondents on the level of Adequacy of Academic Staff in Universities in the South-East States.

S/N	Item Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	The total number of academic staff in my university is	1.69	0.64	IA
2	The total number of permanent academic staff is	1.68	0.66	IA
3	The total number of academic staff on ground (not on sabbatical study or sick leave)	1.77	0.65	IA
4	The total number of academic staff with relevant post Ph.D qualification experience is	1.49	0.75	IA
5	The total number of academic staff on professional cadre is	1.32	0.59	IA
6	The total number of academic staff on senior lecturer cadre is	1.43	0.69	IA
7	The total number of academic staff on lectureship grade I, II and Asst. lecture is	2.27	0.87	IA

Pooled \bar{X} = 1.66 IA

Key: VA = Very Adequate, A = Adequate, IA= Inadequate, VI = Very Inadequate.

Table 1 shows that the mean score of respondents in all the items 1-7 are less than the benchmark of 2.50. This however indicates that the total number of academic staff in the universities is inadequate, the total number of permanent academic staff is inadequate, the total number of academic staff on ground (not on sabbatical, study/sick leave) is inadequate. It also indicates that, the total number of academic staff with relevant post Ph.D qualification experience is inadequate, the total number of academic staff on professorial cadre is inadequate, the total number of academic staff on senior lecture cadre is inadequate and also the total number of academic staff on lectureship grade I, II and Assistant lecturer is inadequate. However, the pooled mean of 1.66 which is equally less than the mean benchmark indicates that the qualified academic staff in universities in South-East states is in adequate.

Research Question 2: What is the level of adequacy of qualified non teaching (support) staff in the universities?

Table 2: Mean Score of Respondents on the level of Adequacy of Non Teaching (support) Staff in Universities in the South-East States.

S/N	Item Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
8	The total number of non teaching (support) staff in my university is	3.17	0.79	A
9	The total number of library staff that holds university degree is	2.43	1.03	IA
10	The total number of career administrators that hold university degree is	2.66	1.08	A
11	The total number of staff in physical planning/works units that holds university degree or equivalent is	2.23	1.03	IA
12	The total number of laboratory staff that hold university degree or equivalent is	2.23	0.99	IA
13	The total number of staff in medical centre that holds university degree or equivalent is	2.31	0.89	IA
14	The total number of staff in the staff school that holds university degree or equivalent is	2.54	1.08	A
15	The total number of staff in security unit that hold university degree or equivalent is	1.19	0.51	IA
16	The total number of non teaching staff with relevant post qualification experience is	2.39	1.05	IA

Pooled \bar{X} = 2.35 IA

Key: VA = Very Adequate, A = Adequate, IA= Inadequate, VI = Very Inadequate.

Table 2 shows that the mean score of respondents in 6 items, that is items 2,4,5,6,8 and 9 are less than the benchmark of 2.50, while that of items 1,3 and 7 are greater than 2.50. This indicates that the total number of library staff that hold university degree or equivalent is inadequate, the total number of staff in physical planning/works unit with university degree or equivalent is inadequate, the total number of laboratory staff that holds university degree or equivalent is

inadequate. Also, the total number of staff in medical centre that hold university degree or equivalent is inadequate, the total number of staff in security unit that hold university degree or equivalent is inadequate and the total number of non teaching staff with relevant post qualification experience is equally inadequate. It as well indicates that the total number of non teaching (support) staff in these universities is adequate, the total number of career administrators that hold a degree or equivalent is adequate and the total number of staff in staff school with university degree or equivalent is adequate. However, the pooled mean of 2.35 is less than the mean benchmark of 2.50 which means that the number of qualified non teaching staff in universities in the South-East is inadequate.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of faculty deans and HODs on the adequacy of academic and non teaching staff in universities in the South-East States of Nigeria.

Table 3: Z-test Analysis of the Mean Ratings of Faculty Deans and HODs on the Adequacy of Academic and Non teaching Staff in the Universities.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Std error	Df	Z-cal	Z-crit	Remark
Faculty Deans	90	23.15	6.72	0.77	556	0.17	1.96	N.S
HODs	468	23.02	6.93					

Table above shows that the Z-calculated value 0.17 is less than the Z-critical table value of 1.96 at the df of 556 at 0.05 level of significance. This however implies that the null hypothesis stated above is accepted to be true. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of faculty Deans and HODs on the adequacy of academic and non teaching staff in universities in the South-East States of Nigeria.

DISCUSSIONS

The finding of this study in table one shows that the pooled mean is 1.66 which is less than the mean benchmark of 2.50. This indicates that the number of qualified academic staff in universities in the South-East states of Nigeria is inadequate. This result agrees with Mgbekem (2004) who opined that since 1963 till date, the rate of student enrolment has been growing

rapidly without a corresponding growth in the number and quality of academic staff, leading to poor standards.

The answer to research question two above shows that the pooled mean is 2.35, which is an indication that the number of qualified non teaching (support) staff in universities in South-East states of Nigeria is also inadequate. This finding is in agreement with NUC (2014) which stated that, apart from career administrators and teachers in the staff school, over 80% of non teaching staff in various units / departments in Nigeria universities have no university degree.

The result of data analysis in table three indicates that there is no significant difference between the men ratings of Deans and HODs on the adequacy of academic and non teaching staff in universities in the South-East states. The similar perception of these two groups of respondents is confirmed by the finding of Mgbekem (2004) that the quality of personnel in our universities is inadequate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings above and the educational implications, the following recommendations are made:

1. Adequate number and high quality academic staff should be employed. Also, young academics without PhDs should be sponsored to obtain this degree. These will help to meet NUC standards and also improve the quality of teaching, research and community service.
2. Adequate number of qualified non teaching staff should be employed and the ones already in service be trained in various universities in order to improve the quality of service delivery.

CONCLUSION

This study concluded that the number and quality of personnel in universities in the South-East states of Nigeria is inadequate. This has contributed to the problems of poor academic standards and quality of university products. As a panacea, there is therefore urgent need to employ more qualified staff and retrain the existing ones.

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