Organisational Challenges to the Effective Management of Training and Development Activities: a Hindrance to Public Sector Management in Federal Polytechnics in Nigeria

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Abstract

Organizations such as the Federal Polytechnics in Nigeria spent much money annually on training and development, but much of the investment is not commiserate with expected outcomes because of poorly implemented interventions. The purpose of this study is therefore to examine how organizational issues constrain lecturers' training and development in the Polytechnics. A research question and a hypothesis were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population was 6028 which included all the management staff, heads of departments and lecturers in the 19 Federal polytechnics. A total of 807 respondents were selected using a two-stage sampling method. Eight hundred and two sample members responded by filling and returning the copies of the questionnaire drawn from six Federal Polytechnics, one each from the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. The sample was selected using the stratified random sampling technique. Data was collected by the use of a structured questionnaire and was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20). Descriptive Statistics such as frequencies, percentages and the Mean were used to analyze and present the data. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Statistics was also used to test the research hypotheses and they were rejected at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of this study revealed that there were organizational issues that constrain staff development in Federal Polytechnics. In conclusion, the organizational issue affecting staff development programmes have

significant impact on the accessibility and participation of lecturers in staff development programmes. Based on the findings it was recommended that Polytechnic managements should produce guidelines for staff development and this should be made available to every lecturer,

Background to the Study

Training is regarded as the process of upgrading the knowledge, skills and improving the ability of workers to perform tasks effectively and efficiently in organizations. Stewart (1996) regards the training and development as referring to organizational function that ensures that individuals are made to achieve the objectives of an organization through the development of appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes of employees. Organizations can only develop when employee skills are developed to meet the exigencies of the organization. Staff development has been described as activities which aim at improving, updating or maintaining employees' skills and abilities (Elnaga & Imran, 2013; Malaolu & Ogbuabor, 2013). It is also a set of systematic and planned activities designed by an organization to provide its members with the opportunities to learn necessary skills to meet current and future demands of work (Werner & De Simone, 2006).

Participation in staff development programmes by an employee is to begin immediately as a person is employed and should continue throughout a person's career. The objective of staff development in organizations like Polytechnics is to increase the skills and knowledge of the lecturers. Planned development programmes add value to organizations in terms of increased productivity, morale and greater organizational efficiency (Nassazi, 2013; Muzaffar & Malik, 2012; Rashid, 2008). Thus when lecturers' skills are developed through various development programmes, like seminars, workshops, mentoring, further education, induction courses and establishment of adequate reference libraries, their productivity is enhanced, as well as that of the institutions they work for.

It is in recognition of the importance of staff development in educational institutions that the Federal Government declared in its National Policy on Education, "that teacher education and re-training will continue to be given a major emphasis in the nation's educational planning, as no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers" (FGN, 2004:70). Several initiatives have been put in place for the development of lecturers in the Polytechnics by government, the

administrators of Polytechnics as well as support from other organizations. Government funded initiatives include sponsorship of staff development programmes through the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TET Fund) and the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and United Nations Educational Scientific Organization (UNESCO) interventions (Yakubu, 2009;Yakubu, 2010). All these are done because Polytechnic education is regarded as a tool for industrial, community and national development, and it is regarded as the bedrock of Nigeria's technological development.

Statement of the Problem

In supporting staff training and development the government has invested in staff training and development through various incentives and mechanisms. However despite these efforts the fact remains that there are problems or challenges to effective management of staff development programmes. Empirical evidence suggests that there are many challenges to the effective management of staff development programmes. (Lloyd, 2002; Budhwar and Sparrow, 2002).However, there is limited empirical evidence of challenges in managing Staff development programmes in Federal Polytechnics in Nigeria. Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine challenges to the effective management of staff development programmes in Federal Polytechnics in Nigeria.

It is hoped that the findings of this study will give the managers of Polytechnics a clear understanding of the various challenges to the effective management of staff development programmes. Hence, relevant and appropriate policies and procedures can be developed and implemented for the effective management of t raining and development of employees.

Objective of the Study

Find out the impact of organizational issues that constraint staff training and development in the Federal Polytechnics of Nigeria.

Research Question

The Study is guided by the question below:
What is the impact of organizational issues that constrain staff training and development in the Federal Polytechnics of Nigeria?

Statement of Hypothesis

On the basis of the objective, null hypothesis was formulated to guide the study:
There is no significant difference in the opinions of management staff, heads of departments and lecturers of Federal Polytechnics in Nigeria on the impact of organizational issues that constrain staff training and development in the Federal Polytechnics of Nigeria.

Review of Literature
Staff development in the Polytechnics is carried out within the framework of the policy prescribed by the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE). The policy (Kaduna Polytechnic,2013; NBTE, 1986) state that further training of staff is recognized as a strategy to achieve efficiency in the Polytechnics and that the training needs of staff shall be determined through staff appraisals after which a suitable programme of training is to be prescribed. The policy also requires staff development in any institution to be related to the primary aim of the institution which is to "effectively promote technical/technological education and training in support of the manpower development of the country" (Kaduna Polytechnic,2013; NBTE, 1986:11). Thus staff training and development programmes are supposed to equip lecturers with knowledge and skills that will facilitate the achievement of Polytechnic goals.

In addition, the policy recognizes the inadequacy of resources available for staff development and therefore encourages institutions to utilize the available funds in such a way that priority is given in sponsoring programmes that will equip staff to contribute more effectively to the success of their respective institutions. The aims of staff development programmes as indicated in the policy are to:
1. Enable staff to add to their qualifications in an area of study directly relevant to their primary assignment.
2. Provide opportunity for staff to develop transferable skills that can contribute to the wider Polytechnic environment.
3. Strengthen the existing skill base of employees of the institution.
4. Support career development pathways for staff.
5. Contribute to the attraction and retention of high performing staff.

To achieve this objective, there are different kinds of sponsorship available to the Polytechnic staff as stated in the policy (Kaduna Polytechnic, 2013; NBTE, 1986: 16). Such as Study leave which may include: full sponsorship study leave with pay (permission) release, study leave without pay, oversees training, study Fellowship, sabbatical leave.

However, for a staff to enjoy any form of sponsorship, he/she must be seen to have a proven ability to benefit from such sponsorship and training which is also expected to enhance the efficiency of the institution. With regards to the disbursement of funds available in the staff development vote, individual Polytechnics usually have a committee that determines which applications for leave are to be granted. In order to limit the expenditure from the limited resources available, the policy recommends that priority for staff sponsorship is to be given for programmes in Nigerian Universities rather than overseas. Individual staff

members are encouraged to seek their self-development with or without Polytechnic sponsorship. There are varieties of human resource training and development programmes that are commonly used in educational institutions especially the Polytechnics. They are also regarded as the in-service training programmes that are continuously available to lecturers throughout their career to improve professional knowledge, interest and skills.

There are different types or approaches to staff development in schools especially Polytechnics. They include: refresher courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, exchange programmes, professional writing, visits to other schools, staff meetings, course of study at Colleges of Education and postgraduate work at a University (Oyebade, 2008). Similarly, Edem (2007) and Hoban(2002) state that in-service education programmes at the school level includes workshops, teachers' meetings (seminars) and conferences, interest study groups, exchange visits, classroom visits by the heads , demonstration classes, mentoring coaching, research, online training, collaborative networks and higher education . Other forms of training and development include sabbatical leave and membership of committees.

Organizations are saddled with the responsibility of maintaining efficiency of staff through various strategies aimed at promoting their development. However, there are challenges that impede staff development of employees. Muzaffar and Malik (2013) in a study found that factors were identified by teachers which hinder their active participation and interest in professional development trainings.   The identified factors were extra workload, insufficient time, absence of incentives in professional development trainings, much emphasis on theoretical aspects than practice, family responsibilities, teacher's conservativeness, lack of awareness regarding usefulness of training and conflict with teachers working schedule. In addition, Degraft-Otoo (2012)   state that the types of organizational issues that constrain training and development in tertiary institutions are the lack of top management support for the training and development , failure to provide adequate resources (finance, people and time) required to implement the training and failure to understand the training needs. Okotoni and Erero (2005) have enumerated the problems of staff development in Nigerian Federal service to include the following:

1.   There is the absence of systematic training despite the various reforms that emphasize this since late 1960s in Nigeria.
2.   Poor funding: This is reflected in the differences between budgetary provisions and actual funds released for staff training over several years.
3.   The curricula and methods remain insufficiently attuned to job requirements.

4. Poor utilization of trained workers. Many public servants sent for training hardly utilise their skills and knowledge.
5. Lack of proper consideration for training needs. Some public officers are sent for training without consideration of the relevance to present job or future posting
6. Lack of adequate training facilities.
7. Use of quack consultants.
8. Most training programmes have not produced the desired results.

Some of these problems may also affect training and development in the Polytechnics.

Methodology

The method of research adopted for this study was the cross sectional descriptive survey design. The population of the study was made up of all the academic staff of the Federal Polytechnics in Nigeria, the management staff (Rectors, Deputy Rectors, Registrars and Deans) and Heads of Departments. The total target population of the study was approximately 6,028 while the sample size was a total 807 respondents made up of 57 management staff, 172 HODs and 578 lecturers from six Federal Polytechnics. The sampling design used was a two- stage sampling design. In the first stage, six (6) polytechnics were selected from the 19 Federal Polytechnics using stratified sampling. The strata used were the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria and selection from each stratum was done based on probability proportional to size technique. The six sampled Federal Polytechnics include those of Kaduna, Bauchi, Nassarawa, Yaba, Okoand Auchi, representing the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. In the second stage, simple random sampling was used to select the sample of the population from each polytechnic. The sample size of lecturers was 20% of the population of lecturers.

The sampling was done in such a way that twenty percent (20%) of the entire lecturers in each of the six selected institutions were used. However, due to the greatly differing sizes of the population of management staff and heads of departments from the sampled institutions and the fact that their population is small in relation to lecturers, all of them were used for the study. A self-designed questionnaire developed after a review of relevant literature was used to gather data contained 10 items. It was a closed – ended type of questionnaire designed in such a way as to answer the research question and the issues in the hypothesis. The questionnaire item was were rated using the 5 point Likert type scale of measurement as follows: Strongly Agree- 5, Agree -4, Undecided -3, Disagree 2, strongly disagree -1. The content validity of the instrument was established using the researchers' colleagues, supervisors and experts in the field of educational

management, research and statistics.

In order to determine the reliability of the instrument of the study, a pilot study was carried out using 30 respondents drawn from Nuhu Bamali Polytechnic, Kaduna who was not part of the study sample. The questionnaire items were then analyzed to ascertain the level of internal consistency using the Cronbach's Alpha formula. A Coefficient of was obtained which shows how the instrument was reliable 0.826 Cronbach Alfa. The responses obtained from the questionnaires were tallied, analyzed and presented using descriptive and inferential statistics. In the descriptive statistics, frequency counts, percentages, means and cross tabulations were done to enhance the understanding of issues raised in the research questions. The one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the hypothesis. The level of significance chosen for the acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis was 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Result

Cross tabulation and percentages were used to determine the responses of the three groups of respondents on the issues that constrain training and development of lecturers in Federal Polytechnics. The Table 1 below shows the responses on the issues that constrain training and development of lecturers in Federal Polytechnics.

Table 1: Responses on the Impact of Issues that Constrain Training and Development of Lecturers in Federal Polytechnics

S/No	Item Statement	Respondents	Responses Agree		Undecided		Disagree	
			Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
1.	Management does not provide adequate information on available staff development opportunities in and outside the polytechnics.	Management Staffs	18	32.1	0	0.0	38	67.9
		HODs	80	47.6	0	0.0	88	52.4
		Lecturers	578	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	Modalities for accessing development programmes are not made known to lecturers	Management Staffs	18	32.1	0	0.0	38	67.9
		HODs	100	59.5	0	0.0	68	40.5
		Lecturers	578	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	Lack of adequate support and feedback from the management	Management Staffs	47	83.9	0	0.0	9	16.1
		HODs	168	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
		Lecturers	578	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
4	Failure to ensure adequate resources (finance, people and time) to implement training.	Management Staffs	47	83.9	0	0.0	9	16.1
		HODs	168	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
		Lecturers	578	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
5	Lack of transparency and fairness in sponsorship (training is provided for some lecturers that are close to the management).	Management Staffs	19	33.9	0	0.0	37	66.1
		HODs	168	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
		Lecturers	578	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
6	Some Lecturers are sent on training without consideration for its relevance to prevent job or future posting	Management Staffs	18	32.1	0	0.0	38	67.9
		HODs	168	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
		Lecturers	522	90.3	0	0.0	56	9.7

Source: Field Survey by the Researchers (2014)

In the Table 1, item 1 sought to know whether Management does not provide adequate information on available staff development opportunities in and outside the Polytechnics. The findings indicate that 676(84.3%) respondents agreed while a total of 126 (15.7%) disagreed. From this analysis the majority of respondents declared that the managements of Polytechnics did not provide adequate information on available staff development opportunities in and outside the Polytechnics. Thus a lack of information could limit accessibility to staff development programmes. Often, the modalities for accessing development programmes were not made known to lecturers in the Federal Polytechnics was the expressed view of majority of respondents on the issue contained in item 2. The analysis showed that 696(86.8%) respondents agreed with the issue. On the other hand 106(13.2%) respondents disagreed. If modalities for accessing staff development programmes and funds are not clearly laid out then it will be difficult for many lecturers to benefit from such programmes.

Item 3 examined whether lack of adequate support and feedback from management works against training and development of lecturers in the Polytechnics. The level of agreement reported by the respondents was overwhelming as seven hundred and ninety three respondents representing 98.9% agreed with the stated item. However, only 9 (1.1%) respondents disagreed. Based on this analysis the lack of adequate support and feedback from management hindered the training and development of lecturers. The failure of Polytechnics managements to ensure adequate resources (finance, people and time) to implement training which militates against development of lecturers was the issue raised in item 4.The results show that a total of 793 (98.9%) respondents agreed on this issue while 9 (1.1%) respondents disagreed. From the analysis, the majority of the respondents confirmed that failure to ensure adequate resources (finance, people and time) to implement training was a barrier to lecturers' participation in training and development programmes.

Item 5 looked at the issue of whether lack of transparency and fairness in sponsorship (training is provided for some lecturers that are close to the management) constrained training and development of lecturers in the Polytechnics. Findings show that a total of 765 (95.4%) agreed on the issue. Only 37 (4.6 %) respondents disagreed. The analysis indicates that an overwhelming majority affirmed that lack of transparency and fairness in sponsorship (training is provided for some lecturers close to the management) militates against training and development of lecturers in the Polytechnics. This perception is instructive of the fact that something ought to be done to reverse this trend. Another issue examined contained in item 6 enquired whether lecturers were sent on training without consideration for its relevance to present job or future postings, of which

the analysis shows that 708 (88.3%) respondents agreed while 94 (11.7%) respondents disagreed. From the analysis a majority of the respondents stated that lecturers were sent on training without consideration for its relevance to present job or future postings. This is indicative of the fact that training and development programmes have to be well planned to meet the needs of Polytechnics.

Item 7 sought to find out whether the managements of Polytechnics rely more on TET Fund for sponsorship than the general allocation in the Polytechnics, limits the number of lecturers sponsored. Findings indicate that 502 (62.6%) respondents agreed But 144 (18. %) were undecided and 156 (19.4%) respondents disagreed. This analysis indicates that the managements of Polytechnics relied more on TET Fund for sponsorship than the general allocation in the Polytechnics and this had limited the number of lecturers sponsored. Item 8, examined whether bureaucratic bottlenecks delay processing of approvals for sponsorship or study leave for lecturers as an issue that constrain the development of lecturers and an overwhelming agreement was recorded by the respondents as an aggregate of 760 representing 94.8% agreed. However, HODs numbering, 24 (3.0%) respondents were undecided while 18(2.2%) respondents disagreed. From the analysis it can be deduced that a constraint to training of lecturers was the bureaucratic bottlenecks that delayed the processing of approvals for sponsorship or study leave for lecturers.

Item 9 investigated whether poor working environment (lack of adequate motivation, physical facilities and communication) hindered lecturers' development. The results show that a sizeable proportion of the respondents 793 (98.9%) agreed. However, only 9 respondents representing 1.1% disagreed. Based on the outcome of the analysis, poor working environment (lack of adequate motivation, physical facilities and communication) hindered lecturers' development so in order to improve training and development of lecturers an enabling environment has to be provided by the management. The issue raised in item 10 was whether the absence of a planned, systematic and structured staff development programme for lecturers militates against training and development of lecturers. The results showed an aggregate of 566 (70.6%) respondents agreed on this issue. However, a total of 99(12.3%) were undecided while 137 (17.1%) disagreed. Based on the level of agreement on the issue the respondents confirmed that absence of a planned, systematic and structured staff development programme for lecturers constrains training and development. This finding is instructive and indicates that the objectives of staff development cannot be achieved without proper planning.

Hypothesis testing

Table 2: Summary of Analysis Variance Statistics (ANOVA) to Test the Respondents Opinions on the Impact of Organizational Issues that Constrain Training and Development of Lecturers

Source	Sum of Squares	D f	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	31.055	2	15.527	414.426	0.000
Within Groups	29.936	799	0.037		
Total	60.991	801			

P value 0.000<0.05 - Significant

In the table 2 above, p value is 0.00 and this is lower than the significant value of 0.05. In view of this, the null hypothesis was rejected and it is therefore concluded that there was significant difference in the mean opinions of management staff, HODs and lecturers on the impact of organizational issues that constrain training and development of lecturers.

Discussion of Findings

Concerning the impact of organizational issues that constrain training and development of lecturers in the Polytechnics, findings reveal that the managements of Polytechnics failed to provide adequate information to lecturers on available opportunities and the modalities for accessing development programmes were not available to lecturers which hinders lecturers from participation in staff development programmes because for them to effectively participate adequate information is essential. Other notable issues were lack of adequate support and feedback, failure on the part of management to commute adequate resources to implement training programmes, lack of transparency in sponsorship (those close to top management were favoured) and the sending of lecturers on training without consideration for the needs of the institution. Others were the reliance on TET Fund which limits management allocation to training of lecturers, bureaucratic bottlenecks, poor work environment and lack of a well- planned and structured development for lecturers all of which constrained the training of lecturers. These findings are corroborated by Muzaffar and Malik (2012), Degraft-Otoo (2012) and Cole (2004) , who indicate that several organizational issues constrain training and development which should be addressed in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness pertaining which Muzaffar and Malik (2012) suggest that concerned authorities should minimize barriers in order to improve lecturers' attitude towards development programmes.

Conclusion

Many organizational issues that hindered the training and development of lecturers were :inadequate information on available staff development opportunities, inadequate information on the modalities for accessing development programmes, failure by management to ensure that adequate resources (finance, people and time) were provided to implement training, lack of transparency and fairness in sponsorship of lecturers as those close to management were favoured , being sent on training without consideration for its relevance to present job or future needs, more reliance on TET Fund than the general allocation for sponsoring lecturers which limited the number of staff that could benefit, poor work environment (lack of adequate motivation, physical facilities and communication), absence of a planned, systematic and structured staff development programme.

Recommendations

The following are recommendations are based on the findings:
1.   In order for training to play a positive role in the polytechnics the policies about training and development should be communicated to the lecturers.
2.   Training provided should be based upon careful consideration of lecturers' needs.
3.   Strategic approaches should be adopted to ensure that training programmes are consistent with overall organizational objectives.
4.   Polytechnic managements should produce guidelines for staff development and this should be made available to every lecturer,
5.   Management should view staff development as the right of every lecturer rather than a privilege for close associates. The Federal government and managements of Polytechnics should ensure that there is a well-planned, regular and continuous development framework for each lecturer through proper monitoring and supervision

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