

Scaling up Human Capital Development for Business Education Lecturers' Productivity in Rivers State

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Abstract

This study sought to determine the Scaling up Human Capital Development for Business Education Lecturers' productivity in Rivers State. One research question and one hypothesis were employed and used in the study. Descriptive research design was employed for the study. The population of the study comprised 110 Business Education Lecturers in Rivers State. There was no sample since the size of the population was manageable. The instrument for data collection was a 4-point scale structured questionnaire of Very High Extent, High Extent, Low Extent, and Very Low Extent. The questionnaire was validated by 3 experts from the department of Business education, faculty of education Rivers State University and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was established through a pilot testing and the data generated thereof was subjected to Cronbach Alpha analysis. The result showed a coefficient of 0.78 which is deemed reliable. Mean and standard, deviation was used to analyze the data collected in order to answer the research questions. On the other hand, the null hypothesis was tested at 0,05 level of significance using t-test statistics. However, out of the 110 questionnaires administered, (98%) completed copies were successfully retrieved and used for the analysis. The State Government, the organized private sector, and university authorities, should encourage Business Education lecturers and other lecturers to be participative in human resource development activities so as to enable Business Education lecturers update their knowledge and skills. In-service training should be organized for Business Education lecturers in Rivers State. This would equip them with the skills necessary of producing students who are high academic achievers.

Keywords: Scaling, Human Capital, Development, Business Education, lecturers, productivity

Introduction

Universities, as the highest educational institutions are statutorily charged with the responsibilities of producing individuals who can fit in properly and contribute, meaningfully to the development of the society. As enunciated in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2008), universities are expected to achieve the following objectives:

1. Contribute to-national development through high-level manpower training.
2. Develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the- individual and the society.
3. Develop individual's intellectual capacity to understand and appreciate their local and external environments.
4. Acquire both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to be self-reliant and useful members of the society.
5. Promote and encourage scholarship and community service.
6. Forge and cement national unity.
7. Promote national and international understanding and interaction.

Based on these objectives, the role of universities in human capital development, productivity research and technological innovation cannot be undervalued. This is because universities are expected to produce highly skilled personnel in technology, engineering, management and other professions.

Secondly, 'universities have the responsibility of producing their own corps of academic personnel that forms the intellectual resource pool targeting at scientific research or generate new body of knowledge and innovation to solve developmental problems (Ajayi, 2014). The management of universities having been aware of these lofty goals, create opportunities for effective and efficient utilization of human capital development for the level of academic achievement among students. Human capital development determines to a large extent, productivity of academic staff in public universities. Onuekwa (2014) observed that Business Education Lecturers' capital development precedes students' academic achievement in every level of education! Onuekwa also stated that the more teachers acquire knowledge, the more they impact such knowledge to students.

Human capital development is a term associated with inventions, ideas, design approaches and its applications to novel situations. This is figured out through academic staff creative-capacity and ability to be innovative using collective knowledge, competencies, experiences, skills and talents at their disposal. Based on the above notion, human capital development is said to be an act of regenerating abilities as well as providing opportunity for adequate knowledge creation and capacity building.

Onuekwa (2014) revealed that human capital development provides the base line of contents and skills training that enable all members of staff possess' minimum level of competency for their job roles and responsibilities. This is predicated on the fact that the way people work in the organization serves as indication that growth and development in the job setting are essential if they maximize their resourcefulness and creativity.

As stated by Sayyed, Javad, and Sayyid (2012) adequate measures that generate or utilize human capital development approaches add value to organizational effectiveness and efficiency, increased quality of the organization, enhance institutional policies and practices, even integrating people into business of the universities at local and global level. The possibilities of achieving these attributes are only grounded in the way management plans the processes of academic staff development in order to endear the behavior and ail if tide of the academic staff of the university. This is based on the assertion that sustaining productivity of academic staff can never be attainable without stringent input of academic staff in any institution of higher learning. This therefore informs the need to examine human capital development and productivity of academic staff in the public universities in south-south geographical zone. Nigeria.

Productivity is the relationship between total output and total input; this involves integration of both physical and human resources efficiently to increase output. It is used to describe how the various skills, talents and potentialities are utilized to cause changes or innovation in the learning environment. According to the researcher, productivity of the university as an organization is tied to academic staffs who are major contributors to the school system. Scholars have often argued that the challenge of productivity in the academic environment has become a challenge of measurement. Difficulty in measurement stems from the fact that inputs and outputs are not only difficult to define but are also difficult to quantify. However, Umo (2010) used the following variables to measure academic staff productivity: punctuality, submission of examination grades on time, extra lessons for students and participation in extra-curricular activities. Researchers like Jamil, Atta, Ali, Bafochi, and Ayaz (2011) have also argued that productivity of academic staff is acknowledged through efficient classroom management, lesson organization, recording and reporting students' work achievement, quality and competency in teaching skills, lecturers' behavior and attitude towards task responsibilities, material resource management and student management. In the same vein, the researcher observed that in learning environment, productivity of academic staff is conceived in respect of the extent in which the course load is accomplished, increase in the rate of students' achievement, engaging in guidance and counseling on issues that addressed and related to academic progress of the students, bringing innovation to challenging academic situation, advising and attending to students' academic challenges, carrying out assigned tasks and responsibilities articulately and assiduously, engaging in research and publication that accelerates and enhances the image of the university. Others are: adequate planning of the scheme of work, participating, assisting and contributing to faculty and departmental projects, setting and conducting of examination proper manner.

Consequently, human capital development and productivity of academic always targets at improving capacities of academic staff to play their roles and fit in their academic assignments, optimally. It aims at removing performance deficiencies as its target workplace safely and proficiency, to develop high level of management personnel and for further career development. It therefore follows that improvement of academic staff competence is crucial to high level of academic productivity.

In spite of the benefits of human capacity development in enhancing productivity in the academic perspective, it is still difficult to show a fundamental link between the human capital development and academic productivity partly because its pay-off may not be seen in the short term. Common experiences have even revealed that human capital development is becoming increasingly, important in the universities as it gears towards maintaining competitiveness and high level of productivity in the dynamic academic environments. Among the various components of resources, human capital is considered very vital to suit the changing work environment which renders obsolete some of their original professional skills and knowledge (King, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

Human capital is the most crucial factor when discussing way forward of the national development. Therefore, if human capital is that important as the vehicle of national and regional growth and development in all ramifications, the development is very paramount (Kwon, 2009). Tertiary institutions in Rivers State and Nigeria ta large are saddle with responsibility of breeding students who can do well on graduation. By interpretation the successes of tertiary institutions especially, in producing Business Education graduates capable of achievement excellence and represent the nation generally and for sustainable National development in good academic capacity is highly dependent on the human capital that generates or demonstrates' higher level of competence. The level of knowledge and skills acquired by students are replicated in their academic achievements. But in Nigeria which the Rivers State is not left, employers of labour have decried the poor-quality of graduates produced from public universities to the labour market.

With the level of poor graduates entering into the labor in the country, employers of labor are inquisitive on whether the public university lecturers in Rivers State, Nigeria lack the capacity to produce students who can perform optimally in the world of work or maybe there is need for some capacity building training to update the knowledge of academic staff in their Held and on the use of current innovative teaching methods and materials. This study therefore sought to find solution to this issue affecting our education system.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine human capital development and Business Education Lecturers' productivity of academic staff in universities in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to;

1. Determine the extent to which academic publications promote productivity of Business Education lecturers in Rivers State

Research Question

The following research questions guided the study

1. To what extent do academic publications promote productivity of Business Education Lecturers in Rivers State?

Null Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H_{01} : There is no significant difference in the mean rating of the responses on academic publications and the promotion of academic stairs productivity in universities in Rivers State.

Human Capital Development and Business Education Lecturers' Productivity

The role of universities in building of human capacity in research and technological innovation cannot be underestimated. All over the world, investment in university education is a critical component of national-development efforts. Today, nation depends on knowledge, ideas and skills which are created and produced in the university. It is this basic-fact that informs the university system globally to intensify increase in human capital restructuring and regenerating.

Enhancement of productivity among academic staff required adequate and proactive development of potentiality as well as reinforcing it through in-service training, in-house programme, routine, supervision, inspection, participatory management processes, and committee system participation in the university.

In this regard, every staff of universities is encouraged and empowered for quality management and administration, quality teaching, learning and experiences. This is to attain broad developmental processes with dynamic strategies that enable individuals in the university to develop critical and technical potentialities to attain the best results. Definitely, productivity is highly central to sustain academic achievement and efficient instructional management processes and procedures. Strategic human capital development has remained one of the principal strategies set in place by the university system to attain the best decision making outcomes in academic achievement. In other words, human capital development reflects on internalization of the knowledge, skills and processes that enable the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of set goals in an efficient manner. Villegas-Reimers (2003) argued that attainment of predetermined goals and objectives of the universities all over the world is based on adequate planned and organized human capital which reflects on series of activities such as: workshops, conferences, professional meetings, mentoring, and sabbatical leave that offer staff varieties of information network. As a long term process, it also includes regular opportunities and experiences planned systematically to promote growth and development in the profession. Hence, dramatic and revolutionary change has been observed in the university system based on effective and efficient utilization of human capital development. Other components of human capital development are attained through: on-the-job training, rotation and job enlargement, tuition aid programmes to assist staff to become better qualified in their assigned academic responsibilities. University emphasizes human capital development as an intervention approach aiming at producing and sustaining change at all levels of activities within the school. This approach is an evidence-driven process of strengthening the abilities of individuals, organizations and systems to perform core functions and to continue to improve and develop over time, it is a medium that provides an overarching vision for strengthening academic staff of the university to respond efficiently and effectively to research, administrative and academic responsibilities.

As an active ingredient for academic productivity of the university system, the policy of management in this regards is to look in depth, targeting values that involves sustainable planned efforts to increase performance through purposeful reflection actions. In particular, the ultimate goal is to enable the organization to grow stronger in achieving its purpose and mission that reflects on:

- (a) Creating an environment for reform and capacity-building, organizational conditions for empowering staff;
- (b) Influence service delivery systems;
- (c) Identify and grasp opportunities for collaboration in the delivery of services;
- (d) Finding ways of providing choice and harnessing the energies of all users of their service;
- (e) Work to ensure cooperation between leaders across sectors;
- (f) Ensure effective, efficient and frugal use and control of human, material and financial resources including appropriate and well-organized data and information for the delivery of the services;
- (g) Establish and operate institutional arrangements to motivate the member of the organization (UNESCO. 2009).

There are evidences from scholars that university lay emphasized on human capacity development because it targets equipping members of the organization with the necessary skill and knowledge that will enhance global competitiveness either in the academic level or administrative tasks. On this note, it is used as the process of empowering individual and communities of educators towards

making complex decisions to identify solve problems as well as connecting theory and practices. To ensure appropriate academic development of the university in Nigeria through human capacity building, same agencies have been involved in professional training of the staff of the university. For instance, National Universities Commission (NUC) oversees the activities of the universities in Nigeria in respects of the facilities, manpower and the processes of curriculum instruction. It also coordinates and set standards for universities. This body is responsible for provision of technical support, funding, equipment and services in education sector. Contributions are also .conceived.in respects of capacity building, research, provision of equipment and other assistance as relates to human capital regeneration. Base on the above assertion, human capacity building is coordinated to build an appropriate balance in education inputs as well as providing an enabling environment for all individuals to be fully engaged in the university development efforts especially in academic mailers, s asserted by Anya (2010) all academic staff is given opportunities to attain their fullest potential through corresponding courses-, training and motivation. An effort to increase and enhance skills, productivity, stimulates the initiative, creativity and resourcefulness of the staff is conceived in human capital development stride. In the light of the above, success of the university depends on the level and utilization of information machinery to achieve ultimate goals.

Methodology

The study employed descriptive research design. The population of the study comprised 110 Business Education Lecturers from tertiary institutions in Rivers State. There was no sample since the size of the population was manageable. The instrument for data collection was a 4-point scale structured questionnaire of very effective, effective, fairly effective and not effective. The questionnaire was validated by experts in the field of education from the faculty of education. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was established through a pilot testing and the data generated thereof was subjected to Cronbach Alpha analysis. The result showed a coefficient of 0.84 which is deemed reliable. Mean and standard, deviations were used to analyze the data collected in order to answer the research questions. For decision, items with a mean range of 3.01 to 4.00 were regarded as very effective, 2.01 to 3.00 as effective, 1.01 to 2.00 as fairly effective and 0.01 to 1.00 as not effective. On the other hand, the null hypotheses were tested at 0, 05 level of significance using t-test statistics and hypotheses were rejected if the calculated z-value is equal or greater than the critical t-value but not rejected if the calculated t-value is less than critical t-value. However, out of the 110 questionnaires administered, (98%) completed copies were successfully retrieved and used for the analysis.

Results

Research Question: To what extent do academic publications promote productivity of Business Education Lecturers in Rivers State?

Table 1: Mean responses on the academic publication and productivity of Business Education Lecturers in Rivers State

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Publications propel productivity	3.71	.67	High Extent
2	Academic publications increase knowledge	3.22	.63	High Extent
3	Academic research increases learning	3.63	.66	High Extent
4	Conferences adds new knowledge	3.44	.77	High Extent
5	Academic research imparts new knowledge	3.03	.62	High Extent
6	Research exposes lecturers to new ideas	3.14	.53	High Extent
8	It is an energy to academic productivity	3.76	.55	High Extent

9	Conferences encourage sharing of new ideals	3.15	.64	High Extent
10	Academic publications is not a key to lecturers productivity	1.75	.45	Low Extent

N = 110, Decision rule = 2.50, Weighted Mean = 3.20

The results in the Table 1 revealed that the respondents agreed that all the items except item number 10 agreed to the extent to which academic publications promote productivity of Business Education Lecturers in Rivers State.

Null Hypothesis: To what extent do academic publications promote productivity of academic staff in universities in Rivers State?

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between academic publications and Business Education Lecturers productivity in universities in Rivers State.

Lecturers	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-crit	P	Decision
Male	45	4.35	0.04					
Female	65	3.76	0.07	109	1.25	1.96	0.05	Accept H ₀

Results in the Table 2 indicated that t-cal (1.25) is less than t-crit (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance, thus the null hypothesis was upheld.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the findings in research question two revealed that academic publications promote productivity of academic staff in universities in South East Nigeria. Through publications academic staff are able add to existing body of knowledge in their field. This finding was supported by Olorunfoba and Ajayi (2006) when they observed that academic publications are the most significant indicator of productivity. The researcher observed that knowledge and capacity of the academic staff is determined by the number of published articles in refereed journals and conference proceedings. For this, purpose, universities are always particular about research/publication for the purpose of maintaining academic qualities or standards at the levels of learning. This, so far keeps individuals in touch with new innovation of ideas and knowledge.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that there is a strong relationship between human capital development and productivity of Business Education Lecturers in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. With these, there will be shared knowledge. Lecturers will be aware of what is obtainable in their field of study nationally and globally. They will also be able to use some 21st century teaching methods and materials in enhancing their teaching.

Recommendations

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

1. Government, organized private sector, and university authorities, should encourage Business Education and other lecturers to be participative in human resource development activities so as to enable them update their knowledge and skills as demanded by body's technological advancement.
2. In-service training should be organized by the various universities in the south-east Nigeria for the purpose of building and improving the capacity of their academic staff. This equip them with the skills necessary of producing students who are high academic achievers.

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