

Human Resource Situation in Nigerian Universities: A Case Study of Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti

Olayemi Abiodun-Oyebanji¹

¹ Department of Educational Foundations and Management, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

Correspondence: Olayemi Abiodun-Oyebanji, Department of Educational Foundations and Management, Faculty of Education, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria. E-mail: olayemi.oyebanji@yahoo.com

Received: May 18, 2012

Accepted: July 5, 2012

Online Published: October 16, 2012

doi:10.5539/jedp.v2n2p152

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/jedp.v2n2p152>

Abstract

This paper examined the human resource situation in Nigerian universities, using Ekiti State University as a case study. The research design used was a descriptive survey type. The population and sample consisted of all the academic staff of the university under investigation. Secondary data was considered and relevant data were collected from the academic planning division of the vice-chancellor's office, Ekiti State University in order to find out the human resource situation in terms of quantity, quality and adequacy as specified by NUC guidelines in the university under investigation. Finding showed that the university under consideration fair very well in terms of academic staff in professorial cadre, considering NUC requirement but its however bottom heavy in terms of academic staff mix. Majority of academic staff in Ekiti State University are in the cadre of lecturer I downward with the 65.1% of the entire academic staff falls into this category; which did not meet up with National Universities Commission (NUC) ideal recommendation of only 45%. Based on this, it was therefore recommended among others that more academic staff of the senior cadre should be recruited to the Nigerian universities to remedy the short fall in the system and so as to equally adhere strictly to NUC standard of lecturer/student ratio in order to ensure quality; since the findings in the university under investigation is not totally different from what is obtainable in other Nigerian universities.

Keywords: human resource, situation, Nigeria, universities, NUC guidelines

1. Introduction

The place of human resource in any organisation cannot be overemphasised. It is the most essential resource and it constitutes the most crucial factor in development process of any organisation. They are equally the intellectual resource pool of any university. The quality of human capital will have direct impact on the development or otherwise of a system. It is expected of university education to provide a needed human capital with enhanced skills that can lead to technological innovation, increase in productivity and growth within an economy. Human resource in an organisation, educational organisation inclusive according to Emechebe (2009) is equally made up of people, their abilities, knowledge and skill which, when properly coordinated and managed determine the success of such an organisation.

This position was further corroborated by Ige (2010) that human resource in educational system generally refers to all human beings engaged as inputs in education and most importantly the academic staff, and having people with relevant skills, abilities and knowledge, go a long way in determining the success or failure of an organisation. They are the building blocks and active agents of an organisation, in fact, the most important resource in any academic institution (Oyebanji, 2009). Also, Olorunsola & Arogundade (2012) further affirmed that academic staff are the major determinant of any educative process in the universities because on them lies the success or failure of the educational system.

Every educational enterprise needs adequate and skilled manpower to function well. The other resources like the physical facilities and equipment are mere complementary resources to the industry. Olakunle (2001) in his own views opined that human capital has ever remained the most productive capital in any organisation, no matter the type or size. This assertion equally agrees with the views of Mkpa (1991) that no educational programme or institution is superior to its teaching staff. The type, quality and quantity of people working in an organisation in order to achieve its goals and objectives are very crucial to its success.

The human resource in Nigeria university system includes the lecturers, administrative staff and the supporting staff; and these ones constitute the life wire of a university. However, the focus of this study shall be the academic staff in the Nigerian university system for they are the implementers of educational policies and programmes (Tabotndip, 2009). Therefore, the effectiveness of an organisation such as a university largely depends on the situation or condition of the academic staff in the system. It is generally believed in the words of Fadipe (2000) that having right type of human resource in Nigerian universities would enhance the production of the right type of manpower in sufficient quantity and quality for the transformation of the nation from a developing country to a developed one.

Also, Jatula (2010) further opines that it is common knowledge that the quality of institution is directly related to the quality of the teaching staff. The higher the quality, the better the graduates who are often than not, better equipped and more likely to excel in their chosen carriers. He further affirmed that in order to become great, good university needs to attract and or retain faculties who have experts in their chosen fields (justify with a Ph.D.) who are capable of keeping abreast of the latest happening in their area of specialisation, able to disseminate knowledge in a symbiotic atmosphere and have the potential to win staff prizes, research grants, medals and citation.

Adegun (2008) while stressing the importance of human resource in an organisation is of the view that the arrow heads of achieving the aims of higher education are the members of staff of that institution, most importantly the academic staff. He strongly believed that certain measures of results will always be achieved if the human resource is adequately provided and up and doing in the performance of their duties; he concluded that no country in the world that has ever developed played down the development of its human capital.

However, as important as human resource is to an organisation, university system inclusive, its situation which entails the availability, quality and adequacy appears to be critical in many Nigerian universities. Universities as citadels of learning, knowledge-producing institutions and repositories of fundamental knowledge require viable and adequate human resource, most especially the academic staff in order to function effectively well; but in many universities in Nigeria, the situation seems contrary as academic staff appear to be in acute shortage and bottom heavy in terms of mix.

Sule-Kano (2007) and Okojie (2008) laid credence to this observation that; there is a considerable shortage of manpower teaching requirement in many Nigerian universities. Even Mimiko (2010) came up with the specifics while quoting Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities (ASUU) that; what we have in terms of academic staff in many Nigerian universities is just about forty percent (40%) of what is required; In his words, if all we have is just 40% of the academic staff that we need, then; that calls for concern. With the seemingly acute shortage of academic staff in many Nigerian universities, the universities' management still appears unwillingly to employ more able hands into the system; due to alleged shortage of funds. Ogunlade (2008) further affirmed that Nigerian universities required about 47,000 academic staff but has only a total of 18,000 lecturers to cater for a student's population of over 1.5million.

As at the time of writing this paper, according to Abiodun-Oyebanji (2011), Nigeria; a country of over 150 million people, has 117 universities: 36 federally controlled, 36 state-owned and 45 privately established; all running close to 3,000 programmes with staff strength of approximately 28,000 and students enrollment of about 1.1million. This translated globally to a student/staff ratio of 40:1, with the state universities having the worst ratio of 59:1. The pathetic side of this information is that Nigeria is in shortfall of about eight thousand academic staff to cater for its tertiary education (Saanu 2009). Okojie (2008) further laid credence to this why decrying the human resource situation in Nigerian universities that; more than 70 percent (72,070) of workers in the Nigerian University system are non-academic staff. He complained that more than half of the 27,394 academics are lecturer 1 downward while 11,958 are in the cadre of senior lecturer/reader professorship categories. Akinrinade (2009) further corroborated the above view that Nigerian universities right now need the service of about 8,000 Ph.D. holders.

Experience has also shown that academic staff appears to be at the receiving end of over-enrolment of students in many Nigerian universities. Awuzie (2008) further confirmed this that some of the problems plaguing university education in Nigeria include shortage of academic personnel, poor funding and explosion of universities without facilities. With this development, the goals and objectives of universities in the production of quality gradates, worthy in learning and character, and the creation of up-to-date knowledge and innovations for the total socio-economic and even political development of a nation like Nigeria may be frustrated or jeopardised.

Due to poor funding of many Nigerian universities by their owners, overseas training for academic staff to boost their efficiency appears extremely difficult to sustain in many Nigerian universities; what is being witnessed

today is academic staff going for local and international conferences at their own expenses. Yann (2002) further buttress this position that many Nigerian universities have been cut off from international networks, scholars from these universities appeared to have been forced to seek individually for alternative resource for research activity. It is therefore against this backdrop that this study investigates the resource situation in Nigerian universities; using Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti as a case study.

Ekiti State University was used as a case study because of the high interest of the Ekiti people in Education and which is well notice all over Nigeria. It is a known fact that: education is the major or main industry of the state; a high percentage of academic staff in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria today is indigenes of this state. Hence, the reason for the appellation “Fountain of Knowledge” given to the state by all and sundry.

2. Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive research design in an attempt to investigate the human resource situation in Nigerian universities, using Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti as a case study; and all members of academic staff of all the eight faculties in the university as sample. The main instrument used for data collection for this study was secondary data. Relevant data were collected from the Academic Planning division of the Vice-Chancellor’s office, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti in order to find out the human resource situation in the university; with respect to the availability, quality and adequacy in accordance to National University Commission’s (NUC) guidelines.

2.1 Human Resource Situation in Ekiti State University

The state of human resource in aforementioned university was examined using the National University Commission (NUC) guidelines and statistical analysis of Academic Staff return of the university.

2.1.1 Academic Staff

NUC expects that the followings should be adhere to so as to ensure that quality graduates which are very critical to national development and central to the progress of the society are produced in Nigerian universities:

Table 1. Teachers’/students’ ratio and NUC ideal guidelines

Faculty	NUC Guidelines
Agricultural Science	1.15
Arts	1.30
Engineering	1.15
Law	1.30
Management Sciences	1.30
Science	1.20
Social Sciences	1.30
Education	1.30

Table 1 shows the NUC guideline for Teacher-students ratio in the Nigerian universities.

Table 2. The staff mix by rank

Rank	% (Percentage)
Professors/Readers	20%
Senior Lecturers	35%
Others (i.e., Lecturer I downward)	45%

Table 2 equally shows the NUC requirement for the staff mix by rank in Nigerian universities.

2.1.2 Qualification of the Teaching Staff

70% and above of the academic staff must have a doctoral degree. Using the criterion in table 1 above, the teachers/students ratio according to NUC guideline; for instance in the Faculty of Agricultural Science are 1:15, Arts 1:30, Engineering 1:15, Law 1:30, Management science 1:30, Science 1:20, Social sciences 1:30 and Education 1:30. The variation in teacher-students ratio as fixed by NUC guidelines for faculties in different

courses was as a result of the preference of some courses over the other by the students. For instance, faculties of Arts, Social Sciences, Education and Management Sciences tend to have more students than faculties of Engineering and Science. This may be as a result of requirements for admission into these faculties of Humanities, that is Arts, Education, Social Sciences and Management Sciences, which are relatively less competitive, compare to Science-based faculties such as Engineering, Science and Agriculture, to mention just a few. The admission into these Science-based courses over the years has been a Herculean task accompanied with intense competition among the applicants. The situation however seems contrary in the university under investigation going by the available data in the table III below.

Table 3. Actual teachers/students ratio in Ekiti State university for the space of 3 academic sections

Faculty	2008	2009	2010	NUC Guideline
Agriculture	1:12	1:18	1:20	1:15
Education	1:25	1:35	1:45	1:30
Arts	1:23	1:20	1:35	1:30
Engineering	1:10	1:12	1:8	1:15
Law	1:19	1:18	1:16	1:30
Management Science	1:70	1:60	1:60	1:30
Science	1:23	1:21	1:25	1:20
Social Science	1:27	1:25	1:35	1:30

Source: Academic Planning Unit, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti

From the above table, it can be seen that only faculty of Law and Engineering adhered strictly to NUC teachers/students ratio requirement of 1:15 and 1:30 respectively for the three (3) academic sessions under consideration. For instance, in 2008, 2009 and 2010 academic sessions, the teachers/students ratio in the faculty of Engineering were 1:10, 1:12 and 1:8 respectively and this was a good take going by NUC requirement of 1:15. Also, Faculty of Law equally adhered to NUC requirement of teachers/students ratio of 1:30, by having 1:19, 1:18 and 1:16 teachers/students ratio in the three years academic sessions under consideration. This development is probably due to students' admission into these courses hence, the reason for adherence to NUC guideline of teacher-student ratio.

However, faculties of Management Sciences and Education were the worst hit with teacher-student ratio of 1:70, 1:60 and 1:60 for faculty of Management science compared with the teacher/students ratio of 1:30 stipulated by NUC. Likewise Faculty of Education teacher/students ratio for the three years academic session under consideration were 1:25, 1:35 and 1:45 respectively; while the NUC requirement was 1:30. This development can also be ascribed to the high demand of students/applicants for these courses and also over enrolment of students into them.

2.1.3 The Staffs Mix by Rank in Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti

Table 4. Statistical analysis of academic staff return as at 30th September, 2010

Faculty	Professor	Reader	Senior Lecturer	Lecturer I	Lecturer II	Assistant Lecturer	Graduate Assistant
Science	16	07	14	16	13	33	2
Education	9	7	15	14	14	13	1
Engineering	4	2	3	20	7	89	-
Law	1	1	5	9	4	1	-
Management Sciences	1	1	5	3	14	2	1
Agric	5	1	9	12	13	6	-
Arts	6	7	6	15	16	1	1
College of Medicine	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Social Sciences	6	6	8	10	18	4	—
Total	49	32	65	99	99	69	5
Library	University Librarian 1	—	Principal Librarian 2	Senior Librarian 1	Librarian I 1	Law Librarian 2	—

Source: Ekiti State University Registry

Summary of Table 4

Rank	UNAD	%	NUC
Professor/Reader	81	19.4	20%
Senior Lecturer	65	15.6	35%
Lecturer1/Others	272	65.1	45%
Total	418		

The percentage of professors/Readers in Ekiti State University as shown in the table IV above is 19.4% which is quite very close to the NUC requirement of 20%. However, the percentage of senior lecturer is 15.6%; and this is far less than the NUC requirement of 35%. On the other hand, the percentage of lecturer 1 downward is 65.1%, which is over and above the 45% requirement of the NUC. This may also be attributed to the failure of university manager to employ more academic staff of the senior cadre into the system; due to allege shortage of fund.

It is therefore evident from the table that while the university under consideration fair very well in terms of academic staff in professorial cadre, its however, bottom heavy in terms of academic staff mix. Majority of academic staff in Ekiti State University are Lecturer I downward with the 65.1% of the entire academic staff falls into this category; while the NUC requirement for this category of academic staff is only 45%; and this situation is the reflection of the human resource situation of many Nigerian universities. This is further confirmed by Okojie (2008) that staffing is a crucial problem of the Nigerian university system today; he further affirmed that most of the private universities especially in Nigeria today do not have the required quantity and quality of academic staff to take care of their teaching and research. The scenario according to Okojie is such that the limited academic staff in the public universities are being shared by the private universities, while the most of the lecturers available in the private universities are very junior to handle serious academic activities.

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

To say staffing is a major problem of the Nigerian university system today is an understatement. It is amazing that the university system generates its needed manpower, but has not been able to attract them to remain in the system.

The situation of human resource in many Nigerian universities today is appalling and unsatisfactory. This could be attributed to myriads of problems facing the university system in the country. The problems among others include inadequate funding, over-enrolment and high degree of "brain-drain". All these have contributed in no small measure to a precipitous human resource situation in many Nigerian universities. To this end therefore, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Better conditions of service have to be put in place in Nigerian universities, these improved conditions will not only attract better staff but will also retain the best brain in the industry. Also, in order to combat brain-drain in Nigerian universities, academic staff should be motivated through enhanced salary package and better conditions of service.
- ii. It should also be made mandatory for all teaching and academic staff in the universities to be computer literate so as to be more productive. Doctoral students should be encouraged by their prospective supervisors to be up and doing with their research works; this is to enable them complete their research programmes on time so as to plough them back into the system as academic staff; and this development will go a long way in addressing shortage of qualified academic personnel in Nigeria university system.
- iii. More academic staff should be recruited to universities so as to remedy the shortfall in the system.
- iv. The universities should develop their academic staff by empowering them to embark on further training, attend local and international conferences and participate in seminars and workshops.
- v. Moreover, the academic staff should also be encouraged to carry out meaningful and productive researches rather than embarking on low quality ones that are geared towards promotion exercise, which usually results in publish or perish syndrome.

References

- Abiodun-Oyebanji, O. (2011). Towards effective management of private university education in Nigeria. *Journal of emerging trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies*, 2(6), 586-590.
- Adegun, J. A. (2008). *Academic Staff Effectiveness*. A keynote address presented at academic empowerment seminar organised for the Faculty of Education academic staff, University of Ado-Ekiti.
- Akinrinade, S. (2009). NUC's agenda for private universities. *The Nation*, p. 18.
- Awuzie (2008). Academic staff of Nigerian universities memo. *The Nation*, p. 3.
- Emechebe, S. N. (2009). *Human resource management in education*. Education management: Theories and tasks. Lagos: Macmillan.
- Fadipe, J. O. (2000). Education for national development: The millennium option. In J. O. Fadipe & E. E. Oluchukwu (Eds.), *Educational Planning and Administration in Nigeria in the 21st Century*. NEIPA.
- Ige, M. A. (2010). Human resource utilisation as correlate of secondary school students' academic performance in Ondo State. An unpublished M.Sc. thesis, University of Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria.
- Jatula, V. (2010). The university challenge: Funding research and collaboration. *The Punch*, p. 12.
- Mimiko, N. F. (2010). Nigerian varsities should pay attention to their websites. *The Nation*, p. 42.
- Mkpa, M. A. (1991). *Contemporary Issues in Education*. Onitsha: Inislink Publishers.
- Ogunlade, A. (2008). *Academic Integrity*. A keynote address presented at academic empowerment seminar organised for the Faculty of Education academic staff, University of Ado-Ekiti.
- Okojie, J. A. (2008). Licensing accreditation and quality assurance in Nigerian universities: Achievements and challenges. Paper presented at a session of the *2008 Consortium of Higher Education Researchers (CHER)*. Summer Workshop.
- Olakunle, I. O. (2001). The human factors in policy and plan implementation. *Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM)*, 3(3&4), 21-29.
- Olorunsola, E. O., & Arogundade, B. B. (2012). Organisational climate and lecturers' job performance in south-west Nigerian universities. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 2(1), 51-57.
- Oyebanji, O. (2009). Resource situation and academic staff job performance in south-west Nigerian universities. An unpublished Ph.D. thesis; University of Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria.
- Philips, E. (2006). Who will save the university? *Comet*, p. 16.
- Saanu, S., & Sunday, S. (2009). Lecturer's retirement at 70 is the best option. *This Day*, p. 16.
- Sule-Kano, A. (2007). The Nigerian universities: Matters arising. *The Punch*, p. 10.
- Tabotndip, J. E. (2009). *Human resources in educational management: Theories and tasks*. Lagos: Macmillan.
- Yann, L. (2002). Extraversion strategy in marginalised institutions: Nigerian academics' responses to changing patterns in international research needs and practices. *Consortium of Higher Education Researchers (CHER)* (pp. 5-7). 15th Annual Conference, Vienna Austria.