ACADEMIC HUMAN RESOURCES SITUATION IN KWARA STATE POLYTECHNIC, ILORIN, NIGERIA

Murtala, A. T.; Lawal, A. A.; Oduwaiye, R. O. (Ph.D);
& Omosidi, A. S. (Ph.D)
Department of Educational Management,
Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria
E-mail: matukur2013@gmial.com; lawal.am1@unilorin.edu.ng; oduwaiye@yahoo.com; drasomosidi@yahoo.com
Phone No: +234-803-337-9728

Abstract

The production function of the polytechnics in terms of producing quality middle-level work force is a function of the quality of teaching which depends largely on the quality and quantity of academic staff available. This paper examined the level of lecturer adequacy under the prevailing academic programme and student enrollment in Kwara State Polytechnics. The paper uses selected sample from the lecturer population in Kwara state Polytechnics, a profoma was used for data collection and frequency count and percentage was adopted in analyzing data collected. The finding of the study revealed that the lecturers in Kwara state Polytechni are inadequate and are grossly over utilized. The paper therefore, concluded that there is shortage of lecturer in Kwara state Polytechnic, thus it was recommended among others, Kwara state government should increase its subvention to the institution and more lecturers should be employed into the Polytechnic.

Keywords: Academic human resources, situation, polytechnic, utilisation

Introduction

Polytechnics Education is that aspect of technical education, which leads to the acquisition of practical and applied skills as well as basic scientific knowledge. The general objectives of this aspect of technical education include the preparation of graduates for occupation that are ranked above skilled craft but below scientific or engineering profession. The National Policy on Education identified five types of technical education institutions outside the universities. They are pre-vocational and vocational schools at post-primary levels; Technical Colleges, Polytechnics, and Colleges of Education (Technical) at Post Secondary Schools (FRN, 2004).

Technical Education had a slow start and developed less quickly than other forms of education in Nigeria, nevertheless, the importance of the products of this form of education for sustainable development cannot be overemphasized. The National Policy on Education provides that, Technical Education would bring about technical knowledge and vocational skills necessary for agricultural, industrial, commercial, and economic development through provision of well-trained sub-professional grade and middle-level manpower (NPE, 2004). In recognition of the fact that technical education forms the basis of the nation's technological development; the Federal Government of Nigeria had substantially increased its expenditure in this field in the Third National Development plan period 1975-1980 (NBTE, 1981).

Ever since the establishment of National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) in 1985, there has been a phenomenal expansion in technical institutions in Nigeria. NBTE, (2012) recounting the steady expansion of Technical Education in Nigeria, provides that; from one Technical College in 1948 (Yaba College of Technology), the country now has 74 polytechnics, with various programmes for both the National Diploma and Higher National Diploma Students. In addition, enrollment in the Polytechnics has witnessed a significant growth. For example, Polytechnic enrollment has risen from 17, 485 in 1986/87 to 104,686 in 1990/91 and to 192, 979 in 1997/98 and 237, 775 in 1999/2000 (Adeyemi and Uko-Aviomoh 2004). Also, from 285,345 in 2002/2003 to 311,844 in 2004/2005 (Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja, 2005) and from 214,391 in 2005/2006 to 225,171 in 2010/2011 (NBTE, 2012). This paper therefore presents an attempt to study academic manpower situation in Kwara State Polytechnics with a view to identify and provide solution to factors that affect effective teaching delivery in the Polytechnic.

Overview of Academics Human Resources Development in Nigerian Polytechnics

Lecturers play very important role in teaching-learning process that, In spite of the advancement in science and technology, the teacher is not yet displaced in the classroom nor has his important role in education diminished (Aghenta, 1998). Similarly, Tarpeh (1994) remarked that academic staff is vital for good achievement of any institution and the number and quality of academic staff affects the efficiency of teaching and learning process. Tarpeh described teachers (academic staff) as a crucial input in the transformation of students and research into graduates, knowledge, and solutions of societal problems.

However, the situation as regards the adequacy of academic staff supply to Polytechnics in Nigeria is highly precarious. Corroborating this situation, (Adeyemi & Uko-Aviomoh 2004; Aina, 2000,) all submitted that there is problem of inadequate qualified teachers at almost all levels and types of education in Nigeria. This situation pointed at a looming crisis that will definitely affect the quality of middle level manpower production in Nigerian Polytechnics and consequently, the nation's technological development.

Lecturer Demand-Supply Mix in Kwara State Polytechnic

Lecturer demand, connote the quantity and quality of lecturer needed for the Polytechnic. On the other hand, supply means the actual number of lecturers available during the years of study. Higbee (1981) in his demand models for academic staff planning identified some formula for determining the number of academic staff required by an academic unit, college, faculty, school, department, etc. He identifies two formulae: student/teacher ratio and work load formula. The student/teacher ratio is adapted in this paper in determining the academic staff need of the polytechnic.

According to NBTE (2012), the following teacher/student ratios are recommended for the Monotechnics and Polytechnics in Nigeria:

(i) 1:8 for technological-based disciplines and
(ii) 1:16 for management and art disciplines

Today, there is phenomenal rise in student enrolment across all levels of education; this from observations could not be matched by the growth in the number of teachers' available (Adeyemi and Uko-Aviomoh, 2004; Omoregie and Hartnett, 1995; UNESCO, 2000).

Causes of Shortage of Technical Teachers

The adequacy of teaching staff at any level of education is a major determinant of quality instructional delivery (Adeyemi & Uko-Aviomoh, 2004; Omoregie & Hartnett, 1995; UNESCO, 2000). In the data illustrated in table 1 and 2 in this paper has shown a drastic downward trend in respect to adequacy of Polytechnic teachers. This position corroborates earlier studies conducted by Adeyemi and Uko-Aviomoh, (2004). This situation of work over load allows little time for staff development opportunities. A lot of factors can be adduced. These include the admission explosion, underfunding of higher education and technical education in particular, dwindling national economy; issue of brain-drain and perception of technical education disciplines as tough.

The urge for admission into higher education in the country has phenomenally increased enrollment. This in the word of Ogundipe *et al.* (2010) has changed the otherwise known colleges of Technology to a more or less "college of management" in they maintain that the scarcity of candidates with science based courses such as Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry who qualified to pursue technological programmes. Many of the non-science-based candidates are quite often ready to take up any course particularly in the art-management disciplines as the case also in the universities.

Ocho (2006) observed that most universities and polytechnics especially and federal and states enroll far more students than the available qualified lecturers, facilities such as classrooms, laboratories, desks reading materials and equipments. Obe (2007) reported that 13 out of the 19 state universities over enrolled while only one of 7 private universities over enrolled. This trend of massification according to Fabiyi and Uzoka (2012) is no different in polytechnics and colleges of Educaiton. Also, Adeyemi (2004) maintained that most institutions do not respect the admission guidelines and quotas. Adeyemi and Uko Aviomoh (2004) further maintained that the income to be generated from certain fees paid seems to be over-riding the sense of judgment. This has led to situations where enrollment for outstrips the available resources, including teachers it takes a long time to produce teacher for this level of education.

Secondly, the downturn in the nations economy has been identified as the cause of all educational problems for the past two decides (Adeyemi et-a, 2004, and Fabiyi and Uzoka, 2012). Ten years ago, the country could only allocate about 1.4% of her GNP to education; while countries like Ghana, Zimbabwe, and Malaysia allocated 4%, 8.5% and 7.1% respectively of their GNP to education. (Daily Time, 2-12-93). The situation still remains the same up to day. Corroborating this summision Durosaro (2012) revealed that the percentage allocation to education on federal government annual budget ranged between 4.84% and 9.64%. This allocation according to Durosaro appears to low compared with other countries spend on education.

The poor allocation has led to under-finding of the polytechnics and other in situation. Facilities have degenerated and teaching equipment to the dissatisfaction of teaching staff. In addition the condition of service become unattractive to newcomer and repulsive to service teachers corroborating this situation Adeyemi (2004) said that the Academic Staff Union of Polytechnic has equally expressed its displeasure. The low allocation has seemingly affected all aspects of education in general and technical education in particular. All these either discouraged brilliant young scholars from taking up teaching job or led to the brain-drain" syndrome. Many teachers are either leaving the polytechnics for greener pasture outside the country or even lucrative industries that require in large number the skill and service of technological oriented scholars within the country. In a study conducted on the phenomenon of brain-drain in two polytechnics in Nigeria by Giwa (2000) it was revealed that withdrawal transfer of service and resignation of teaching staff were tested to be significant and that their directions were mainly to cross to universities manufacturing industries, while some went on private business.

The high rate of staff attrition his not good for quality assurance in the polytechnics. More experienced teachers and leaving, while brilliant young graduate are not encouraged by the situation. At the same time, less qualified people are being recruited to fill the gap. In this case, the delivery system of quality technological education would definitely be in jeopardy. Onokherhoraye and Nwoye (1995) corroborated this as they asserted that the attrition of quality and experienced academic staff could result in poor standard.

Another probable cause of shortage of teaching staff in the nation's polytechnics, according to Adeyemi and Uko-Aviomoh (2004) could be attributed to the general notion that science and technological disciplines are tough to pursue right from secondary schools, not to mention of pursuing them to post-graduate level that could qualify one to be a teacher at this level. In their opinion, it is not on easy task to pursue post-graduate programme in Nigeria universities nowadays because of the poor state of laboratories and workshops. At the same time, the poor state of the nation's economy has affected overseas sponsorships. Some factors can be identified, these factors include among others; admission explosion, government under funding of higher education, dwindling national economy, lower rate of technical teachers production, and the issue of brain-drain.

The demand for admission to higher institution by the secondary school leavers in Nigeria today has phenomenally increased enrollment. Must institutions do not respect the admission policy and quotas. In Kwara state polytechnic as gathered from data collected, the income to be generated from certain fees paid by the student seems to be over-riding the sense of judgment on merit and consideration of available academic manpower. This has led to situations where enrollment far outstrips the available resources, including teachers.

Secondly, the downturn in the nation’s economy has being identified as the major cause of all educational problems for the past two decades. In addition, the poor allocation of fund to the institution by the Kwara state government has led to the under-funding of the polytechnic and other institutions in the state. Corroborating this fact, Durosaro, (2012) on

percentage allocation to education on federal government annual budget provides that, allocations ranged from 4.84% in 2006, 9.98% in 2009 and, 8.43% in 2012, this allocations according to Durosaro appears too low compared with what other countries spend on education and the 26% of annual expenditure of the nation suggested by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Teaching facilities and equipments have degenerated to the dissatisfaction of teaching staff. In addition, the condition of service had become unattractive to newcomers and repulsive to serving teachers. All these either discouraged brilliant young scholars from taking up appointment at the polytechnic or led to the "brain-drain" syndrome.

The implication of under-funding on academic staff turnover, portend danger to the future of technical education in general and polytechnics in particular Adeyemi and Uko-Aviomoh, (2004). This situation could hamper the technological development of the country. The high rate of staff attrition is also not good for quality assurance in the polytechnics. More experience academic staff are leaving, while brilliant young graduates are not motivated by the situation. At the same time, less qualified people are recruited to teach in the polytechnic to fill the gap. Hence, quality technological education delivery would definitely be in jeopardy.

Challenges to Polytechnics and Technical Education in Nigeria

Arising from the investigation and findings of this paper, government policies on Technical Education has been a challenge for the fact that, there is inconsistency in the mode of implementing the policy. Ideally, Technical Education is to provide meddle-level manpower needed for the nation's economy. Nevertheless, this has not been the case for Nigeria Polytechnics due to some reasons, prominent among the findings of this study on Kwara state Polytechnics are; lack of enough funds, over enrolment and over utilization of teachers.

Funding has been a major challenge of Technical Education. Technical Education is capital intensive and government has not been able to adequately cater for financial need of the institutions thus, making it difficult for Polytechnic to carryout fully their mandates. On records, government allocation to education has been very low compared to other country's spending on Education (Adeyeni et al., 2004; Fabiyi & Uzoka, 2012; Durosaro, 2012). Despite the low funding, there is increase in the demand for polytechnics education over the year thus, facility expansion to cater for the increased enrolment is hampered by fund. This situation no doubt affects the quality of Polytechnics outturns.

Enrolment of students into Kwara State Polytechnic has been over and above its available teaching staff capacity under the prevailing academic programme of the Polytechnic. Teachers in Kwara State Polytechnics are grossly over utilisied as shown from the outlook of teacher/student ratio under the prevailing academic programme and student enrolment.

Research Objectives

The paper investigates into Academic Human resources situation in Kwara state polytechnic. The purposes of this paper are to:

(i) examine the actual situation on ground in Kwara state polytechnic as regards lecturer supply.
(ii) identify weather there is adequate number of teachers and find out the utilization level of available teachers in Kwara state polytechnic.

Research Questions

(i) What is the situation of lecturer supply in Kwara State Polytechnic?
(ii) What are the level of lecturers adequacy and utilization level in Kwara state Polytecnics?

Methodology

The population for the study comprises the 273 teaching staff in Kwara State Polytechnic as at December 2013. The researcher using purposeful sampling technique to select 120 teaching staff from 12 departments in the Polytechnics.

Instruments used in this study consist of two sets of researcher designed profoma tagged: "Students' Enrolment Determination Proforma (SEDP)" and "Academic Staff Availability Proforma (ASAP)" was used to collect data on student enrollment into the Polytechnics between 2007 and 2011, and also academic staff available from 2010 to 2011. Both the validity and reliability of the instrument used are appropriately ascertained. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics of average and percentages.

Research Question 1 what is the situation of lecturer supply in Kwara state Polytechnic, Ilorin? The result of the situation of lecturer supply in Kwara State Polytechnics, Ilorin is in table 1

Table 1: Situation of lecturer supply in Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin

Year	Student enrolment (both ND and HND)	Actual teaching staff available	Ideal teaching staff based on NBTE teacher/student ratio of1:12 (representing the average of 1:8 and 1:16 for Business and Science/Technology respectively)	Ideal/ actual difference (shortfall)
2007/2008	12901	168	1075	907
2008/2009	4894	201	408	207
2009/2010	6584	213	549	336
2010/2011	7158	273	597	324

Source: NBTE and Fieldwork.

Table 1 shows a number of shortfalls ranging from 907 in 2007/2008; 207 in 2008/2009 and 324 in 2010/2011. This observation calls for serious concern to educational managers.

Research Question 2: what is the level of lecturer adequacy and utilization in Kwara State polytechnic, Ilorin? The result of lecturer adequacy and utilization is in table 2

Table 2: Lecturers' adequacy and utilization level based on ideal lecture hours per week and ideal number of students per class in some departments in Kwara State Polytechnic 2010/2011

Departments	Actual lecture hours per week	Ideal lecture hours per week	Actual number of students handle in a lecture	Ideal number of student in a lecture	Utilization level (Under/over/optimum utilization)
Accountancy	8 to 12 hours	6 to 8 hours	128 and above	16	Over utilization
Banking and Finance	8 to 12 hours	6 to 8 hours	128 and above	16	Over utilization
Mechanical Engineering	4 to 8 hours	6 hours	16 to 32	8	Over utilization
Metalhology	4 to 8 hours	6 hours	16 to 32	8	Over utilization
Mineral Resources Engineering	8 to 12 hours	6 to 8 hours	64 to128	8	Over utilization
Public Admin	8 to 12 hours	6 to 8 hours	128 and above	16	Over utilization
Estate mgt	8 to 12 hours	6 to 8 hours	40 to 60	16	Over utilization
Statistics	8 to 12 hours	6 hours	24	8	Over utilization
Computer Sci	8 to 12 hours	6 hours	22	8	Over utilization
Mass Communication	8 to12 hours	6 to 8 hours	40	16	Over utilization
Bus Admin	8 to 12 hours	6 to 8 hours	91	16	Over utilization
Surveying	8 to 12 hours	6 hours	20	16	Over utilization

Source: Fieldwork

Table 2 shows over utilization of available lecturers both in terms of lecture hour and number of student per class for a lecture in Kwara State Polytechnic. This indicates an overall, over utilization of technical teachers in all the departments studied. This observation should be a serious concern to educational managers.

Conclusion

The place of academic work force is very crucial in the production of middle-level manpower for the development of the nation. Consequently, the country and Kwara state in particular had rested its hope on teaching of science and technology as a crucial road to developmental take-off. Unfortunately, from the foregoing analysis one can conclude that, there is inadequacy of academic staff in Kwara state polytechnic. Also, the available lecturers are crossly over utilized. This situation has created a high teacher/student ratios across most discipline, which could seriously jeopardize the effectiveness of technical education delivery, especially in the nearest future if urgent attention is not directed to the problem and urgent solution provided.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was therefore recommended that:

(i) Kwara State government should increase monthly/annual subvention of Kwara state Polytechnic, also the Polytechnic management should develop an all-inclusive revenue generation methods to compliment government subvention to ensure that enough funds are available to run the institution.

(ii) The management of Kwara State Polytechnic through its governing council should employ more lecturers for all departments and programme in the institution in the Polytechnic to reduce the problem of lecturer over utilisation. Enrolment into Kwara State Polytechnic should be based on available academics human recourse situation and the NBTE stipulated benchmark for Polytechnics in Nigeria.

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