Internal Quality Assurance and Staff Job Performance in Public Higher Institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Higher institutions in Cross River State continue to experience a low level of staff development and a high rate of student enrolment. The study assessed the relationship between internal quality assurance and staff job performance in Cross River State. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The research design used for this study was the cross-sectional survey research design. The population of the study consisted of 3870 staff. The sample size of the study consisted of 351 respondents. A questionnaire for Academic Staff on Internal Quality Assurance and Staff Job Performance (QASIQASJP) was used for data collection. The instrument yielded 0.76 as the logical validity index. The coefficient of internal consistency of 0.78 was obtained after pilot testing the instrument. The research questions were answered using the descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study showed that there was a significant relationship between staff development and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State and there was a significant relationship between Carrying Capacity Policy and staff job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State. The study recommended that All the public tertiary institutions in Cross River State should be mandated by their various regulatory agencies to set aside special funds annually for staff development through their sponsorship for conferences and further studies to help the academic staff acquire knowledge and skills for effective job performance.
Keywords: Internal Quality Assurance, Staff Job Performance, Staff Development and Carry Capacity Policy.

Introduction

Higher institutions in Nigeria have several means of meeting the desire for preparing and equipping the younger generations to contribute meaningfully towards national growth and development. There is continuous demand by the government and the general public for higher institutions to achieve the national goals and objectives through human capacity development. The demand requires the academic staff in higher institutions in Nigeria to contribute positively towards the provision of quality education to the citizens. As such, managers of higher institutions are expected to integrate the internal quality assurance mechanisms into their various institutions to sustain the standard of academic programmes (Iyala, 2018). Quality is the degree to which an educational system maintains the standard set up to facilitate the attainment of the goals of educational institutions. Internal quality assurance encompasses the process of monitoring, assessing and evaluating different aspects of educational programmes to ensure that high standard is sustained in

educational institutions. Internal quality assurance is a major aspect of achieving a high standard of teaching and learning in educational institutions (Asiyai, 2017).

The nature of internal quality assurance mechanisms in higher institutions may affect staff emotions, their perceptions of self-efficacy and their commitment to remain in the teaching profession. The job performance of academic staff in higher institutions consists of the various academic activities that are undertaken by lecturers to ensure that the job of teaching and learning take place effectively. Among the jobs performed by the academic staff in higher institutions include teaching, consultancy services, conducting research, supervision of students' projects and marking of students' scripts. Internal quality assurance in higher institutions is aimed at meeting the conditions related to academic issues, staff-student ratios, staff development, Carrying Capacity Policy, physical facilities management, adequate funding, well-equipped laboratory and adequate library facilities (Adeniyi, 2015). This study assessed the relationship between quality assurance and staff job performance in the aspects of staff development and Carrying Capacity Policy.

The level of job performance by academic staff in higher institutions may be influenced by the nature of staff development opportunities provided for them by managers of higher institutions. Staff development is one of the critical areas of the internal quality assurance approach that is meant to assist the academic staff to acquire the relevant knowledge, skills and experiences needed for effective discharging of their official responsibilities. Staff development is a critical aspect of internal quality assurance because it involves the planned activities that focus on increasing and enlarging the capabilities, improving the technical and conceptual skills of lecturers to enable them to possess the required knowledge and competencies for performing complex activities (Ali, et al., 2013). Oredein (2014) conducted a study and found out that there was a significant positive relationship between the factors that bring about lecturers' conditions of service to work such as periodic review of salaries, provision of opportunities for professional development and their job performance.

Furthermore, Aliyu and Kabiru (2014) conducted a study and found out that there was no defined management strategy on staff training and development in Nigerian Polytechnics. The majority of academic staff members in higher institutions in Cross River State attend conferences based on self-sponsorship using their income which sometimes limits their active participation in conferences because of the high financial involvement for attending conferences. Some higher institutions also find it difficult to sponsor their academic staff for further studies. The inability of many academic staff members to have access to Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) sponsorship, therefore, means that those with lower academic qualifications may find it difficult to have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills for effective job performance.

Carrying Capacity Policy is another internal quality assurance mechanism that could be employed to enhance staff job performance in educational institutions. Carrying Capacity Policy refers to the number of students admitted by an institution concerning the available human and material resources at their disposal. This means that admission of students must correspond with available funds, physical facilities and human resources in each higher institution (Archibong & Okey, 2016). The factors that are usually considered in the admission of students using Carrying Capacity Policy in areas of material resources include comfortable accommodation, size and number of lecture rooms, libraries stocked with modern textbooks, renowned national and international journals among others and human resources include quality and qualified teaching and non-staff in the right quantity and quality. Adewale (2011) conducted a study on Determinants of Carrying Capacity of Academic Programmes in Federal Universities in Nigeria and found out that there was a positive

correlation between the number of academic staff and carrying capacity. The essence of Carrying Capacity Policy is to ensure that quality tertiary education services are provided to students with the view of maintaining suitable lecturer students ratio. However, it is observed that higher institutions in Cross River State find it very difficult to adhere to the Carrying Capacity Policy when admitting students as some lecturer halls cannot accommodate students during lectures and lecturers sometimes stress themselves by speaking louder to be heard by every student due to large class size. Such an effort of lecturers struggling to manage large classes is bound to prevent them from performing the assigned responsibilities effectively. Hence, this study was aimed at assessing the relationship between internal quality assurance and staff job performance in Cross River State.

Statement of the Problem

The researchers observed that the academic staff in higher institutions in Cross River State are not properly developed as they attend conferences based on self-sponsorship using their income which sometimes limits the level of their active participation in certain development programmes because of the high financial involvement for attending conferences. Some higher institutions in the state hardly sponsor their academic staff for further studies. The inability of the majority of the academic staff to have easy access to Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) sponsorship, therefore, means that those with lower academic qualifications are not properly equipped with the appropriate knowledge and skills for effective job performance.

Furthermore, there is a continuous increment in students' enrolment in higher institutions in Cross River State due to the high demand for higher education by the citizens. The high rate of enrolment is preventing quality teaching and learning in higher institutions in the state. The increment in the admission of students without the corresponding increment in staff recruitment has led to the assignment of too much workload to the few available academic staff. Virtually, all the academic staff in higher institutions in Cross River State teach more than the required credit units as recommended by the various regulatory bodies of higher institutions in Nigeria. Hence, this study was designed to assess the relationship between internal quality assurance and staff job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the relationship between internal quality assurance and staff job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State. The following were the specific objectives of the study:

1. To determine the relationship between staff development and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.
2. To ascertain the relationship between Carrying Capacity Policy and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.

Research Questions

The study provided answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between staff development and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State?
2. What is the relationship between Carrying Capacity Policy and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between staff development and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.
2. Carrying Capacity Policy has no significant relationship with job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.

Methodology

The study was guided by the cross-sectional survey research design. A cross-sectional research design is used to obtain the views of a given population with several opinions over a particular topic (Uzoechi, 2015). The total population of this study comprises 3870 academic staff obtained from the four public higher institutions in Cross River State. The sample of the study consisted of 351 academic staff. Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) Table of Specification was employed to determine the sample size of the study. The sample procedures were conducted through the use of the 'lucky-dip method' of simple random sampling technique to select the actual respondents for the study. The technique gave all the respondents an equal opportunity of being selected without any form of bias. The researchers' self-developed questionnaire which consisted of 13 items was used for data collection from the respondents. The instrument is titled 'Questionnaire for Academic Staff on Internal Quality Assurance and Staff Job Performance' (QASIQASJP). The instrument was duly validated and it yielded 0.76 as the logical validity index while 0.78 was obtained as the coefficient of internal consistency after piloting the instrument. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Pearson Product Moment Correlation was employed to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The total copies of 351 questionnaires were administered to the respondents while 338 were appropriately completed as 13 of them were invalid. The remaining 338 valid questionnaires were used for data analysis for this study.

Presentation of Results

Descriptive Analysis of Research Questions

The details of the results of the analysis of the research questions are presented on tables 1 and 2:

Research Question One: What is the relationship between staff development and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State?

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis showing the Relationship between Staff Development and Job Performance in Public Higher Institutions in Cross River State

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	Std. б	Decision
1.	Lecturers with lower academic qualifications are given the opportunity by the institutions to acquire additional degrees to improve their classrooms management skills.	40	35	150	113	2.20	0.73	Disagreed

2.	The institution organises workshops periodically for the academic staff to enable them to supervise students' projects efficiently.	50	46	120	122	2.11	0.80	Disagreed
3.	The academic staff are managing large class sizes successfully through the additional knowledge they acquire during further studies.	25	50	165	98	2.10	0.75	Agreed
4.	Workshops are regularly organised for lecturers to help them perform their assigned responsibilities diligently.	49	30	150	109	2.12	0.85	Disagreed
5.	The majority of the academic staff members do not have access to TEFfund sponsorship for further studies to enable them to acquire new ideas needed for performing their academic job successfully	130	128	60	20	2.55	0.89	Agreed
6.	Lecturers are conducting quality researches because the institution sponsor them for international conferences.	36	35	167	100	2.25	0.77	Disagreed
7.	Responsibilities are delegated to staff members to help them contribute towards the quality management of the institution	60	50	128	150	2.30	0.70	Disagreed
Aggregate Mean						**2.23**	**0.78**	Disagreed

Scale Mean 2.50   *Source: Researchers' Field Work, 2022*

Table 1 indicated the mean and standard deviation responses on the relationship between staff development and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State. The analysis of research question one indicated that item 1 has the mean value of 2.20 with a standard deviation of 0.73, item 2 has the mean value of 2.11 with a standard deviation of 0.80, item 3 has the mean value of 2.10 with a standard deviation of 0.75, item 4 has the mean value of 2.12 with a standard deviation of 0.85, item 5 has a mean value of 2.55 and standard deviation of 0.89, item 6 has the mean value of 2.25 with a standard deviation of 0.77 and item 7 has the mean value of 2.30 with a standard deviation of 0.70. The details of the analysis showed that the aggregate mean of 2.23 is below the scale mean of 2.50, this indicates that there is poor staff development which hinders effective job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.

Research Question Two: What is the relationship between Carrying Capacity Policy and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State?

Table 2

Mean and Standard Deviation Analysis showing the Relationship between Carrying Capacity Policy and Job Performance in Public Higher Institutions in Cross River State

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	Std. Ɓ	Decision
1.	The institution admits more students yearly which prevent effective control of students' behaviour during lessons delivery by lecturers.	45	30	130	133	2.52	0.75	Agreed
2.	School facilities help lecturers to discharge their assigned responsibilities successfully because they are not over-utilised despite the high number of students.	56	40	142	100	2.25	0.69	Disagreed
3.	Staff members are efficient irrespective of the fact that much workload is allocated to them to accomplish every semester as more students are admitted.	25	50	160	103	2.10	0.75	Agreed
4.	There is proper control of teaching and learning by lecturers despite the high rate of admission by the institution.	40	39	140	119	2.28	0.80	Disagreed
5.	Lecturers do not manage their lecturers appropriately because of the high rate of students' admission.	100	78	90	70	2.50	0.83	Agreed
6.	Consideration is given to the available resources in the institution before students are admitted as lectures facilities adequate to enhance effective teaching and learning.	43	45	160	90	2.15	0.74	Disagreed
	Aggregate Mean					2.30	0.76	**Disagreed**

Scale Mean 2.50   *Source: Researchers' Field Work, 2022*

Table 2 indicated the mean and standard deviation responses on the relationship between Carrying Capacity Policy and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State. The analysis of research question one indicated that item 8 has the mean value of 2.52 with a standard deviation of 0.75, item 9 has the mean value of 2.25 with a standard deviation of 0.69, item 10 has the mean value of 2.10 with a standard deviation of 0.75, item 11 has the mean value of 2.28 with a standard deviation of 0.80, item 12 has a mean value of 2.50 and standard deviation of 0.83 and item 13 has the mean value of 2.15 with a standard deviation of 0.74. The details of the analysis showed that the aggregate mean of 2.30 is lower than the scale mean of 2.50, this signifies that there is low compliance to Carrying Capacity Policy which prevent effective job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.

Testing of Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were formulated and tested at a 0.05 level of significance using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation. The results are presented on tables 3 and 4.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between staff development and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.

Table 3

Correlation Coefficient Analysis Showing the Significant Relationship between Staff Development and Job Performance

S/N	Variables	$\bar{X}$	SD	N	Df	r-cal	r-crit	Level of Sig.	Decision
1.	Staff Development								
2.	Job Performance	2.25	0.60	338	336	0.62	0.195	0.05	Reject Ho$_1$

Source: Researchers' Field Work, 2022

Table 3 showed the correlation coefficient of the significant relationship between staff development and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State. The analysis of the results indicated that the r-calculated value is 0.62 while the r-crit value is 0.195 at a significant level of 0.05 and 336 as the degree of freedom. Since the calculated value of 0.62 is above the critical value of 0.195, the null hypothesis one was therefore rejected. The result, therefore, implies that there was a significant relationship between development and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.

Hypothesis Two: Carrying Capacity Policy has no significant relationship with job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.

Table 4

Correlation Coefficient Analysis Showing the Significant Relationship between Carrying Capacity Policy and Job Performance

S/N	Variables	$\bar{X}$	SD	N	Df	r-cal	r-crit	Level of Sig.	Decision
1.	Carrying Capacity								
2.	Staff Job Performance	2.25	0.60	338	336	0.68	0.195	0.05	Reject Ho$_2$

Source: Researchers' Field Work, 2022

Table 4 showed the correlation coefficient of the significant relationship between Carrying Capacity Policy and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State. The analysis of the results indicated that the r-calculated value is 0.65 while the r-crit value is 0.195 at a significant level of 0.05 and 336 as the degree of freedom. Since the calculated value of 0.65 is above the critical value of 0.195, the null hypothesis one was therefore rejected. The result, therefore, implies that there was a significant relationship between Carrying Capacity Policy and staff job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.

Summary of Findings

The following were the summary of the findings of the study:

1. The findings of hypothesis one on Table 3 showed that there was a significant relationship between staff development and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.

2. The findings of hypothesis two on Table 4 indicated that there was a significant relationship between Carrying Capacity Policy and staff job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant relationship between staff development and job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State. The findings of the study agreed with Oredein (2014) who ascertained that there was a significant positive relationship between the factors that bring about lecturers' conditions of service to work such as periodic review of salaries, provision of opportunities for professional development and their job performance. The findings of the study also agreed with Aliyu and Kabiru (2014) who found out that there was no defined management strategy on staff training and development in Nigerian Polytechnics. Staff development helps to provide staff with the requisite knowledge, skills, experiences and understanding to enhance their job performance. It is one of the critical areas of the internal quality assurance approach that is meant to assist the academic staff to acquire the relevant knowledge, skills and experiences needed for effective discharging of their official responsibilities. Staff development is a crucial aspect of internal quality assurance because it involves the planning of activities that focus on increasing and improving the capabilities, technical and conceptual skills of staff to enable them to possess the required knowledge and competencies for performing complex activities successfully. However, as revealed by the findings of this study, the academic staff in higher institutions in Cross River State are not properly supported by their respective institutions to enable them to acquire the appropriate knowledge needed for effective job performance. It is quite unfortunate as many staff with the desire for further education and participation in conferences do so based on self-sponsorship. The problem as revealed by the findings of this study is preventing the academic staff from active participation in some development programmes needed to boost their level of job performance.

The findings of the study also indicated that there was a significant relationship between Carrying Capacity Policy and staff job performance in public higher institutions in Cross River State. Unlike the findings of the current study which showed that public higher institutions in Cross River do not adhere to the policy of carrying capacity as students are admitted yearly more than the available educational resources, Adewale (2011) conducted a study on Determinants of Carrying Capacity of Academic Programmes in Federal Universities in Nigeria and found out that there was a positive correlation between the number of academic staff and carrying capacity. The demand for admission into the various public higher institutions keeps increasing yearly as a result of the continuous increment in the population of the nation. As revealed by the findings of this study, higher institutions in Cross River State admit students every academic session more than their available human and material resources which contradict the carrying capacity system where students are supposed to be admitted based on the available resources. The resources under consideration for students' admission are lecture rooms, library facilities, lecturer-students ratio, accommodation, available funds among others. Higher institutions in an attempt to generate more funds tend to violate the Carrying Capacity Policy by admitting more students than the numbers allocated to them by their respective regulating bodies. Such violation which often leads to a high rate of students enrolment is responsible for overcrowding in lecture halls that sometimes prevent lecturers from performing their academic responsibilities effectively.

Conclusion

The study concluded that public higher institutions in Cross River State do not grant their staff adequate opportunities to participate actively in development programmes such as workshops, conferences and in-service training to help them acquire the appropriate knowledge required for the successful performance of their tasks.

The study also concluded that there is a poor job performance among the academic staff in public higher institutions in Cross River State because students are usually admitted more than the capacity and strength of the available material and human resources which prevent the lecturers from managing their classes effectively during lesson delivery.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

- As part of the staff development strategy, all the public tertiary institutions in Cross River State should sponsor their staff for conferences and further studies to help the academic staff acquire knowledge and skills needed for effective job performance.
- All higher institutions in Cross River State should be mandated to strictly adhere to the admission stipulated by the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) to minimize the high rate of students' admission that induces the overloading of lecturers and prevent them from performing their tasks diligently.

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