RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF UNIVERSITIES IN NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

*FELIX EMEKA IYALA (PhD); & **OCHIOGU BOLARINWA BOSEDE

*Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Veritas University, Abuja.
**Department of Educational Management, Nasarawa State University, Keffi.

iyalafelix@gmail.com

Abstract

This study assessed the relationship between planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses. The research design employed in this study was the correlational survey research design. The population of the study consisted of 1820 staff obtained from the two universities in Niger State. The total sample size of the study consisted of 998 respondents selected using the purposive sampling technique. The researcher developed an instrument for data collection from the respondents. The questionnaire was tagged 'Planning and Management of Universities' Questionnaire (PMUQ)". The instrument was duly validated and it produced 0.78 as the validity index. The instrument was pilot-tested on 50 staff in the University of Abuja and a reliability co-efficient of 0.73 was obtained. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer all the research questions while Pearson's product moment correlation was employed to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study indicated that there is a significant relationship between human resource planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria and there is a significant relationship between timetable planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria. The study recommended among others that the National Universities Commission (NUC) should mandate all federal universities in the North Central States, Nigeria to strictly adhere to the commission's recruitment policy to avoid a shortage of staff that hinders the effective management of the university system.

Keywords: Planning, Management, Universities, Human Resource Planning and Timetable Planning.

Introduction

University education is the centre for human capital development, the continuous advancement of knowledge, the generation of innovative ideas, development of the minds of the young and the old (through engagement in challenging intellectual work) and continuous engagement in issues concerning the survival of humanity. The goals of

university education in Nigeria, according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2014:16) are as follows:

1. Intensifying and diversifying its programmes for the development of high-level, manpower within the context of the needs of the nation;
2. Making professional course content to reflect the national requirements;
3. Making all students part of the general programme of all-round improvement in university education;
4. To offer general study courses such as the history of ideas, philosophy of knowledge, nationalism and Information Technology (IT); and
5. Making entrepreneurial skills acquisition a requirement for all Nigerian university students.

The attainment of the above goals of university education in Nigeria to some extent depends on the effective management of universities. Management of universities through planning is meant to enhance innovation and cost reduction in the school system. It helps an institution to achieve its goals successfully. The integration of planning into school management could help to determine the policy objectives of an institution or the degree to which an institution realizes its own goals through the absolute determination of the goals and mission in the future (Zheng, Yang & Mclean, 2020). Management of universities is concerned with output, creation of additional value, innovation and cost reduction in the university system. It is the major instrument through which a university achieves its goals. Heilman and Kennedy (2019) suggested that management helps assess the progress of an institution in terms of mission fulfilment and goal achievement. Better communication, interaction, good leadership, proper direction, adaptability, goal attainment and a positive environment are the common indices of managerial effectiveness in the university system. University management is a systematic process in which a team of managers mobilize both human and non-human resources towards the attainment of school goals and objectives. University management is the careful process of getting the task of a school done at a particular time, within a given school through the staff and students.

For effective management of universities, the managers are expected to be guided and directed through the application of planning to facilitate the attainment of stated goals. The attainment of the goals of universities in Nigeria depends on the chief executives' abilities to manage the affairs of their institutions through proper planning because it is one of the major approaches that could facilitate the effective management of universities. Heilman and Kennedy (2019) suggested that management helps assess the progress of an institution in terms of mission fulfilment and goal achievement. Better communication, interaction, good leadership, proper direction, adaptability, goal attainment and a positive environment are the common indices of managerial effectiveness in the university system. Megbo and Danjuma (2015) described university management as a systematic process in which a team

of managers mobilizes both human and non-human resources towards the attainment of schools' goals and objectives. University management is the careful process of getting the task of a school done at a particular time, within a given school through the staff and students. The entire managerial affairs of the university system are focused on planning.

Planning is a management function that is linked with other functions of controlling, organizing and supervising to achieve the goals of university education. It involves determining an institution's objectives and developing strategies for achieving them (Chukwumah & Ezeugbor, 2015). Planning is a management function that is linked to other functions of controlling and coordinating the affairs of an institution. It involves the determination of an institution's objectives and developing strategies for achieving them.

In the university system, planning is the process by which the managers of universities decide the mission and objectives of universities and take the necessary steps to achieve the desired objectives. It is the process of bridging the gap between an institution's current position and where it wants to be in the future. Proper planning may minimize risk and ensure that resources are efficiently and effectively managed. Planning in the university system could be conducted in different ways among which are human resource planning, academic planning, financial planning (budgeting), enrolment planning and school facilities planning (Iyala, Oyekan & Ogbo, 2019). This study assessed how human resource planning and timetable planning determine the management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria.

Human resource planning is a significant aspect of planning in the university system. Human resources refers to people and the workforce needed to perform different jobs in the university setting. Human resources in this situation consist of both the academic and non-academic staff with several skills, ideas, talents, values, knowledge and attitudes that are useful for the management of universities. Human resource planning is the assessment and identification of human resource requirements of an institution in advance or future. As such, the activities on how to recruit both the academic and non-academic staff of a university are expected to be planned to enhance the effective coordination of teaching and learning activities (Aminu, 2016). Proper human resource planning means making provision for the employment of personnel with the appropriate talents, skills, knowledge and ideas to contribute positively towards the management of the university system. Human resource planning may provide the basis for proper direction, reduce uncertainty and minimize wastage by maintaining the set standards of the university's organization (Akpochafo, 2023). Through human resource planning, staff inventory could be conducted to determine when some staff will retire in future so that proper recruitment strategies could be designed to replace such staff members when they retire. Human resource planning may be used as a tool for making provision for staff training through in-service training and other forms of training such as seminars and workshops to update the knowledge in advance for the managerial and other functions within the university system (Asiyai, 2017).

Another aspect of planning that may aid the management of universities is the school timetable. The timetable indicates the courses that are taught in each of the classes, the overall number of periods each course is to be taught in a week, the time allocated for each lesson period, the number of lesson periods in a day, the time of commencing and ending semesters and academic sessions are all captured on the school time-table. When the activities of a university are not coordinated and organized through appropriate planning of timetable, both staff and students may find it difficult to identify what they are expected to do at a particular time, as a result, teaching and learning and other activities in universities may be conducted in haphazard patterns (Iyala, Ogbo & Tanimu, 2020). School timetable serves as a tool for checking and monitoring some academic staff who are in the habit of skipping their classes by Heads of Department. Strict adherence to school timetables may lead to proper coordination and harmonization of the various academic programmes of a university (Egwunyenga, 2016). The essence of the school timetable is to provide a sense of direction on the use of time allocated for the execution of different academic activities to maintain a well-coordinated university system.

Statement of the Problem

The increment in the admission of students without the corresponding increment in staff recruitment in universities in Niger State has led to the assignment of too much workload to the few available academic staff. Virtually, all the academic staff in universities in Niger State teach more than the required credit units to be handled by each lecturer as recommended by the National Universities Commission. The prevalence of the above situation cannot in anywhere facilitate quality in the management of the university system in Niger State. The problem of overburdening the staff in universities is a thing of concern which suggests that planning has been neglected in the management of academic programmes in universities in Niger State, Nigeria. The question that needs to be asked is what are the roles of the academic planning units in universities? If every university in the state has a planning unit and the activities of the Universities are not still well-planned, it, therefore, means that universities in the state may not be effectively managed. Hence, this study was designed to assess the relationship between the planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to assess the relationship between planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study were:
1. To determine the relationship between human resource planning and management of universities in Niger State.
2. To examine the relationship between timetable planning and management of universities in Niger State.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. To determine the relationship between human resource planning and management of universities in Niger State.
2. To examine the relationship between timetable planning and management of universities in Niger State.

Research Hypotheses

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

HO$_1$: There is no significant relationship between human resource planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria.

HO$_2$: There is no significant relationship between timetable planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria.

Research Methodology

The study was guided by the correlational survey research design. The population of this study consisted of 1820 staff obtained from the two universities in Niger State. However, as a result of the peculiar nature of the study, the purposive sampling technique was employed to select the sample size. The sample size of the study therefore consisted of 998 academic staff. However, 13 questionnaires representing 1.3% were rendered invalid by the respondents. As a result, the 985 valid questionnaires were used for the analysis of the study. The instrument used for data collection was a 12-item called 'Planning and Management of Universities Questionnaire' (PMUQ). The instrument was designed based on the modified 4-point Likert's scale given as follows: Strongly Agree (SA=4), Agree (A=3), Disagree (D)=2 and Strongly Disagree (SD=1). The instrument yielded 0.78 as the average logical validity index. The instrument also yielded 0.73 as the reliability coefficient. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while **Pearson's** product moment correlation was employed to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Description of Research Questions

The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation as presented below:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between human resource planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation showing the Relationship between Human Resource Planning and Management of Universities in Niger State, Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	Std. б	Decision
1	The University always plans on how to fill vacant positions to employ quality staff for effective university management.	200	36	392	357	2.20	0.58	Disagreed
2	New staff are employed regularly by the university to contribute towards the successful university management.	150	165	550	120	2.25	0.67	Disagreed

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	Std. σ	Decision
3	There is a shortage of staff in the University.	145	50	540	250	2.05	0.60	Disagreed
4	There is a clear policy guiding the staff recruitment activities to improve the management of the university system	192	46	390	357	2.20	0.62	Disagreed
5	The university is properly managed because there is fair play in the recruitment process of the university.	36	199	350	400	2.08	0.77	Disagreed
6	The university is effectively managed because sufficient time is given to applicants to apply for vacant job positions in the university.	178	100	365	350	2.50	0.70	Average
7	Recruitment activities of the university are decided in advance which helps for the employment of staff with good skills to facilitate efficient university management.	120	50	365	450	2.30	0.60	Disagreed
Cluster Mean						2.22	0.64	**Disagreed**

Scale Mean = 2.50

Table 3 showed that item 1 had the mean value of 2.20 and standard deviation of 0.58, item 2 had the mean value of 2.25 and standard deviation of 0.67, item 3 had the mean value of 2.05 and standard deviation of 0.60, item 4 had the mean value of 2.20 and standard deviation of 0.62, item 5 had the mean value of 2.50 and standard deviation of 0.77, item 6 had the mean value of 2.50 and standard deviation of 0.77 while item 7 had the mean value of 2.30 and standard deviation of 0.70. The detail of the responses revealed that the cluster mean of 2.22 is below the scale mean of 2.50, this therefore means that there is a low positive relationship between human resource planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between timetable planning and management of Universities in Niger State, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation showing the Relationship between Timetable Planning and Management of Universities in Niger State, Nigeria

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD	$\bar{X}$	Std. σ	Decision
8	The activities of the university are properly managed using timetables.	192	46	390	357	2.25	0.55	Disagreed
9	There is the absence of a clash of academic activities which helps to enhance effective university management.	36	199	350	400	2.10	0.62	Disagreed
10	The timetables in the university are poorly planned which influences poor management of the university system.	178	100	365	350	2.28	0.66	Disagreed
11	Staff members are diligent in contributing towards effective management of the university because all the tasks to be performed are scheduled ahead.	120	50	365	450	2.45	0.59	Disagreed
12	All the programmes of the university are scheduled ahead for proper management of the affairs of the university setting.	150	46	397	392	2.15	0.77	Disagreed
13	The university is effectively managed because it does not skip any programme with the help of a timetable.	90	185	570	140	2.75	0.50	Disagreed

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| 14 | The timetable helps with the proper conduct of examinations. | 10 | 65 | 555 | 265 | 2.20 | 0.70 | Disagreed |
| Cluster Mean | | | | | | 2.31 | 0.62 | **Disagreed** |

Scale Mean = 2.50

Table 2 shows that item 8 has a mean value of 2.25 with a standard deviation of 0.55, item 9 has a mean value of 2.10 with a standard deviation of 0.62, item 10 has a mean value of 2.28 with a standard deviation of 0.66, item 11 has a mean value of 2.45 with standard deviation of 0.59, item 12 has a mean value of 2.15 with standard deviation of 0.77, item 13 has a mean value of 2.75 with standard deviation of 0.50 and item 14 has a mean value of 2.20 with standard deviation of 0.70. The analysis of research question 2 revealed that the aggregate mean of 2.31 is below the scale mean of 2.50. The detail of the responses indicated that the cluster mean of 2.32 is below the scale mean of 2.50, this therefore signifies that there is a low level of poor timetable planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria.

Testing of Hypotheses

All the hypotheses were tested using Pearson's product-moment correlation at 0.05 level of significance and the results are presented in Table 3-4 below:

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between human resource planning and management of universities in Niger State.

Table 3: Correlation Coefficient Analysis Showing the Relationship between Human Resource Planning and Management of Universities in Niger State

S/N Variable of Sig. Decision	$\overline{X}$	N	Df	r-cal	r-tab	Level
1. Human Resource Planning						
2. Management of universities	2.00	985	983	0.35	0.194	
0.05 Rejected						

Table 3 indicates the correlation coefficient of the significant relationship between human resource planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria. The analysis of hypothesis one revealed that the r-calculated value is 0.35 while the r-table value is 0.194 at a significant level of 0.05 and 983 as the degree of freedom. Since the calculated value of 0.35 is above the table value of 0.194, the hypothesis was rejected which means that there is a significant relationship between human resource planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between timetable planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Correlation Coefficient Analysis Showing the Relationship between Timetable Planning and Management of Universities in Niger State

S/N	Variable	$\overline{X}$	N	Df	r-cal	r-tab	Level of Sig.	Decision
1.	Timetable planning							
2.	Management of universities	2.30	985	983	0.48	0.194	0.05	Rejected

Table 4 showed the coefficient of the significant relationship between timetable planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria. The analysis of hypothesis four showed that the r-calculated value is 0.48 while the r-table value is 0.194 at significant level of 0.05 and 983 as the degree of freedom. Since the calculated value of 0.48 is above the table value of 0.194, the hypothesis was rejected which means that there is a significant relationship between timetable planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria.

Summary of the Major Findings

The summary of the major findings include:

1. The findings of hypothesis one indicated that there is a significant relationship between human resource planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria.
2. The findings of hypothesis two revealed that there is a significant relationship between timetable planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study showed that there is a significant relationship between human resource planning and management of universities in Niger State, Nigeria. The findings of the study disagreed with Alimi, Ehinola and Alabi (2022) who found that a significant difference does not exist between human resource planning and school performance in Ondo State. The analysis of hypothesis one in Table 3 revealed that the r-calculated value is 0.35 while the r-table value is 0.194 at the significant level of 0.05 and 983 as the degree of freedom. Human resource planning is a significant aspect of planning in the university system. Human resources consist of both the academic and non-academic staff with several skills, ideas, talents, values, knowledge and attitudes that are useful for the management of universities. The activities on how to recruit both the academic and non-academic staff of a university are expected to be planned to enhance the effective coordination of teaching and learning activities. Proper human resource planning means making provision for the employment of personnel with the appropriate talents, skills, knowledge and ideas to contribute positively towards the management of the university system. Human resource

planning may provide the basis for proper direction, reduce uncertainty and minimize wastage by maintaining the set standards of the University's organization. It is useful to eliminate the problems of human resource shortage and wastage that arise from unemployment, over-employment and underemployment in the university setting as none of the above situations could facilitate successful management of universities. The major aim of human resource planning in universities is to ensure that the right quality and numbers of both the academic and non-academic staff members are employed for the various programmes to minimize staff shortages that would hinder effective coordination and control of universities' programmes. Through human resource planning, staff inventory is conducted to determine when some staff will retire in future so that proper recruitment strategies can be designed to replace such staff members when they retire. Human resource planning is a tool for making provision for staff training through in-service training and other forms of training such as seminars and workshops to update the knowledge in advance for the managerial and other functions within the university system.

The findings of the study further indicated that there is a significant relationship between timetable planning and management of universities in Niger State. The findings of the study affirmed the position of Odufowokan (2021) who concluded that the nature of school planning and administrative planning are relatively significant. The analysis of hypothesis four showed that the r-calculated value is 0.48 while the r-table value is 0.194 at significant level of 0.05 and 983 as the degree of freedom. The timetable indicates the courses that are taught in each of the classes, the overall number of periods each course is to be taught in a week, the time allocated for each lesson period, the number of lesson periods in a day, the time of commencing and ending semesters and academic sessions are all captured on the school time-table. When the activities of a university are not coordinated and organized through appropriate planning of timetable as revealed by this study, both staff and students normally find it difficult to identify what they are expected to do at a particular time, as a result, teaching and learning and other activities in universities are conducted in haphazard patterns. School timetable serves as a tool for checking and monitoring some academic staff that are in the habit of skipping their classes by Heads of Departments. Strict adherence to school timetables leads to proper coordination and harmonization of the various academic programmes of a university. The essence of the school timetable is to provide a sense of direction on the use of time allocated for execution of different academic activities to maintain a well-coordinated university system.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn based on the findings of the study:

The study concluded that there is a deficiency in human resource planning that had invariably created a negative influence on the management of universities in Niger State Nigeria and universities in Niger State have disorganized academic activities because there are no clear

policies for regulating and guiding the planning of the academic programmes of the universities.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn based on the findings of the study

1. The study recommended that the National Universities Commission (NUC) should mandate all universities in Niger State to strictly adhere to the commission's recruitment policy to avoid a shortage of staff that hinders the effective management of the university system in the state.

2. The study also recommended that universities should do away with the traditional and manual approach of preparing timetables and task the ICT units to develop software that would automate and generate timetables electronically to avoid confusion that occurs due to clashes of lectures that prevent the effective management of teaching and learning activities in the university system in Niger State.

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