Non-Teaching Staff Development and Institutional Efficiency: A Focus of University of Benin

Uwamusi Cordelia Beauty

Institute of Public Administration and Health Services Management, Ekewan, University of Benin, Edo State

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the impact of non-teaching staff development and institutional efficiency. University of Benin was the focus. Population sample of 900 employees were taken into consideration. 900 questionnaires were distributed to five different departments in the institution in question while 850 questionnaires were collected at retrieval level. The study employed convenience sampling in arriving at the population selection. Staff development plays importance roles in enhancing staff performance, motivation, and organizational effectiveness. The study employs Vroom's Valence Expectancy Theory and the Human Resource-Based Theory as theoretical frameworks to explore how training, skill development, and career advancement opportunities influence the attitudes and behaviors of non-teaching staff. Vroom's Valence Expectancy Theory highlights the relationship between effort, performance, and outcomes. The theory is used to assess how staff expectations about training outcome affect their motivation to engage in developmental programs. Meanwhile, the Human Resource-Based Theory provides a lens to understand how organizational investments in human capital contribute to overall institutional success by improving employee capabilities and job satisfaction. The study adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative survey and qualitative interviews to collect data on the effectiveness of staff development programs. Findings from the study suggested a positive correlation between staff development initiatives and employee job satisfaction, motivation, and performance. This study contributed to the understanding of how staff development strategies can be utilized to optimize the workforce in higher education institutions, particularly in the context of non-teaching staff, and provided recommendations for policy improvements at the University of Benin.

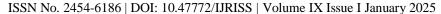**Keywords:** Development, motivation, non-teaching staff, mixed-methods

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

University of Benin is a public university which is research based. It is located in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. It is one of the Federal Government owned institutions in Nigeria and was founded in 1970. The school started as Midwest institute of Technology and was accorded the status of a full-fledged University by National Universities Commission (NUC) on 1st July, 1971.

University of Benin has two campuses, the Ugbowo campus which is the main campus and Ekewan campus. The University of Benin operates the Faculty System with Dean as administrative head while the Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Basic Medical Sciences and Institute of Child Health, reverted back to the Collegiate System in August, 1999, with a Provost as its administrative head. The University has some Institutes, Institute of Child Health, Institute of Education and Institute of Public Administration and Health Service Management (IPAHSM)

Non-teaching employees have a significant role in creating secure, supportive learning environments and high-quality education. The non-teaching staff has a wide range of tasks and responsibilities that help provide

services that have been shown to reduce the administrative strain and workload of instructors, Blatchford et al., 2009; Mwaisum, (2016). The word "staff" describes the people who work for an organization. One may define staff as the individuals who comprise of an organization's workforce.

Non-teaching staff could also be seen as supportive staff members who assist with the day-to-day operations of university institutions. The Registrar's office is in charge of the non-teaching staff's administrative apparatus. The Registrar serves as the University's Secretary to the Senate and Governing Council. Every day, the Registrar communicates with the Vice Chancellor. Acting and making decisions on behalf of the Senate Chairman and the governing council, the Vice Chancellor is the university's alter ego. Townsend, B., and Flynn, S. (2015).

It is required of tertiary institution staff to support the mission and objectives of the university. They are in charge of maintaining the institution's principles and regulations and making sure everything functions properly. Since the calibers of these employees determine whether a firm succeeds or fails, they create a competitive advantage, Patrick et al, (2008). The goal of staff development programs is to increase employees' competences, knowledge, and skills, which boosts organizational effectiveness.

Non-teaching staff has great contribution towards quality education as well as safe and positive learning environments. The non- teaching staff has wide varieties of roles and responsibilities that contribute towards the provision of services that have seen to decrease the workload of teachers and administrative burden Blatchford et al., (2009).

Staff development is essential for enhancing employee performance, productivity, and organizational competitiveness. In today's fast-place and competitive higher education landscape, universities face the challenge of improving employee performance, job satisfaction, and institutional commitment. Staff training has emerged as a vital strategy for enhancing employee skills, knowledge, and attitudes, leading to improved productivity and institutional effectiveness (Armstrong, 2009; Noe, 2017).

One crucial aspect of achieving institutional success is investing in staff training and development. Staff training is a vital component of institutional or organizational development, as it enables employees to acquire new skills, update existing knowledge, and adapt to changing work demands (Baldwin and Ford, 1988).

This study aimed at the impacts of staff development in a workplace, a focus on non-teaching staff of University of Benin. The findings of this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on staff training and development, providing insights for human resource practitioners, policymakers, and university administrators to enhance employee outcomes and institutional effectiveness in higher institutions.

Problem Statement

Despite the growing recognition of the importance of staff development in organizations, there is limited research on how training programs affect the non-teaching staff in university of Benin. In the case of the University of Benin, there is a notable gap in understanding how staff development initiatives impact the motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performance of non-teaching employees. This lack of data and analysis leaves a significant gap in the management of human resources at the university, limiting the ability to formulate effective strategies for improving staff development programs. This study, therefore, seeks to fill this gap by exploring the relationship between staff development and the performance of non-teaching staff, focusing on the specific case of the University of Benin.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Phillips (2007) viewed staff development as a process that involves the training, education, and support of employees in order to improve their skills and knowledge. This can be done through formal training programs, mentoring, and other activities that help employees to grow and develop. The goal of staff development is to

increase the effectiveness and productivity of employees, and ultimately improve the overall performance of the organization. Drucker (1967) defined staff development as a process of providing opportunities for staff members to learn and grow in their roles. This can include things like formal training, developments programs such as workshops, and mentoring.

Staff development refers to the process of teaching and developing the skills, knowledge, and abilities of employees in an organization to improve their performance and achieve the company's goals. It aims to enhance their capabilities, productivity and job satisfaction, leading to better outcomes for the institution. Staff training enhances employee skills, knowledge, and performance (Armstrong, 2009). It also boosts job satisfaction, leading to increased productivity and retention (Kotter, 2001). Organizational commitment is enhanced through training, fostering a positive work environment (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

Staff training is a vital component of human resource development in any organization, as it enhances the skills, knowledge and performance of employees (Noe, 2017). Noe et al (2020), mentioned four major aspects for organization to warrant staff training. They are: (a) staff training is crucial for organizational success (b) staff training must align with organizational objectives(c) Performance on both an individual and organizational level can be enhanced by effective training (d) Lastly, but not least, crucial training elements include needs analysis, instructional design, delivery, evaluation, and transfer.

Training has been shown to have a positive impact on employee motivation, job satisfaction and commitment (Bartlett, 2001). Moreover, training can improve employee productivity, efficiency and quality of work (Cascio, 2018). It can also lead to improved communication, teamwork and leadership skills (Yukl, 2013).

"A workplace is a location where an employee performs their job duties, and can include offices, factories, construction sites, and other locations", (Occupational safety and Health Administration, 2020). "The workplace is a social system that includes the physical space, the organization, and the people who work there." (Hatch, 2013).

Theoretical Framework

The theories guiding this study are Human Resource Based Theory and the Vroom's Valence Expectancy Theory.

Human Resource Based Theory

Human resource based- theory is a perspective in human resource management that argues that the way an organization manages its' employees can be a source of competitive advantage. This Theory builds on human capital theory by adding an emphasis on the way that organizations can develop and manage their human resources to create value. One key idea in human resource-based theory is that the collective knowledge and expertise of an organization's employees can be a source of value that is difficult for competitors to imitate (Scullion and Collings, 2011). Human resource-based theory was propounded by Wernerfelt, 1984.

The human resources are the pool of employees that are under the influence of employer especially in a contractual relationship within an organization. Organizations need human beings to achieve set goals and objectives and to enhance organization competitive edge especially among competing organizations within institution. Thus, the human resource-based theory is hinged on the importance of human beings for the successful establishment and competitive performance of an organization. The theory relies on two assumptions for a successful competitive advantage in an organization (McDowall and Saunders, 2010). First, the theory assumed that firms within an industry operate on different competitive edge depending on the capability of the resource with regard to human beings and thus, will have a different competitive advantage. This means that if all organizations in all-encompassing have the same type of human resources, then all organizations would operate on the same kind of competitive edge which may deter continuity and the success of an institution.

Secondly, it assumed that, since an institution's resources are not mobile or traded within an industry, thus, an institution can retain a competitive edge acquired through firm resources for a long period of time (Olusanya et al., 2012). The emphasis of the theory, therefore, was that institutions within an industry compete with different resources with regard to human beings and thus, will have a different competitive advantage. This means that if all institutions in an industry have the same type of human resources, then all institutions would operate on the same kind of competitive edge which may deter continuity and the success of an industry. The theory is an essential measure of human resource efficiency for an institution's competitive advantage and performance (Ezeani and Oladele, 2013).

This showed that human efficiency within an institution is determinant of what becomes the fate of an organization within an industry. Human efficiency within an institution is expected to deliver different results for an organization in order to satisfy the needs of customers at an agreed cost. For institutions to achieve and experience a sustainable competitive advantage, its resources need to be rare and valued from the eyes of customers and improperly imitable and substitutable from the eyes of competitors (Obi-Anike and Ekwe, 2014).

The Vroom's Valence -Expectancy Theory

The Vroom's theory was developed by Victor Vroom, a Professor of Management at Yale University, in 1964. Vroom was interested in understanding what motivated people to behave in certain ways, and his theory was based on the idea that people make decisions based on their expectations of the consequences of their actions. Vroom believed that people are rational decision-makers who weigh the costs and benefits of their choices and choose the option that is most likely to lead to the desired outcome.

The application of Human-Based Theory and Vroom's Valence Expectancy Theory, in discussing staff development enhances employee motivation, job performance, and organizational commitment by fostering a culture of continuous learning, clear expectations, and recognition of efforts. This synergy boosts employee valence, instrumentality, and expectancy, leading to improved job satisfaction, reduced turnover, and increased innovation. Ultimately, combing Human Resource Theory and Vroom's Valence Expectancy Theory creates a high-performing workforce aligned with organizational goals.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a **mixed-methods research design** which involves a selected sample from a population. The study employed convenience sampling in arriving at the population selection. The population of the study was 900 while 850 questionnaires were retrieved from staff at retrieval level. This made all the 850 total numbers of non-teaching staff of University of Benin combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of staff development on non-teaching staff at the University of Benin. The mixed-methods approach is chosen because it allows for a more robust analysis of the relationship between staff development programs and employee performance, job satisfaction, and motivation. Quantitative data offered us measurable insights while qualitative data captured in-depth perception and experiences of non-teaching staff.

The sample size is determined using a **confidence level of 95%** and a **margin of error of 5%**, which resulted in a sample size of approximately 265 respondents. This sample included staff from different departments and administrative levels to capture a broad spectrum of experiences and perceptions regarding staff development programs. Different types of development programs were looked into to know which was more prevalent in the University of Benin. According to (Dessler, 2011), he identified the following methods of Staff:

A. On-the-job training-which entails instructing staff members as they carry out their daily tasks at work.. this is further broken down to its different tasks, such as job retention-which gives the employees the

privilege to learn new skills as they are rotated to different departments. Job rotation can be used to develop staff member's leadership skills, prepare them for promotion, or help them identify their strengths and weaknesses. He also identified role playing under this part of training.

B. Off-the-job-training: this type of training is utilized to impart knowledge or new skills that not immediately accessible on the job. This training is the practice of developing employees outside the typical workplace, such as in classrooms, workshops, seminars, conferences, online courses and many others.

The following processes were adopted in the work:

A. Quantitative Data – Survey/Questionnaire: A structured questionnaire was developed to gather data on the perceptions of non-teaching staff regarding staff development programs at the University of Benin. The questionnaire consists of both closed and Likert scale questions designed to measure:

- The frequency and types of staff development programs available.

- Staff members' perceived effectiveness of these programs.

- The impact of staff development on job satisfaction, motivation, and performance.

- Demographic variables such as age, years of service, and job position.

The survey was physically to the selected respondents, with an overall response rate of 85%. The data gathered from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, and means) and inferential statistics (correlation analysis and regression models).

B. Qualitative Data – Semi-Structured Interviews: To complement the survey data, **semi-structured interviews** were conducted with 15 non-teaching staff members selected from different departments. The interviews aimed to explore in greater depth the personal experiences of employees with staff development programs, their motivations for participation, and the perceived barriers to effective training.

Thus, the interview guide focused on questions such as:

- What are your experiences with staff development programs at the University of Benin?

- How have these programs impacted your job satisfaction and performance?

- What challenges do you face in accessing or engaging with development programs?

- How do you perceive the University's commitment to staff development?

Data Analysis

- **Quantitative Data:** The responses from the survey were coded and entered into statistical software (SPSS). Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and means were used to summarize the data. Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between staff development participation and job satisfaction, motivation, and performance. Additionally, multiple regression analysis was employed to assess the predictive power of staff development programs on employees' performance and satisfaction.

- **Qualitative Data:** The qualitative interview data was analyzed using **thematic analysis**, where key themes related to the participants' experiences and perceptions were identified. These themes were then categorized and compared across different departments and job roles. The goal of the thematic analysis was to gain a deeper understanding of the nuances and complexities of staff development programs from the perspectives of non-teaching staff.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Quantitative Results

The quantitative data reveals several key findings about the relationship between staff development programs and the performance, motivation, and job satisfaction of non-teaching staff at the University of Benin.

1. **Perceived Effectiveness of Staff Development Programs:**
   o 78% of respondents indicated that they have participated in at least one form of staff development program at the university.
   o Of those who participated, 68% rated the programs as "effective" or "very effective" in improving their job skills and competencies.
   o However, 22% of participants felt that the training programs were either "ineffective" or "somewhat ineffective," citing lack of relevance to their specific job roles as a primary concern.
2. **Impact on Job Satisfaction and Motivation:**
   o A significant 83% of respondents reported that their participation in staff development programs positively impacted their job satisfaction. Many noted that learning new skills and feeling more competent in their roles contributed to a greater sense of fulfillment.
   o Furthermore, 70% of participants indicated that staff development programs increased their motivation to perform well at work. However, 15% of respondents mentioned that they did not see a direct link between training and tangible rewards such as promotions or salary increases.
3. **Correlation between Staff Development and Job Performance:**
   o A positive correlation ($r = 0.65$) was found between staff development participation and job performance, suggesting that employees who engaged in development programs generally reported higher levels of productivity and performance.
   o Regression analysis further revealed that staff development programs explained 45% of the variance in employee performance, indicating that these programs have a substantial influence on how well non-teaching staff perform their duties.

Qualitative Results

The interviews provided deeper insights into the reasons behind the quantitative findings and highlighted some important nuances in the data.

1. Training as a Path to Career Advancement: A number of interviewees highlighted the importance of staff development programs as a means of advancing their careers. In order to advance into higher positions within the university, several respondents indicated a great desire for more defined professional development tracks. One respondent, for instance, said: "I think training offers me the opportunity to learn new things, but the prospect of a promotion is what drives me most." The university should link skill development to professional advancement if it is sincere about enhancing my abilities.

Barriers to Engagement in Staff Development- Lack of time and finances to participate in training programs were a common theme in the interviews. Training sessions were frequently planned around busy work hours, and many non-teaching staff members expressed feeling overburdened by their responsibilities. One person revealed:

Although I would really like to go to additional training, the majority of the sessions take place during our busiest times. It's challenging to juggle my obligations and going to workshops.

1. According to this research, even while staff development initiatives are seen as advantageous, practical problems like scheduling conflicts and time constraints may prevent full involvement.

Perceived Disconnect between Training and Practical Application: The apparent discrepancy between their training and the real-world requirements of their professions irritated a few participants. A few workers

complained that the training was overly abstract and failed to specifically address the difficulties they encountered on a daily basis.

CONCLUSION

Summary of Key Findings

This study confirms that staff development programs have a positive impact on the motivation, job satisfaction, and performance of non-teaching staff at the University of Benin. The quantitative findings indicate a strong correlation between staff development participation and job performance, while the qualitative data reveals that staff development is viewed as a key pathway to career advancement. However, challenges such as scheduling conflicts, the perceived irrelevance of some training programs, and a lack of direct links between training and career rewards were identified as barriers to full engagement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Needs-Based Training Programs:** Staff development programs should be better aligned with the specific needs and job roles of non-teaching staff. More specialized training, with clear links to job requirements, will enhance the perceived relevance and effectiveness of the programs.
2. **Flexible Scheduling:** The university should consider offering training sessions during off-peak hours or provide online learning options to accommodate staff schedules. This would make participation easier for those who are otherwise constrained by their workload.
3. **Career Development Pathways:** The University of Benin should establish clearer links between staff development and career progression. This could include formalized career advancement opportunities for non-teaching staff that are tied to the completion of specific training programs.

REFERENCES

1. Armstrong M. (2009). Armstrong hand book of human resource management practice (11th edition) Kogan page limited, Philadelphia, PA and London.
2. Baldwin, T.T., and Ford, J.K. (1988). Transfer of training; A review and directions for future research. Personnel psychology, 4(1), 63-105
3. Bartlett, K. (2001). The Relationship Between Training and Organizational Commitment: A Study in the Health Care Field. Human Resource Development Quarterly, 12(4): 335-352
4. Blatchford,P. Bassett, P., Brown, P., Martin, C., Russell, A., and Webster, R. (2011). The impact of support staff on pupils' '' positive approaches to learning'' and their academic progress. British Educational Research Journal, 37(3), 443-464. http://doi.org/10.1080/01411921003734645
5. Cascio,W.F. (2018). Managing human resources: Productivity, quality of work life, profits (11th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
6. Drucker, P.F. (1967). The practice of management. Harper and Row.
7. Ezeani, N. E. and Oladele, R. (2013). Implications of training and development programs on accountant's productivity in selected business organizations in Onitsha, Anambra State, Nigeria: International journal of asian social science, 3(1), 266-281.
8. Hatch, M.J. (2013). Organization theory: Modern, symbolic, and postmodern perspectives. Oxford University Press.
9. McDowall, A. and Saunders, M.N.K. (2010).Uk: Manager's conceptions of training and development. Journal of European industrial training, 34(7), 609-630.
10. Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1997). Commitment in the workplace: Theory, research, and application. Sage Publications.
11. Mwaisumu, W. N. (2016). The recruitment of supporting staff in Tanzania secondary schools Journal of Education and Practice, 7(19): 86-89.

12. Noe, R.A. (2017). Employee training and development (7th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education

13. Noe, R.A., Hollenbeck, J.R., Gerhart, B., & Wright, P.M. (2020). Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage (12th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education

14. Obi-Anike, H.O. and Ekwe, M.C.(2014). Impact of training and development on organizational effectiveness: evidence from selected public sector organizations in Nigeria. European Journal of business and management, 6(29): 66-75.

15. Olusanya, S.O., Awotungase, S.A. and Ohadebere, E.C. (2012). Training and development, a vital tool for organizational effectiveness. Journal of Business and Management, 6(2), 48- 57

16. Facebook:(Page)-https://www.facebook.com/library.uniben.edu/(Group)-https://www.facebook.com/group/john.harris. library.uniben/

17. Twitter: (Page)-https://twitter.com/jhluniben (Handle)-@jhluniben

18. Patrick, C., Peach, D., Pocknee, C., Webb, F., Lectcher, M. and Pretto, G. (2008). The WL Report: a National Scoping Study. Brisbane: Queensland University of Technology.

19. Phillips, J. (2007). Return on Investment in Training and Performance Improvement Programs Amsterdam Boston Heidelberg, London New York.

20. Scullion, A.J., & Collings, D. (2011). Human resource management: A critical approach. McGraw-Hill Education.

21. Vroom, V.H. (1964). Work and motivation. Jossey-Bass Publishers.

22. Wernerfelt, B. (1984) A resource-based view of the firm. Strategic Management Journal, 5(2), 171-180.

23. Yukl, G. (2013). Leadership in organization (8th.ed.) Pearson.

24. Fowler, F. J. (2014). Survey research methods (5th ed.). Sage Publications.

25. Herzberg, F. (1966). Work and the nature of man. World Publishing.

26. Mullins, L. J. (2016). Management and organizational behavior (10th ed.). Pearson Education.