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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ACADEMIC STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MECHANISM ADOPTED BY UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT FOR MANAGING EDUCATION WASTAGES IN STATE AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH EAST, NIGERIA

Prof. Ada Sam Omenyi & Chukwunonye, Marcel Nchekwube
ada.omenyi@unizik.edu.ng; mchukwunonye@yahoo.com
Department of Educational Management and Policy,
Faculty of Education,
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

ABSTRACT

The study compared internal mechanisms adopted by university management in managing education wastages in state and private universities in South East of Nigeria with emphasis on staff professional development mechanism. One research question and one null hypothesis guided the study. The hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of 7,245 lecturers of which 4,761 were from five state universities and 2,484 from 16 private universities in the South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The sample for the study comprised 749 lecturers of which 628 are from state universities and 121 from private universities drawn using multistage sampling procedure. The researchers-developed instrument was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts who were lecturers from the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Using Cronbach alpha for test of internal consistency, the co-efficient for instrument was 0.78 and was considered adequate for the study. The researchers together with five research assistants collected data for the study using the direct approach method and 97% return was recorded. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question while t-test was used to test the null hypothesis. The results of the study showed among others that there is difference in the academic staff professional development mechanisms adopted by university management for managing education wastages in state and private universities in South East, Nigeria in favour of public universities. Based on the findings, it was recommended among others that University management in South East universities especially those in private universities should organise annual professional development for lecturers to improve their skills to enable them effectively teach the students to prevent educational wastages.

Keywords: Internal Mechanisms; University Management; Education Wastages; State and Private Universities; Staff Professional Development Mechanism.

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Introduction

Education is a veritable tool for developing individuals' skills and knowledge to enable them participate in the development of the society. It also inculcates the right attitudes, abilities and capabilities in individuals to become useful members of the society. Every level of education is geared towards bringing about desirable change in behaviour of individuals to be useful members of the society. One of educational levels in which students acquire skills and knowledge is the higher education.

In Nigeria, higher level of education includes universities, polytechnics, and institutions of technology and colleges of education among others. Erhieyovwe and Ukavwe (2019) asserted that higher education is the educational level acquired after secondary education in tertiary institution of learning such as polytechnics, universities, colleges of education and other relevant institutions of higher learning doing correspondence programmes, diploma and certificates. The apex level of higher education that produces and supplies high-level skilled manpower to the economy is the university. Adenike (2020) stressed that the society at large depends on universities among other higher institutions of learning to produce well-adjusted individuals physically, mentally, morally and technologically to enable them function effectively and fit properly into the environment in which they find themselves so that they may become productive, self-fulfilling and attain self-actualization. Subair and Adeniyi (2021) averred that universities across the world and particularly in Nigeria are established essentially to advance knowledge through teaching and research, with the ultimate purpose of rendering services to the community apart from information dissemination. University education equips learners with relevant skills and sound knowledge for self-improvement and maximum contribution to development of the nation. The emerging sustained growth and demand for university education has increased the number of State and private universities in Nigeria.

State universities are those universities owned, financed and managed by state or federal government. Private universities are those universities owned, financed and managed by individuals, mission bodies or non-governmental organizations. National Universities Commission (NUC) grants operating license to private universities in Nigeria. According to Ofojebe, Nwogbo and Anachuna (2015), the approval for establishment of private universities by the Federal Government of Nigeria through the NUC gave opportunity to Nigerians who can afford the high cost of education in private universities to attain their educational desires. The students who start particular programme in state and private universities is expected to complete that course within the prescribed years. Ndem and Bassey (2019) posited that the situation where students who started a particular

educational cycle and fail to complete that cycle of study is called educational wastage.

Educational wastage is failure of students to complete the school programme at the stipulated duration. Unachukwu and Amaonye (2020) defined education wastage as a situation whereby the number of students who enrolled in a particular level of education fail to complete the duration of the study as a result failed to transit to the next level of education. Educational wastage is the retention of students in one grade in academic year or premature withdrawal of a student from school at any stage before completion of the school system cycle. According to Ndem and Bassey (2019), educational wastage is the premature withdrawal of a student from school without completing the educational cycle. Continuing, Ndem and Bassey stressed that since the student does not complete the cycle of education, the time, money and energy expended on such a student is said to be wasted. In the context of this study, educational wastage is failure of students to complete their school programmes at stipulated period which depicts inefficiency in the use of educational resources by school management. The inefficiency in educational system could be managed through internal mechanism.

Internal mechanism focuses on the means by which an educational system ensures that the services it provided remain relevant and appropriate to the needs of the societies. According to Consolata and Herme (2015), internal mechanisms are school practices that contribute toward enhancement of performance and improved quality of education. In the context of this study, internal mechanisms involve series of operational techniques, activities and all action taken to improve the quality of education deliver in school. Internal mechanisms for managing education wastage include; personnel recruitment strategies, professional development of lectures, students' admission, provision of learning infrastructure and guidance and counselling services (Muhammed, 2012). The focus of this study is personnel recruitment strategies.

Staff Professional development is any activities designed to enable lecturers acquire the knowledge and skills of teaching the students. According to Amie-Ogan and Deekae (2020), staff development is an essential and a systematic approach of assisting personnel in acquiring new skills and knowledge to fit into current trends of the profession and be effective in the classroom. Continuing, Amie-Ogan and Deekae (2020) asserted that it is a means of assisting poorly prepared, untrained and inexperience staff to improve both academically and professionally. According to Udoh-Uwah and Etim (2018), professional development refers to the activities aimed at acquisition of new knowledge and skills for effective job delivery. Olatunbosun (2019) defined staff development as a set of programmes planned for lecturers and designed to develop their skills and knowledge at different levels.

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Staff development is continuous learning and upgrading of knowledge of lecturers. According to Othman and Dahari (2011), staff development is the sharing ideas and expertise through various group-based activities, which can take many forms, such as large-group presentations and discussions, workshops, seminars, colloquia, demonstrations, role-playing, simulations, and micro-teaching. Staff development mechanism is any strategy of helping lecturers to upgrade their skills and knowledge to perform effectively and efficiently on their job. Academic staff are not only the transporters of information and knowledge from curriculum to learners, but they also translate and give forms and meanings to curriculum so that it becomes meaningful and beneficial to the students. With the onsets of a knowledge based economy and to achieve the desired impact on quality education, teachers should be equipped with latest knowledge in their respective disciplines through staff development programmes. Furthermore, with the change in the market demand and also with the changes taking place in the environment, it is expected that the teachers are constantly updating themselves with the current knowledge and skills. The knowledge and skills that were required to become a teacher most especially at the University level have now considerably changed largely due to knowledge explosion in different discipline owing to extensive research and technological achievements and with the advent of information communication technology (ICT).

Academic staff development is informed by the fact that if teachers are to stay monitored on the job they must have opportunities for continuing professional development, advancement and improvement in their chosen career. Gadi and Lauko (2019) stressed that effective development programme help academic staff to get acquainted with new technological advancements and to gain full command of the competencies and skills required to perform at a particular job and to avoid on the job errors and mistakes. Menwoukechiosigwe, Idoli, Nwogbo and Uzorka (2020) maintained that the staff development brings about change in individual's knowledge, understanding, behavior, attitude, skills, values and beliefs. The author asserted that the purpose of staff development generally is to improve job performance, enhance the quality of the work environment and foster personal growth. Academic staff development mechanism is an aspect of internal mechanism for managing education wastage. It is defined as a process of improving both the teachers' academic standing as well as acquisition of greater competence and efficiency in discharging his obligation in and outside the classroom. It includes the process, organizational mechanism and practice that are aimed at providing training support to the teacher for the improvement and smooth

discharge of his duties, which help to manage educational wastage.

Lecturers as inputs to the educational system are therefore required to continuously upgrade their set of knowledge and skills to effectively execute their responsibilities which will at the same time enhance and strengthen the quality factor. More also, teachers are to engage in growth and development activities alongside providing training and development opportunities as part of their assignment. Udoh-Uwah and Etim (2018) stressed that in the University system, lecturers' professional development is encouraged through re-training programmes, mentorship, seminars, research Stateations, conferences, symposiums, inaugural lectures, Communication and Technology Gadget utilization and so on. The frequency and magnitude of lecturers' development through conferences, retreats, symposia and workshops could improve their skills of effective delivery of their lectures.

A conference is a meeting of academicians or individuals to deliberate a particular topic. Research findings are presented and discussed in conference for advancement of knowledge. According to Amie-Ogan and Deekae (2020), conference is a form of teacher re-training programme where obsolete skills and experiences are retooled during subject panel meetings to enhance the performance of participants in terms of subject content knowledge communicating skills, leadership and lesson delivery. Amie-Ogan and Deekae also added that conferences are attended by reputable scholars in the educational system with different ideas to enhance teachers teaching performance in their fields.

A workshop is an interactive session where members of staff discuss specific issue affecting teaching and learning. Hamby (2012) affirms that workshops tend to be smaller and more intense than seminars and often involves participants trying new skills during the event under the watchful eye of the instructors. Amie-Ogan and Deekae (2020) stressed that through workshops, teachers are exposed to new skills which they may not necessarily acquire during their pre-service training in higher institutions.

Academic staff development simply means teacher education and continued learning. It is continuing learning process by which serving teacher acquires the knowledge, skills and values to sustain the desired spark of intellectual vitality, which will improve the quality of teaching and students learning outcomes thereby managing education wastages. Lecturers are known to be responsible for translation and implementation of educational policies. The importance of training and re-training of career enhancement and capacity of teachers for improvement in teaching and learning process cannot be over emphasized. Academic staff development is particularly important mechanism because of the need for teacher to do better and raise academic performance standards of the students. In order to meet the challenging demands of the

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jobs occasioned by technological innovations, teachers must be capable and willing to continually upgrade their content knowledge, skills and practices.

However, the variation of internal mechanism of State and private universities in South East, Nigeria may account for difference in student dropouts and carry overs which constitute educational wastages in tertiary institutions. If these ugly trends go on unabated, the Nigerian university education might end up in a mess as regard to quality education thereby wasting the material and human resources of the nation. Based on the problem, the study seeks to comparatively analyze the internal mechanism adopted by university management in managing education wastages in private and state universities in south east of Nigeria.

Research Question

What are academic staff professional development mechanisms adopted by university management for managing education wastages in state and private universities in South East, Nigeria?

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers in state and private universities on academic staff professional development mechanism adopted by university management for managing education wastages in South East, Nigeria.

Research Method

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The research was carried out in the South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of 7,245 lecturers of which 4,761 were from five state universities and 2,484 from 16 private universities in the South East geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The sample for the study comprised 749 lecturers of which 628 are from state universities and 121 from private universities drawn using multistage sampling procedure. This sample consists of 10 percent of the population of lecturers in state and private universities in South East, Nigeria. Firstly, simple random sampling technique involving sampling without replacement was used to select three state and three private universities in three states in South East, Nigeria. In the second stage, the proportionate random sampling technique was adopted for the selection of the lecturers to participate in the study. Each of the categories of lecturers (in the sampled state and private universities) formed a stratum from where 30% were drawn. A structured questionnaire developed by the researchers and titled ‘‘Internal Mechanism adopted by University Management for Managing Educational Wastages Questionnaire (IMAUMFEDQ)’’ was used for data collection. IMAUMFEDQ was developed from review of related literature and information gathered from consultation of experts. The instrument has two sections A and B. Section A of the instrument was designed to collect information on the

personal data of respondents such as category of university. Section B has items on staff professional development mechanism for managing educational wastages. The instrument is structured on a four-point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree weighted at 4, 3, 2 and 1. The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts who are lecturers; two in the Department of Educational Management and Policy, and one in Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained by administering copies of the questionnaire to 40 lecturers comprising 25 in state and 15 in private universities in south-south zone of Nigeria. The data obtained were subjected to test for internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha and the reliability index of 0.78 was obtained. The researchers together with five research assistants who are lecturers in state and private universities in South East zone collected data for the study. Out of these, a total of 728 copies of questionnaire of which 612 copies were from lecturers in state universities and 116 copies were from lecturers in private universities were properly filled and successfully retrieved, indicating 97% percent return. At the end of the exercise, copies of the questionnaire retrieved were used for data analysis. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research question and t-test to test the hypothesis. In taking decisions on the research questions, mean item rating of 2.50 and above was taken as agreement and any mean rating that falls below 2.50 was taken to indicate disagreement. In taking decisions on the null hypotheses, if the exact p-value is equal to or greater than significant value of 0.05, the null hypothesis was accepted and but if exact p-value is less than significant value of 0.05 , the null hypotheses was rejected.

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Presentation of Results

Research Question: What are academic staff professional development mechanisms adopted by university management for managing education wastages in state and private universities in South East, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation Scores on Academic Staff Professional Development Mechanisms adopted by University Management for Managing Education Wastages in State and Private Universities

S/N	ITEMS	State University (n = 612)			Private University (n =116)		
		$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remark
1	Ensuring newly recruited lecturers participate in orientation programmes organized for them	2.75	1.10	Agree	2.51	1.09	Agree
2	Organising in-service training of lecturers.	2.81	1.05	Agree	2.52	1.07	Agree
3	Organising regular professional development seminars for lecturers' intellectual improvement.	2.67	1.08	Agree	2.40	1.01	Disagree
4	Encouraging lecturers to attend qualitative conference on educational issues.	2.76	0.95	Agree	2.38	1.00	Disagree
5	Granting permission for study leaves to ensure teachers improve their qualifications.	3.03	1.08	Agree	2.35	1.27	Disagree
6	Encourages lecturers to undertake refresher courses to acquire knowledge on current method of teaching to ensure better instructional delivery.	2.67	1.05	Agree	2.46	0.98	Disagree
7	Organising symposium for lecturers on the use of information technology and computer	2.41	0.96	Disagree	2.38	1.01	Disagree
8	Ensuring that staff to participate in training workshop that encourage team spirit among staff.	2.81	0.97	Agree	2.60	1.10	Agree
9	Encouraging lecturers to upgrade their academic qualification through further studies.	2.67	1.02	Agree	2.42	1.13	Disagree
	Cluster Means and Standard Deviation	**2.73**	**1.03**	**Agree**	**2.45**	**1.07**	**Disagree**

Data analysis as shown in Table 1 revealed that the mean scores of lecturers in state and private universities for items 1 and 8 are above 2.50 indicating agreement with the items as academic staff professional development mechanisms adopted by university management for managing education wastages. The mean scores of lecturers in state universities for items 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9 are above the cut off mean score of 2.50 indicated agreement with the items, while the mean ratings of their counterparts

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in private universities are below 2.50 indicated disagreement with the items. On the other hand, the mean ratings of lecturers of public and private universities for item 16 is below the cut off mean score of 2.50 indicating their disagreement with the item

The cluster standard scores which stood at 1.07 and 1.03 for lecturers in state and public universities respectively indicated similarity in their responses amongst each cluster. The clusters mean of 2.73 obtained by lecturers in state universities is above the cut off mean score of 2.50 indicated their agreement with academic staff professional development mechanisms adopted by university management, while their counterparts in private obtained cluster mean of 2.45 which is below the cut off mean score of 2.50 indicating their disagreement. Thus, there is difference in the academic staff professional development mechanisms adopted by university management for managing education wastages in state and private universities in South East, Nigeria in favour of state universities.

Testing the Null Hypothesis

Ho_1: There is no significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers in state and private universities on academic staff professional development mechanism adopted by university management for managing education wastages in South East, Nigeria.

Table 2: The t-test Summary of Mean Ratings of Lecturers in State and Private Universities on Academic Staff Professional Development Mechanism adopted by University Management for Managing Education Wastages

Respondents	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	p-value	Df	∞	Remark
Lecturers in State Universities	612	2.73	1.03	0.02	726	0.05	Significant
Lecturers in Private Universities	116	2.45	1.07				

As shown on Table 2, the p-value of 0.02 is less than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers in state and private universities on academic staff professional development mechanism adopted by university management for managing education wastages in South East, Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The result of the study indicated that there is difference in the academic staff professional development mechanisms adopted by university management for

managing education wastages in state and private universities in South East, Nigeria in favour of state universities. This agreed with the finding of Oladimeji, Atunde, Abdulraheem, Medupin and Tijani (2021) which revealed that state universities have better professional development opportunities for staff than their private counterparts. The agreement in findings could be attributed to the fact that the two studies were conducted in Nigerian universities. This contradicted the finding of Rachna (2017) which showed that private sector organization was better in providing staff professional development programmes than their counterparts in public organization. The two studies were conducted in different organizations in vary geographical location which might be responsible for the disagreement in the findings. The state universities are more interested in helping lecturers to grow within the institutions than their counterparts in private universities. Perhaps, lecturers in state universities tend to maximize the training opportunities offered by Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) and other relevant agencies in advancing their frontiers of knowledge, unlike their private counterparts who tent to have limited financial aid options to provide academic staff professional development opportunities. Lecturers in state universities are exposed to learning opportunities designed to acquire skills and knowledge required for discharging their duties.

Further result showed that there is significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers in state and private universities on academic staff professional development mechanism adopted by university management for managing education wastages in South East, Nigeria. This supported the finding of Oladimeji, Atunde, Abdulraheem, Medupin and Tijani (2021) which indicated that there is significant difference between state universities and private universities regarding their professional development opportunities. The possible reason for the agreement in findings could be attributed to the fact that the two studies were conducted in universities in Nigeria. This disagreed with the finding of Rachna (2017) which revealed that there is significant difference between public and private organization on their staff professional development programmes in favour of the private establishment. The disagreement in findings could be attributed to difference in two span and geographical locations.

Summary of the Findings

Based on data analysis, the summary of the findings are presented as follows:

1. There is difference in the academic staff professional development mechanisms adopted by university management for managing education wastages in state and private universities in South East, Nigeria in favour of public universities.
2. There is significant difference in the mean ratings of lecturers in state and private universities on academic staff professional development mechanism

adopted by university management for managing education wastages in South East, Nigeria.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that internal mechanisms are better adopted in state universities than private universities in managing educational wastages in South East, Nigeria. The significant differences were reported on academic staff professional development mechanism adopted in state and private universities in favour of state universities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. University management in South East universities especially those in private universities should organise annual professional development for lecturers to improve their skills to enable them effectively teach the students to prevent educational wastages.
2. Special teams of educational experts should be formed and in conjunction with officials of NUC to make regular visits to both state and private universities to assess the available staff professional development opportunities and make recommendations to help reduce educational wastages.
3. University management in South East universities should support staff professional development in order to enhance students' academic performance and minimize educational wastage arising from carryovers.

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