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MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES AND LECTURERS' RESEARCH PRODUCTIVITY IN TERTIARY INSTITUTION IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated Manpower Development practices and lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institution in Cross River State, Nigeria. The purpose of the study was to examine manpower development practices and lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institution in Cross River State. Two research questions guided the study and two hypotheses were formulated and tested. A correlational research design was employed for the study. The population of the study comprised of 5,295 lecturers drawn from ten tertiary institutions in Cross River State. A sample of 1080 lecturers was selected for the study using a multi-stage sampling technique. Two structured questionnaires titled: Manpower Development Practices Questionnaire (MDPQ) and Lecturers' Research Productivity Questionnaire (LRPQ) were the instruments used for data collection. The instruments were subject to validation by the three experts from faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikwe University, Awka. Cronbrach coefficient Alpha method of reliability was used to determine the reliability of the instruments. The reliability coefficient between 0.70 and 0.93 were obtained for the research variables. Descriptive statistic was used to answered research questions while simple linear regression was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that manpower development practices have a significant prediction on lecturers' research productivity. The study recommended among others that tertiary institutional management should organize training and retraining program for all academic staff periodically by equipping them with basic research skills to facilitate their research productivity and every staff should be given equal opportunity for the exercise.

Keyword: Manpower Development, In-service training, mentorship, Research, Research productivity

Introduction

Lecturers are important human resources in tertiary institutions as they play significant roles that are directly tied to the achievement of educational goals. A lecturer has three basic functions which include teaching, research and community service. They are seen as catalysts of knowledge transfer, knowledge advancement and knowledge application. According to Kpolovie and Onoshagbegbe (2017), lecturers' core responsibilities in tertiary institutions are teaching and research, and they are expected to stay updated with the current trends through research. Research in higher educational institutions has become the utmost activities due to it numerous significance and rewards. It is an area of priority for both tertiary

institutions and the nation. It is the fulcrum on which innovation and development of any society or nation hangs. However, every institution has the responsibility of promoting its institutional image through research and innovations, as they are vital indices for world institutional ranking. According to the Organisation of Economic Corporation and Development (2017), research involves any creative systematic activity undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge and the use of this knowledge to develop new applications for modern living. Research is the base where most government policies and decision are formed. Walts and Bansell (1981) explained that research is a systematic, formal, rigorous and precise process employed to gain solution to problem or to discover and interpret new facts and relationships. Research therefore involves the process of gathering data, information and facts for the purpose of knowledge advancement; it is also the developing and transferring existing knowledge and new knowledge.

Simisaye (2022) said that any nation that fails to invest wisely on research will definitely get it at higher cost from countries outside their boundaries. He further explained that if research is well coordinated in a country it could revolutionize change in the society and make lives more pleasant by bringing in desired development. However, so many countries have begun to prioritize and have immensely committed more resources to tertiary institution for research advancement. Although these resources depend on the economic status and the values they place on research. Despite the huge significance of research, Igiri, Okoduwa, Akabuogu, Okoduwa, Enang, Idowu, Abudullahi, Onukak, Onuruka, Christopher,Chris, and Onyemachi (2021) outlined some challenges encountered by researchers. These include: family challenges, financial constraints, inadequate research skills, inadequate motivation from employer, brain drain, inadequate mentoring, heavy workload, infrastructural inadequacy, research misconducts, lack of research findings, and inadequate information resource in the library. It is therefore expected that when these challenges are addressed, they could enhance research productivity of researchers in tertiary institutions.

Every organization has its methods of measuring their personnel job performance or productivity. In academia teaching and research are used as tools to measure lecturers' job productivity. However, research has an upper ranking both in the internal and external academic world and. Lecturers' research productivity could be conceptualized as quality and quantity of research output of academic staff over a period of time. It could be seen as the extent lecturers are able to create or contribute to the bank of knowledge through their research activities. This could be seen in terms of the number of their research publications in academic journals, both local and international, contributions to book chapters, book authoring/co-authoring, conference paper presentation, online research visibility and citations, among others. Simisaye and Popoola (2019), described research productivity as the total number of journal articles, textbooks, monographs, conference proceedings, technical reports, chapters in books, theses, dissertations, scientific peer reviews, co-authored textbooks, occasional papers and patents produced by scholars within a specified timeframe. Research productivity of academics in Nigeria rests largely on the quality and often the quantity of research in published textbooks, chapters in books, journals articles, conference proceedings,

monographs, book reviews, bibliographies, abstracts and indexes, published thesis or dissertation, technical and scientific reports. Bassey et al (2007) pointed out that research publication has become the major indicator of lecturers' productivity. In their opinions it provides current information for growth, progress, development, improved society, and lecturers' promotion is practically based on it, from the rank of assistant lecturer to professorial cadre. In the same vein, Oloruntoba and Ajayi (2006) pointed out that research publication is paramount to examining lecturers' productivity in tertiary institutions. The success or failure of any academic staff in their career is greatly dependent on research output and instructional delivery; as they are major parameters in determining career growth of lecturers. Research productivity increases the social prestige of an academic staff member in terms of appointments, promotion, and high salaries (Igiri et al 2021). It also forms the basis for high institutional reputation, as research output of academic staff is a major criterion in world institutional ranking and quality of the institution is obviously the reflection of the research output which contributes to the university.

The attainment of expected level of research productivity by lecturers may be influenced by manpower development practices, The need for lecturers to improve their knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours while on the job is more critical in developing nations for a number of reasons, which may include attaining the standard of global best practices (Peretommode and Chukuma, 2012). Manpower development in tertiary institutions could be seen as the explicit learning and training lecturers received in order to improve and be abreast of the trending innovations in the education sector to enable them achieve success in their chosen career. It is deemed as a way of maintaining high level manpower that will foster global competitiveness, improve performance level, enhance structural development and improve skills of worker in education sector. According to Sullvian and Steven (2003), Manpower development is about recruiting, supporting and investing in people through education, training, coaching, mentoring, internships, organizational development and human resources management. Some of the manpower development programmes that may be employed in tertiary institutions are in-service training and mentorship.

In-service training is a training that is carried out within an organization or institution to enhance its staff productivity. According to Aroge (2012), in-service training involves the acquisition of specific skills, knowledge, attitude and social behavior for the purpose of an occupation or work. It is for specific skills which are job or task -oriented rather than personal. In tertiary institutions, in-service training is a training given to lecturers while they are on the job. It is a professional development methodology that involves personal and classroom-based coaching within a structured program, intended to provide teachers with new skills and technical feedback about better teaching practices (Harvey, 1999).

Mentorship as another manpower development practices tool is seen as a relationship between mentor and protégé. Ekpoh and Ukot (2019) viewed mentoring as a close and personalized relationship that exist between senior (with career experience) and newly employed (without career experience) faculty members, aimed at providing emotional and moral support, feedback on specific task performance, knowledge and challenges to the newly employed academic staff. Mentorship

has a huge impact on early career scholars and their benefits can be over emphasize. The purpose of mentoring is to improve employee chances of achieving occupational goal by linking them to a mentor to pass on knowledge, experience and judgment to the mentee.

Manpower development practice training and development play significant role by making it possible for organization to have and maintain competent personnel for the operations of the organization activities (Babagana 2014) It is therefore expected that when lecturers acquired the necessary skills and techniques it will enhance their research productivity. In a common knowledge, to achieve productivity in organization it is determined by the employees' abilities and capabilities. It is against this backdrop that the researcher investigated manpower development practice and lecturer' research productivity in tertiary institution in Cross River State. Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Lecturers are the life wire of any functioning tertiary institution. They play a vital role in teaching, community service and in the world of research. Research provides lecturers with a smooth platform to accomplished scholars through their research output. Research productivity is an indicator or a tool that is used for lecturers' career progression. This means that, for any lecturer to be promoted from one cadre to another he/she needs to publish in local and international journals, attend local, national and international conferences (physical and visual). The benefits of research productivity are not only limited to the lecturers but also to the institutions and the country at large. It increases the institutions' social prestige/ reputation and its economic development. Despite the huge relevance of research productivity, it has been observed with dismay by the researcher and stakeholders in tertiary institution that the research productivity of lecturers in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, especially in Cross River State is very low. However, the unfortunate situation has affected the lecturers in terms of career stagnation/promotion whereby some lecturers stay in a particular cadre for a long period of time because their publications did not meet the criteria to be promoted to the next cadre, some hardly gets research grants from local and international organizations due to poor quality research work while other lack citations/ H-index by local and foreign researchers etc. the government and some non-governmental organizations also have taken it upon themselves to support lecturers in their research activities and other involvements, yet the problem still persists. The researcher is of the opinion that maybe some manpower development practices such as in-service training and mentoring, might be the bottleneck of lecturers' research unproductivity.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate manpower development practices as predictors of lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study ascertained;

1. In-service training as predictors of lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria.
2. Mentorship as predictors of lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions was posed to guide the study:

1. What is the predictive value of in-service training on lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria?
2. What is the predictive value of mentorship on lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study:

1. In -service training does not significantly predict lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria.
2. Mentorship does not significantly predict lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research Method

The research design that was applied in this study is correlational research design. Correlational research design is a research approach that attempts to find the nature of the non-causal relationship existing between a set of variables, of which cannot be determined by the researcher or manipulated, but present naturally within a group or sample. According to Nworgu (2015) opined that a correlational study is type of study that seek to establish the relationship that exist between two or more variables. The design is considered appropriate for this study as the study seeks to predict the relationship between manpower development practices on lecturers' research productivity as it exists presently in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, The population of this study consisted of 5,295 academic staff in the 10 tertiary institutions in Cross River State. The 10 tertiary institutions comprised of two universities, one federal and one state owned, two colleges of education, one federal owned and one state owned, one polytechnic, which is state owned, and five monotechnics. According to data obtained from the registry departments of the various institutions, they are 5,295 academic staff in the tertiary institutions, and they comprised the study population. Multi-stage sampling procedures was used to draw the sample size of 1080 lecturers from the population. The instrument for data collection was two self-structured questionnaires titled: Manpower Development Practices Questionnaire (MDPQ) and Lecturers' Research Productivity Questionnaire (LRPQ). The first questionnaire was designed to collect data on the two sub-scales of manpower development practices. Each of the sub-scale measured with six items giving a total of 12 items. The questionnaire was design by the researcher using the modified of 5-point Likert scale Very Strongly Agree (VSA), Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The second instrument is "Lecturers' Research Productivity Questionnaire (LRPQ)" which was designed to collect data on lecturers' research productivity. The questionnaire contained 13 items that measured the dependent variable. It was constructed to obtain open-responses, as the respondents are expected to indicate the number of their outputs in each aspect of the listed research productivity. It is expected that the lecturers will provide responses to at least 10 items, as the 13th item, in addition to the responses the lecturers may provide, will be sourced from online by the researcher to authenticate its accuracy. Also, in addition to the benchmark of

research output areas and rating that is expected to be provided by the respondents, the benchmark as it is applicable to each academic rank will be obtained from each institution. This will ensure the correctness of rating of lecturers' productivity in each research output area, which will be finally done by the researcher.

Results and findings:

Research question 1: What is the predictive value of in-service training on lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria?

Table 1. Summary of simple regression analysis with In-Service Training as Predictor of Lecturers' Research Productivity

Predictor	R	R^2	Adj.R^2	SE
In-service Training	.39	.15	.15	3.77

The summary of the simple regression analysis as shown in the above table indicates that in-service training is a weak predictor of lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State. This is shown by the regression coefficient (R =.39) and the coefficient of determination (R^2 = .15) which indicates that in-service training explained 15% of the variance in lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State. Thus, other variables not included in the model can explain the remaining 85% of the variance in lecturers' research productivity.

Research question 2: What is the predictive value of mentorship on lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria?

Table 2. Summary of Simple Regression Analysis with Mentorship as Predictor of Lecturers' Research Productivity

Predictor	R	R^2	Adj.R^2	SE
Mentorship	.62	.40	.39	3.77

Table 2 shows that the simple regression coefficient (R) is .62 while the coefficient of determination (R^2) is .40. This indicates that mentorship is a modest predictor of lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State. The coefficient of determination (R^2 = .40) indicates that mentorship explained 40% of the variance in lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State. By implication, 60% of the unexplained proportion of the variance in lecturers' research productivity can be attributed to other predictors not included in the model.

Hypothesis 1: In -service training does not significantly predict lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Table 3. Test of Significance of Simple Regression Analysis with* in-service Training *as Predictor of Lecturers' Research Productivity

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p
Regression	2521.22	1	2521.22	177.20*	.000
Residual	13843.76	973	14.23		
Total	16364.97	974			
a = 22.84; SE = 0.97; B = .66; Beta = .39; t = 13.31; p < .05					

*Significant at .05 level

As shown in table 3 the F-ratio associated with the analysis of variance of the regression analysis is 177.20 and the *p*-value is .000. Since the *p*-value is less than the stipulated .05 level of significance at 1 and 973 degrees of freedom, the null hypothesis was rejected. This suggest that in-service training is a significant predictor of lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State. The unstandardized regression coefficient in Table 12 shows that a one per cent increase in the provision of in-service training is associated with a 0.66% increase in lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, assuming other variables remain constant. The regression equation of the hypothesis is therefore fitted as follows:

RP = 22.84 + 0.66(IST) + 0.97 (14)

Hypothesis 2: Mentorship does not significantly predict lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Table 4. Test of Significance of Simple Regression Analysis with* Mentorship *as Predictor of Lecturers' Research Productivity

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P
Regression	16611.41	1	16611.41	344.05*	.000
Residual	25396.47	973	48.28		
Total	42007.88	974			
a = 67.57; SE = 2.35; B = 2.40; Beta = .63; t = 18.55; p < .05					

*Significant at .05 level

Table 4 shows that the F-ratio associated with the analysis of variance of the regression analysis is 344.04 and the *p*-value is .000. Since the *p*-value is less than the stipulated 0.05 level of significance at 1 and 973 degrees, it implies that mentorship is a significant predictor of lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State. Consequently, the null hypothesis was therefore rejected. The unstandardized regression coefficient indicates that other things being equal, a 1% increase in mentorship is associated with a 0.63% in lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria. Thus, the regression equation of this hypothesis is

fitted as follows: RP = 67.57 + 2.40(MP) + 2.35 (15)

Discussion of findings

Research question one stated that what the predictive value of in-service is training on lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions Cross River State, Nigeria. The analysis for this study reveals that in-service training is a weak predictor of lecturers' research productivity. This implied that in-service training has a minimal positive prediction on lecturer's productivity in term of research in tertiary institution in Cross River State, meaning when there is a unit increase in training and retraining of personnel there is a unit increase in research output, lecturers should not only limit themselves on training to facilitate their productivity in research, they should involve others indices to foster their research output. . this slightly conforms with the findings of Rwothumio, Daniel and Usilfrida (2021) who found a moderate positive correlation between staff training and academic staff teaching output, on the contrary, they also reported a weak positive relationship between staff training and research output. The scholars suggested that university management should reformulate policies that would help staff to exploit relevant training opportunities to improve on the teaching and research output of government-owned universities.

The analysis of hypothesis one which stated that in-service training does not significantly predict lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria. The analysis revealed that there is a significant prediction of in-service training on lecturers' research productivity. This implies that lecturers who constantly engage in workshop, seminars or any others professional training and development program will have a positive impact in their job performance and productivity. This study supports the findings of Awodigi and Ijaiye (2019), Eneastator, Azumike & Orji (2019), Fejoh & Faniran (2016) and Ekaetor, Iheanacho, Lebo, Obo, Awah and Kufre (2023) that revealed staff training significantly influence employees job productivity. Langat and Ombito (2022), also supported the findings saying despite the location found that there was significance positive relationship between staff training and academic performance of lecturers. This suggest management of tertiary institutions need to organize frequent staff training in order for lecturers to have knowledge expansion that exposes them to new research methodologies, emerging theories, research skills such as data analysis, academic writing, grant proposal development, or research project management and advancements in their field. This knowledge expansion enhances their ability to conduct high-quality research, leading to increased productivity. Husse support the findings of this study, he reported that lecturers gaining of new knowledge and skills helps them to perform tasks better with job satisfaction and motivation.

The second research question stated that what is the predictive value of mentorship on lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria? The findings of the study showed that mentorship is a modest predictor of lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions Cross River State. This implies that academic mentoring whereby a more experienced and knowledgeable person (the mentor) is attach with a less experience person (the mentee) for coaching in order to help the mentees in their career advancement has a moderate prediction on lecturers' research productivity

in tertiary institution in Cross River State which ought not to so. however, the result of the findings could be course by certain factors like heavy workload, lack of incentive and rewards, lack of institutional support, lack of mentor training and development and many others. The finding suggests that having a supportive and experienced mentor can contribute to an increase in research output. The is in line with findings of Uchenna and Nkechi (2019) which indicated that there is a positive and significant relationship between knowledge transfer mentoring and career growth of Junior Lecturers

The analysis of hypothesis two which stated that mentorship does not significantly predict lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria. The result of the hypothesis reveals that mentorship is a significant predictor of lecturers' research productivity in tertiary institutions in Cross River State. Mentorship plays a crucial role in guiding and supporting lecturers specially the early-career researchers, helping them navigate the challenges of conducting research and building their academic careers. The result further agrees with the finding of Expoh and Ukot (2019) who reported that research monitoring, administrative mentoring and mentor-mentee relationship were significantly related to lecturers' effectiveness.

The finding of the present study also aligns with the finding of Okon, Owan and Owan (2022) the findings revealed that mentorship practices significantly contribute to the research productivity of early-career research in educational psychology in universities. This study was supported by Gill and Gosine-Boodo (2021) Nundulall and Dorasamy (2012), Ebisinkemefa and Lucky (2022) and Adebowale, Ibidapo and Saheed (2023) who all identify that mentorship has a significance influence on academic state research productivity and job performance. It is suggested that tertiary institutions authority should create a conductive environment and provide the necessary support for the smooth running of mentoring practice.

Conclusion

The researcher concluded that manpower development practices which are in-service training and mentorship are significant indices that helps lecturers to foster in the actualization of their research productivity. Lecturers cannot be effective in their job productivity without the constant engagement in training and development in order to be abreast with trend in technology and in the world of research. Through engaging in professional development, it helps them in enhancing skills, providing access to resources, offering expert guidance, facilitating networking opportunities, and fostering motivation and accountability. These factors collectively contribute to improved research output and the professional growth of lecturers.

Recommendations

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

1.Tertiary institutional management should organize training and retraining program for all academic staff periodically by equipping them with basic research skills to facilitate their research productivity and every staff should be given equal opportunity for the exercise.

2 Tertiary institutional management and all stakeholders in education should provide financial support to all lecturers to enable them attend seminar, workshop and conferences both

in local and international professional bodies and certificate should be used as requirement for promotion.

3 The management of the institutions should encourage mentorship practice among lecturers whereby an experienced lecturer is attached with less experienced lecturer for mentoring and policy should be enacted and implemented to that effect because mentorship is seen as a channel for promoting research productivity.

4 Incentive should be given to all professors and senior lecturers who served as mentors to young career academics as a form of motivation and encouragement

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