

# TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS' HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT: STRENGTHENING QUALITY EDUCATION

By

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## **Abstract**

*This paper examines tertiary institutions, the quality of teaching, learning process and the pedagogy competencies of the lecturers. It is aimed at Tertiary institutions' staff development activities and the furtherance of knowledge, attitude and skills required to professionally carry out teaching and research duties in higher institutions. The objective of the paper is to stress a properly planned and well-articulated staff development programme that will facilitate a robust and well-motivated teaching, research and environment for students and the institutions' community. This paper therefore speaks to the need of tertiary institutions' staff development opportunities, the need for staff development and the activities involved as it relates to pedagogy development. The research method adopted is qualitative; consultation of relevant material in library and the internet. The paper also discusses some crucial challenges of human resources development in tertiary institutions, and concludes by recommending among others that, lecturers should be regularly encouraged to participate in academic activities as workshops, conferences and seminars locally and internationally. Tertiary institutions' human resource departments should reposition their personnel units for training and retraining of their academic staff to acquire the relevant administrative and academic skills for leadership and policy implementation; higher institutions in collaboration with relevant institutions, should work out international sponsorship programs for lecturers, to expose them to practical professional standards, current pedagogical skills, and cross fertilization of ideas and knowledge.*

**Keywords:** Pedagogy, Tertiary institution, Development, Training needs.

## **Introduction**

We have seen the introduction of train the teachers on-the-job, and even the college /university based postgraduate diploma (PGDE) has become more vocationally oriented in Nigeria. Teacher training and development have been identified as the only solution that can make staff grapple with this great task and increase the growing confidence and skills in them as good teacher is the one who knows that his education has scarcely begun when he leaves the university or training college.

Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (2014) shared that the education of a professional is a life-long process which begins with pre-service training, through induction into the profession and thereafter, going professional or in-service training. That a life-long

process of professional education is divided into stages marked by evaluation which are intended to determine the capacity of the individual to proceed to the next higher level of responsibility. Teachers are in the business of education. They are perceived as facilitators of learning rather than didactic fount of knowledge. It follows that teacher should adopt the philosophy of lifelong learning in their own professional activities. Mole (2000) regards development and training as means of assuring all citizens of greater security. This development help focus the organization with the assumption that organisations must grow and change in order to remain viable and relevant. It prepares the individual to move in the new direction that the organisation may require.

Pressure on staff from tertiary institutions to adopt new methods of teaching, master new ways of classroom management and embrace more technical instructional materials have compelled teaching staff to be challenged to take up the responsibility of further development in recent times. Also, the alienation and career occupational dislocation due to changing technological process and occupational opportunities have put staff in the tertiary institutions on edge. Development and training as an internal function of human resource department that systematically organises staff to either improve on their current roles or be more equipped for greater responsibilities. Since there is always dissatisfaction with the status quo, this always applies. At most times, there must be deficiency either in the present or foreseen to make training and development necessary. There are two methods of ensuring that staff acquires the desired traits, skills, and abilities. The first is through selection, which takes in only those thought to have the desired traits. The second method for matching organizational need with workers' characteristics is the process of behavioural modification. This is usually referred to as training and development. Koko (2005), opined that development and training have the same focus and objectives and activities that are conscious institutional approach intending to improve the capacities of staff to fill specific roles. Narrowing this down to education, they stated that several aspects of staff development follow from the definition that is concerned with a range of staff training activities irrespective of whether they are voluntary or mandatory, in school's interest, and related to curriculum or otherwise; a conscious approach to staff development. Without a credible, creative, positive environment for in-service training and staff development, very little capacity building and enhancement will be achieved.

Considering the challenges and deliverables off tertiary institutions, the need for continuous training as a means of strengthening quality education cannot be overemphasized. As a sector that is saddled with the tasks of shaping and refining the minds, it is at present viewed as not focusing enough attention on retraining. Higher institutions as Universities, Colleges and Polytechnics, according to UNESCO (2014) are labour intensive organisations; they depend on people to deliver their services. The quality of staff is central to their effectiveness of service rendered. Similarly, the objective of building a virile and competent nation with reliable economy is dependent on its human resources capacity, which is a key task for the tertiary institutions. To achieve this, the institutions must have to make the most effective use of all their human resources. In the tertiary institutions, the training and re-training of the individual is the most crucial impact affecting his development. This is because the challenge-oriented staff institution developmental changes. Management and development practices have changed rapidly and radically in recent years, that they have proved quite prophetic in that the impetus for all round effective management by the organization itself

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could not be stronger or more opportune. For instance, in the industrial organization, the nature and climate of education have seen more changes in the last few years than the previous twenty.

#### **Pedagogy, Tertiary Institutions and staff quality**

Pedagogy is often referred to as the activities that impact knowledge or skill; of educating, or instructing or teaching. The Oxford English dictionary (2002) defined pedagogy as the profession, science or theory of teaching. Pedagogical competencies of instructors play a very crucial role in improving the quality of teaching and learning in higher education, and in bringing learning to life. According to Sara & Azzedin (2018), pedagogy which appears to be the major challenge of higher education can be defined as a process of helping in some social and instructional conditions, which can be verified in terms of exploratory and heuristic value in the educational sector. Learning is dependent on pedagogical approaches teachers use in classrooms. It refers to the interaction between teachers, students, the learning environment and learning task. The broad term includes how teachers and students relate together, as well as the instructional materials approaches implemented in the classroom. What constitutes effective pedagogy is often context-dependent, therefore teachers need to receive specific preparation on how to make contextual adaptation to their teaching approaches through both pre-service and in-service training. (UNESCO, 2014).

Since teachers in tertiary institutions are also learners, there is need to develop their capacities to guarantee quality teaching, professionalism and commitment. The training and development mission of higher education calls from within itself, appropriate teaching practices. These have been pedagogy of higher education, pedagogy of basic training, pedagogy of program approach and pedagogy for research. Every training and development mission contain a pedagogy requirement. (Sara & Azzedin, 2018). Higher education institutions are facing new challenges especially in this age of rapid technological development, changes and adaptation in this sector. Educators need to face and address today's higher education learning landscape offering new insights, fresh ideas and learning experiences from different educators' perspective. The future of education is seen as highly dynamic and mobile. Knowledge comes from reflection and contemplation. The engine for learning is continues circle of engagement and reflection. (Santhiram, 2016).

Teaching over the centuries has transformed from simple educational function into a complex profession. It is seen today as a very specialized function involving pedagogic principles and practices design to provide unique service to meet the educational needs of the individual and society. Raising awareness among academics regarding their teaching and learning approaches is significance to their learning experiences for students in tertiary institutions. Academic staff should have access to series of programs that facilitate continuous staff development and encourage reflective practices. (Aynar, 2017 & Santhiran, 2016). Academic staff training and development aims at enhancing excellence across range of academic practice by developing individuals and championing development provision across the institution.

#### **Higher Education and Required Competencies**

No educational system can rise above the quality of its teachers. (NERDC, 2014). Human capital in Nigeria tertiary institutions is deficient and motivation for intrinsic job satisfaction, enrichment and enlargement is to its lowest ebb. In order for tertiary institution to

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academically grow, teachers to remain relevant, current and not to be rustic, teachers' development programs are very critical. TRCN (2014) noted that quality delivery is a determining factor of whom can be called a teacher. According to Peretomode & Chukwuma (2012), situations similar to the above implies that lecturers need to keep abreast of the time and the trends of knowledge development or their discipline areas not to become obsolete and made redundant. The ultimate goal of self-development is the enhancement of individual's job satisfaction and optimization of skills, talent and tasks accomplished. A concerted and conscious effort geared towards lecturers in tertiary institutions' shaping their abilities to have them better prepared in performing their various obligations, tasks and functions associated with or related to their present or future expected roles. The people in tertiary institutions will play varying roles as participants in the sector. The institutional leadership as Vice Chancellors, Rectors, and Provosts among others bear the brunt of decision making and strategic direction in very uncertain environment. Leadership skills will be essential as well as communication and persuasion skills. The institutional managers such as the Deans, HODs are executive heads that ensure that changes happen. They ensure discipline and take a key part in implementing institutional change. As their roles are in more detailed level, they will need to have a more tangible competency. They will have to have people management skills such as team building and helping staff to develop themselves academically and professionally; understanding financial issues; IT awareness; sensitive to new development and strategic awareness of institutionalised position. Academic staff in their teaching roles will bear the ultimate burden of having to "do more with less", as students number increases without matching funding especially for development. They teach a wide range of students (matured, part-time and disadvantages) in different ways involving new methods and technologies. In such harsh environment, a model teacher should be aware and understand the different ways in which students' learn; committed to scholarship and discipline, maintaining professional standards and knowledge of current development, mastering new teaching and learning methods, skills in handling large number of students, developing personal and professional "copping strategies", and awareness of IT applications. The academic staff in their teaching roles are under pressure. Universities are increasingly basing their assessment of research quality on the ability of researchers to raise outside funding, as well as volume of research conducted and published. Among the skills which researchers now need are Proposal writing, networking and fundraising for projects, managing Doctoral students and project management, particularly relating to international partnership projects. For academic support and administrative, staff in library, resource and computer centers, there are matching demands. As both are helping students to access knowledge, and are required to face calls for help over long hours from wide ability range of students. (Halidu, 2015).

#### **Identifying Training Needs for quality education engineering**

According to Klein (2007), traditional professional development has often ignored the particular needs of teachers to sort their input in their own professional growth. A number of researches have begun to identify important elements of a successful staff development program. Some of the important elements of effective staff development identified are that good professional development should engage teachers in collaborative problem solving, should be continuous, supported, information rich, and should help teachers develop a theoretical understanding of the elements involved in the change or reform. The professional

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development organization needs to help teachers develop a 'repertoire' for practice that is consistent with their new understandings the teachers are building.

The signs for training needs which are a result of gaps between knowledge, skills and attitudes required in a job, and the knowledge, skills and attitude of the person carrying out the job. It is also as a result of a defined or anticipated advanced knowledge required for future or a sudden higher responsibility. Queens University of Charlotte (2021) has identified some special situations that can serve as signals for training needs. These according to her are:

- a. Challenges for teachers to keep up with the trends and best practices. This is because educational technology, school district guidelines and curriculum standards are constantly changing.
- b. When educators discover new teaching strategies through professional development.
- c. When students expect their teachers to be subject matter experts for the new topics they teach.
- d. When there are gaps and need to prepare teachers for higher, administrative and leadership roles in the institution.
- e. When there are teachers with low quality impact on the students and on the institution's development.
- f. When workers become unsuitable for their present jobs probably due to deteriorating health or loss of interest.

American Psychology Association (2006), through an intensive research has identified teachers' needs as:

- a. Induction on professional activities relating to classroom management for first year teachers.
- b. In-district professional development workshop with teams of teachers or online module for refreshment, to avoid knowledge decay and foster exposure to modern methods.
- c. Exposure to modern classroom management, instructional materials and students' academic test, measurement and evaluation.

The purpose of development has also been identified by Amadi (2013) as: -

- a. To ensure depth of content knowledge.
- b. To provide a strong foundation in the pedagogy of particular discipline.
- c. To provide more general knowledge about teaching and learning process, and about schools and institution.
- d. To reflect the best available research.
- e. To contribute to measurable achievement in students learning.
- f. To expect teachers to be intellectually engaged with ideas and resources.

These constitute the elements that strengthen the muscle for quality education re-engineering in a given society and institution.

#### **Challenges with Human Resource Development in Tertiary Institutions**

It is evident from research that all faculties in our tertiary institutions mostly face the challenges of human capital development, funding, and inadequate equipment required for teaching. This has been observed to be linked to the overall selective and discriminative allocation of economic resources by most countries in Africa. The effect of this has a

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multifaceted effect on education generally. Human capital development is a continual responsibility of the organisation's management. For our institutions to reach the acceptable standards anywhere and soar its pedagogy, there must be a rethink and reversal of the current perception on education budgetary allocation. (Adegbenjo & Olubato, 2015). UNESCO (2014) identify challenges which affects tertiary institutions' human resource development as-

- a. The growth in demand for higher education. This phenomenon has risen to an alarming rate. In many countries, the rate of expansion in students' enrolment has exceeded the economy so that the reluctance of some countries (in Africa for example) to contemplate cost sharing has posed a major problem for their public sector financing. It has placed pressure on facilities of all kind.
- b. Financial constraints. This means that government can no longer fund education as before. They now call on not only parents and students, non-governmental agencies and the private sector to share in the cost. Continuously, they call for efficiency saving in institutional budgets, which has led throughout the world to severe staff-student ratio and heavier workload for academic staff. One irony is the situation where budgets for human resource development are often the first to be cut, just when they are most needed, in terms of serious financial difficulty. In most countries, the reduction of funding for institutions is leading to a growth in higher education by private sector.
- c. A focus for basic education has persuaded many countries to limit their support for higher education. In many countries, the reputation and public image of universities and other higher institutions has not helped their cause of getting more finance from their government.
- d. The government and public expectations of universities and other tertiary institutions are that they will be able to serve wider audiences of students, at different levels, in different ways. Among the new expectations will be an ability to handle a growing proportion of part-time students; willingness to teach a greater number of matured students; the assumption that the institution can serve regional population using link to associate colleges or providers; an ability to offer distance learning and face-face tuition in 'dual mode' that is using the same materials and same staff; that staff have technical competencies which offer research and consultancy services to industry and commerce in the area. The expectation placed a great onus on institution to give much more formal consideration to the needs of their stakeholder in their strategic planning and to involve their communities in advising on their institution's development.
- e. A concern for quality products has accompany the expansion in number and reduction in funding. There is inevitable fear that quality will suffer as mass higher education becomes a reality. Government, parents and students are asking questions about the teaching/learning process and are expecting institutions and funding bodies to monitor the quality of the processes and their output.
- f. Technological change affects all disciplines (but to varying extent) and expect staff member to be alert to the latest innovations in teaching methods and research support. Even when access to the internet will eventually enable developing country universities to remedy some of the deficiencies in their library and information services, this will only partly help to close the gap.

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### **Conclusion.**

In the era where curriculum and academics have become innovative, deeper in content and standardized, embracing new methods, easily accessed by modern technology and information, and knowledge is becoming globalized, the expectations of the teacher cannot be more open and exposed to assessment and evaluation, pitched against the global teaching standard. Tertiary institution staff are therefore only left with the option to be more skillful and deliver quality. This can only be achieved when staff development is constantly made part of the learning process of the teacher.

### **Recommendations**

Therefore, this paper makes the following recommendations.

1. As a matter of policy, academic institutions should come out, annually, with staff development calendar, getting imputes from faculties, to identify training needs, paucity of capacity among staff and potential gap areas to enable a proactive approach to staff development and productivity.
2. The government in collaboration with the private sector should sponsor and provide the enabling environment, in tertiary institutions, especially on the side of funding, to facilitate lecturers' participation in oversea training and development to enhance cross fertilization of ideas and knowledge.
3. Tertiary institutions' human resource department should take the responsibility to reposition their personnel units for training and retraining of their academic staff to acquire relevant knowledge for policy implementation and academic growth.
4. Management of tertiary institutions should continue to encourage lecturers to regularly participate in activities as workshops, conferences, seminars, and courses, locally and internationally, to enable them add value to themselves and the institutions.

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