



ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL RELATED SCHOOL FACTORS AND MANAGEMENT OF ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS IN STATE UNIVERSITIES IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA: IMPLICATION FOR NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



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Abstract

The study examined the influence of economic and political related school factors in the management of academic departments in state universities in Cross River State, Nigeria. Three research questions were posed with corresponding null hypotheses. Ex-post facto research design was adopted in the study. The population of the study comprised 57 heads of academic departments in the two state owned Universities in the state. The entire population was sampled purposively to collect data. An instrument titled "Economic and Political Related School Factors Management of Academic Departments Questionnaire (EPRSFMADQ) was used to collect data. The instrument was validated by two experts in measurement and evaluation, and educational management. Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the instrument. Simple linear regression was used to analyze the data. Results revealed that internal funding, recruitment policy and admission regulation have significant influence in the management of academic departments. Therefore, it was recommended among others that school managers should adequately fund academic departments to enhance effective and efficient management for sustainable national development.

Keyword: Internal funding, recruitment policy, admission regulation, management, academic departments, sustainable national development.

Introduction

Structurally, Universities comprised various academic departments, each headed by a Head of Department whose duty is to manage the affairs of the department with a view to achieving educational goals and objectives. According to University of Ibadan (2017), the primary duties of Heads of Departments include overseeing the day - to - day operation in their departments, implementing university Policies, and fostering a productive teaching and learning environment for staff and students. Management involves the process of coordinating resources and activities of an organization in a manner that will ensure attainment of organizational goals and objectives. In the school context, management refers to the process of coordinating school resources and activities to accomplish school goals and objectives. At the departmental level, the duty of managers is to ensure that educational resources are coordinated and utilized, and also ensure that work is done to accomplish school goals and objectives. Heads of Departments perform the functions of managers at the departmental level. The level of management performance at the departmental level determines the success of the university in terms of achieving its goals and objectives. School managers make strategic plans and decisions, formulating educational policies, coordinating, controlling, supervising and evaluating human and material resources under their watch for the achievement of educational set goals and objectives (Ekwegu & Uzoamaka, 2024).

The goals of university education according to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) include among others, to contribute to national development through high level relevant manpower training. Nigeria is a nation dependent on educational institutions, particularly the universities for sustainable national development. Universities through the various academic departments train individuals and equip them with necessary skills and knowledge for self and national development. However, it has been observed in recent times that many graduates of Universities are struggling to make impact

contribution to national development, due to lack of skills and knowledge. This has been confirmed by Onwuka (2019) who observed that graduates of universities in Nigeria do not match the needs of Nigeria industries. This problem may be linked to ineffective management of academic departments that provide educational services directly to the students.

Management of academic departments can be connected to economic and political related factors within the school system such as, internal funding, recruitment policy and admission regulation. Internal funding refers to deployment or allocation of financial resources to various educational units or departments to carry out educational functions. It can also be referred to the process of disbursing school finance to execute various programmes and projects meant to achieve educational goals. Availability of funds and proper management of same will go a long way to enhance teaching and learning for attaining educational goals (Ukpong, 2019).

It is the duty of university managers to make funds available in the various educational departments to carry out educational activities. Availability of funds determine management performance at the departmental level, which further determine staff and students performance. Oluwatosin and Anyanwu (2018) report that there is a significant relationship between funding and administrative effectiveness. Also, Krumine, Kavale, Egalite, Letuskrasta and Puce (2016) report that funding system has impact on higher education system.

Recruitment is the process of identifying and attracting qualified and suitable candidates to fill position in an organization based on existing vacancies. It creates a pool of applicants which to fill existing vacancies (Jacob & Ibara, 2023). Employing staff without following proper recruitment policy may result to hiring unqualified teachers, which may create management problem and also affect the quality of education. Using incorrect type of recruitment processes may affect institution's efficiency in producing great talent (Keyamba et al, 2015). Mamoria and Ganker (2010) noted that effect of poor recruitment include, poor job performance, high training expenses to reduce poor performance and high turnover.

A good recruitment is one that has a good recruitment policy which provides a framework of implementation of the recruitment programmes in a form of procedures. A good and pre planned recruitment policy based on corporate goals, study of environment and the corporate needs, may avoid hasty or ill-considered decisions, and may go a long way to manage the organization with the right type of personnel (Mamoria and Ganker, 2010). Recruitment policy provides basic information about the task to be performed, the knowledge and training, physical and mental abilities, and industrial reference required to perform (Muhammad, 2022). In education, recruitment policy are guidelines and procedures used in employing staff into the school system. It is an important policy as it is imperative to employ qualified candidates into educational institutions considering their significant role in sustainable national development.

Agyei and Christopher (2016) report that there is a high relationship between recruitment and organisational performance. According to the report, recruitment criteria have significant impact on organizational performance. Similarly, Anganyo and Muya (2018) report that there is a significant relationship between recruitment and organisational performance.

Admission regulation are guidelines and procedures put in place by school managers for the purpose of admitting students into the school system. An attempt to regulate university admission with respect to available space and national spread within the university gave rise to the establishment of some admission policies which ensure that only candidates that fulfill some pre conditions are granted admission into university (Oriki, 2015).

It is important to establish admission regulation and adhere strictly to admission requirements while admitting prospective students into university because the quality of students admitted into a particular academic department may have implications on the management of the department as well staff and students performance. Oriki (2015) report that admission regulation has impact on academic performance of undergraduates students. Similarly, Obono (2022) revealed that internal admission regulations has significant influence on job performance and effectiveness of academic staff.

From the background of the study, there is an observed link between economic and political related factors and management of academic departments. Therefore, this study examined the influence of economic and political related factors in the management of academic departments in state universities in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

Academic departments play important roles in the university, especially in the areas of teaching, learning and administration. University provide educational services to the learners through the various academic departments. They implement academic programmes to the learners and also help the university to implement its policies. What affects academic department also affects the university system as a whole. Therefore, management at this level is always a concern to both university managers and stakeholders. Unfortunately, many academic departments lack effective management to achieve the goal and objectives of university for sustainable national development due to some factors such as lack of funds, lack of competent staff and poor enrollment of students. Despite the efforts of university managers over the years in improving leadership at the departmental level, poor management remain unabated, as evidence in poor performance of staff and students.

Earlier studies have suggested that management of academic departments can be influenced by some factors within the school system. Therefore, it is imperative to link economic and political related school factors with the management of academic departments. Thus, the problem of the study rest on whether economic and political related school factors has any relationship with the management of academic departments in state universities in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

- i) How does internal funding influence management of academic departments?
- ii) To what extent does recruitment policy influence management of academic departments?
- iii) How does internal admission regulation influence management of academic departments?

Statement of hypotheses

- i) Internal funding does not have any significant influence in the management of academic departments.
- ii) Recruitment policy have no significant influence in the management of academic departments.
- iii) There is no significant influence of internal admission regulation in the management of academic departments.

Research method

The study adopted an ex-post facto research design. The study area was in Cross River State, Nigeria. The state is situated in the south south geopolitical zone of Nigeria. It shares boundaries with Venue state to the North, Atlantic ocean and Akwa Ibom State to the South, Abia and Ebonyi states to the West and Republic of Cameroon to the East.

The population of the study comprised 57 heads of academic departments in the two state owned Universities (University of Cross River State - 39, University of Education and Enterprenurship - 18). The entire population was sampled purposively to collect data. An instrument titled "Influence of Economic and Political Related Factors in the Management of Academic Departments Questionnaire (IEPRFMADQ) was used to collect data. The instrument was validated by two experts in measurement and evaluation, and in educational management. Cronbach's Alpha was used to determined the reliability coffient of the instrument, which yielded coffient ranged o. 76 to 0. 82.

Data collection was carried out by the researcher using direct method. 84 questionnaires were distributed, returned and coded. Simple regression was used in the analysis.

Results

Hypothesis 1: Internal funding does not have any significant influence in the Management of academic departments. Independent variable of this hypothesis is internal funding, while dependent variable is management of academic departments. Simple Linear regression was used in the analysis. The summary of the result is presented in table 1.

Table 1
Simple Linear Regression Analysis of the influence of Internal Funding in the Management of Academic Departments (N=57)

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std Estimate	Err
1	.375	.140	.125	3.12916	
ANOVA					
Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Regression	88.021	1	88.021	8.989	.004b
Residual	538.541	55	9.792		
Total	626.561	56			
Unstandardized					
Coefficients					
	B	Std.Err	Beta	t-value	p-value
(Constant)	15.657	1.586		9.874	.000
Internal funding	.269	.090	.375	2.998	.004

a. Dependent Variable: management of academic departments

*Significant, $p < 0.05$

The model shows an R-value of .375. This indicates moderate positive linear relationship between Internal Funding and the Management of Academic Departments. A positive r-value indicates that as internal funding increases, there is a tendency for the management of academic departments to also increase. More so, the R² value is .140. Therefore, this means that Internal Funding can explain 14.0% of the variance in the Management of Academic Departments. Thus, the remaining 86.0% of the variance is unexplained by this model, indicating that other factors not included in this model also influence the Management of Academic Departments. Furthermore, the p-value for the overall model (from the ANOVA table) is .004. Since this p-value is less than the significance level of 0.05, the model is statistically significant. This indicates that Internal Funding has a significant influence in the Management of Academic Departments.

Hypothesis 2: Recruitment policy have no significant influence in the management of academic departments. Independent variable of this hypothesis is recruitment policy, while dependent variable is management of academic departments. Simple Linear Regression was used in the analysis. The summary of the result is presented in table 2

Table 2

Simple Linear Regression Analysis of the influence of Recruitment Policy in the Management of Academic Departments (N=57)

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Err Estimate
1	.535a	.286	.273	2.85109

ANOVA					
Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Regression	179.483	1	179.483	22.080	.000b
Residual	447.079	55	8.129		
Total	626.561	56			

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std.Err	Beta	t-value	p-value
(Constant)	15.657	1.586		9.874	.000
Recruitment Policy	.269	.090	.375	2.998	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Management of Academic Departments

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*Significant, $p < 0.05$

The R-value of 0.535 indicates a moderate positive correlation between Recruitment policy and the Management of Academic Departments. More so, the R² value is 0.286. This means that the Recruitment Policy can explain 28.6% of the variance in the Management of Academic Departments. Therefore, the remaining 71.4% of the variance is due to other factors not included in this model. In addition, the p-value for Recruitment Policy coefficient is 0.004. Therefore, since the p-value (0.000) is less than the conventional significance level of 0.05, this means that the model is statistically significant. This indicates that Recruitment policy has a significant influence in the Management of Academic Departments.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant influence of admission regulation in the management of academic departments. Independent variable of this hypothesis is internal admission regulation, while dependent variable is management of academic departments. Simple Linear Regression was used in the analysis. The summary of the result is presented in table 3.

Table 3

Simple Linear Regression Analysis of the influence of Internal Admission Regulation in the Management of Academic Departments (N=57)

Management of Academic Departments (N = 57)					
Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Err Estimate	Err
1	.388a	.151	.135	3.11013	
Model	ANOVA				
	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value
Regression	94.553	1	94.553	9.775	.003b
Residual	532.008	55	9.673		
Total	626.561	56			
	Unstandardized		Standardized		

	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std.Err	Beta	t-value	p-value
(Constant)	15.390	1.607		9.578	.000
Admission regulation	.276	.088	.388	3.127	.003

a. Dependent Variable: management of academic departments

*Significant, $p < 0.05$

The R-value (r), represented as 'R' in the "Model Summary" table, is 0.388. This indicates a positive linear relationship between Admission regulation and the management of academic departments. In addition, the R^2 value is 0.151. This means that 15.1% of the variance in the Management of Academic Departments can be explained by the Admission regulation. Therefore, the remaining 84.9% of the variance is unexplained by this model. More so, the p-value for the overall model (from the ANOVA table) is 0.003. Therefore, since the p-value (0.003) is less than the significance level of 0.05, it indicates that the regression model as a whole is statistically significant. This indicates that there is a significant influence of internal admission regulation in the management of Academic Departments.

Discussion

Hypothesis 1: Result of this hypothesis revealed that internal funding has significant influence in the management of academic departments. This result implies that funding of academic departments by school managers will enable departmental heads to confront financial challenges that are constantly affecting effective and efficient management of academic departments for sustainable development. This result aligned with the finding of Krumine et al (2016) who report that funding system has impact on higher education system. The finding also the finding of Oluwatosin et al (2018) who report that there is a significant relationship between funding and administrative effectiveness.

Hypothesis 2: Result of this hypothesis revealed that recruitment policy has significant influence in the management of academic departments. This result implied that if school managers formulate recruitment policy and follow the guidelines and procedures stipulated in the policy when employing staff, only qualified staff who knows and understand their job will be employed, thereby resolving management problem in the area of personnel management within the academic department for sustainable development. This result is in line with the finding of Agyei and Christopher (2016) who reports that there is a high relationship between recruitment and organisational performance. Similarly, the result agreed with the finding of Anyango et al (2011) who found out that there was a significant relationship between recruitment and organisational performance.

Hypothesis 3: Result of this hypothesis revealed that there is significant influence of admission regulation in the management of academic departments. This result indicated that with admission regulation, university will be able to admit only qualified candidates and right number of students to match existing facilities of the department. With the right number and quality of students, departmental management will have no problem in achieving their goals and objectives for sustainable national development. The result was in agreement with the findings of Obono (2022) who reports that internal admission regulation has significant influence on job performance and effectiveness of academic staff. And Orike (2015) who found out that admission regulation has significant influence on academic performance of undergraduates students.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that economic political related factors such as internal finding recruitment policy and admission regulation are significant in improving

effective management of academic departments of state universities for sustainable national development.

Recommendations

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

- i) University managers should fund academic departments adequately to ensure effective and efficient management for sustainable national development.
- ii) University managers should make recruitment policy and follow strictly when employing staff to enhance management performance at the departmental level for sustainable national development.
- iii) University managers should endeavor to regulate admission processes to ensure that only the right number and quality candidates are admitted to enhance management performance at the departmental level for sustainable national development.

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