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## EDITORIAL DESK

Volume 3 of the West African Journal of Educational Administration and Planning (WAJEAP) has a total of ten articles that were the products of well researched papers presented at the international conference held in May 2024 at the Presbyterian University of East Africa in Kikuyu, Nairobi, Kenya. The conference had well over 100 participants that gathered at the ambiance of PUEA environment, which was well attended by over 25 universities across the globe including Nigeria, Serra Leone, Kenya, South Africa, Australia and University of South Alabama in United States of America. All the articles have been peer reviewed and plagiarism checks conducted on them before publication.

I, therefore, want to deeply appreciate the management team of the Presbyterian University of East Africa for making this publication a reality. All the writers and authors are congratulated for passing the stringent measures set by the guild of editors.

Congratulations to everyone, and I wish you a prosperous Christmas celebration in advance.

**Prof. M. O. B. Mohammed FNAEAP,**

*Head, Editorial Team*

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# INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS AS PRECURSORS FOR EFFECTIVENESS OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

*Education is widely recognised as the primary tool for promoting growth, development, and progress in all countries worldwide. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004) has recognised education as a crucial tool for achieving national development. As a result, they have established three levels of education: primary, secondary, and postsecondary. This study focuses on the tertiary level. In contemporary Nigeria, tertiary education is usually perceived as an essential instrument for the socio-economic progress of individuals, their political sustainability, and the complete attainment of their ambitions and capabilities. The paper provides a discourse of the concept of tertiary education, and institutional factors in higher education. In addition, the paper analysed the roles of human resources management, effective communication, career development, rewards system, ICT infrastructure and technical, vocational education and training programmes in tertiary institution effectiveness. The paper conclude that institutional factors are critical to effectiveness of tertiary institutions in achieving their goals. Among the recommendations put forward in this research is the need by tertiary institutions to establish a system for implementing high performance work systems by using the input they received.*

**Keywords:** Education, institutional factors, tertiary institution effectiveness

## INTRODUCTION

Education is a purposeful and intentional endeavour aimed at attaining various objectives, such as the cultivation of well-informed individuals capable of rational thinking, the establishment of a sustainable society, and the attainment of economic objectives that benefit both individuals and their communities (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). According to Osaro (2014), education plays a significant role in generating a population of engaged people in any country.

Each organization or institution is founded with certain goals and objectives that must be accomplished within a specific timeframe. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1968) and Appleby (1980), organizations and institutions are created with distinct objectives, aims, or goals. The targets and goals are meticulously prepared and recorded to ensure comprehension for both current stakeholders and future users. The responsibility for implementing suitable strategies to accomplish specified goals and objectives lies with the administration of these institutions or organizations. According to Ghabarro (1992), management is considered to be a challenging endeavor for humanity, primarily due to the dynamic and cognitive nature of both individuals and groups involved in people and industrial relations. According to Gbosi (2003), there are several challenges associated with staff development programmes, accounting for the value of human resources, calculating the economic value of human resources as the primary factors of production, and psychologically processing human resources information. These issues collectively necessitate a fresh approach to human resources management.

In the National Policy on Education (2004), the Federal Government of Nigeria outlined the objectives of tertiary education as follows: 1. The process of obtaining, cultivating, and fostering the appropriate moral principles necessary for the well-being of individuals and society. 2. The enhancement of individuals' cognitive abilities to comprehend and value their surroundings. 3. The attainment of both physical and intellectual proficiencies that will empower individuals to become valuable contributors to the community. 4. The attainment of an impartial perspective on the local and external surroundings.

The Federal Government of Nigeria holds the perspective that the aforementioned objectives of tertiary institutions have to be accomplished by means of instruction, investigation, and the distribution of both established and novel knowledge (FGN, 2004). The fundamental job of school management is to meet the aims of tertiary institutions. In contemporary times, both the Federal and State Government have predominantly regarded higher education as a means of investing in the development of human capital. This perception is driven by the objective of cultivating a proficient workforce capable of assuming managerial and technocratic roles within the economic, social, and political domains of the nation. A significant number of Nigerian secondary school graduates perceive university education as a valid means to achieve personal satisfaction and advance their socio-economic standing within society. Many individuals, groups, and organizations strongly believe that postsecondary education has the potential to effectively address various social issues, economic challenges, and societal problems commonly associated with illiteracy in Nigeria. The aforementioned vices encompass corruption, bribery, ignorance, conservatism, sickness, malnutrition, superstitious beliefs, tribalism, nepotism, political instability, unemployment, and economic stagnation. According to Amaele (2005), in a concise manner.

*An educated Nigerian should be equipped with skills knowledge and character to be able to take his rightful place in the country. In this complex society, he should not be carried away by the ethno-centric or religion-centric circumstances, but be logical in thought and humane in acting. He must not be gripped by the shackles of outdated cultural values nor get intoxicated by undigested foreign values.*

There is no doubt that tertiary education in Nigeria plays a crucial role in facilitating the nation's social, political, moral, cultural, technological, and economic goals. It achieves this by equipping individuals with knowledge, skills, dexterity, commendable behavior, and desirable attitudes and values that contribute to national development, self-actualization, good governance, and national security. Adesina (2005) asserts that the outcome of the Nigerian educational system should enable individuals to effectively integrate into society and actively contribute to national progress by leveraging the knowledge, skills, and experiences obtained via their education. The adoption of tertiary education in Nigeria has been widely welcomed, resulting in an unprecedented demand for this level of education over the past three decades, specifically from 1984 to 2014.

### **The Concept of Tertiary Education**

According to the Fourth Edition of the National Policy on Education (2004), tertiary education refers to the educational pursuits that follow secondary school and are provided by institutions such as universities, colleges of education, polytechnics, monotechnics, and those that offer correspondence courses.

Tertiary education represents the pinnacle of educational instruction and knowledge acquisition, serving as a platform for cultivating exceptional intellect and human capital within any given nation. Its primary objective is to foster comprehensive personal and societal

advancement. University, colleges of education, polytechnics, and mono-technics are institutions where individuals pursue tertiary education. In Nigeria, it is widely acknowledged that prior to 1980, the quality standards and performance of the country's tertiary education system were comparable to, and even beyond, those of the world's top higher education institutions. However, after 1980, the situation has undergone a detrimental transformation, perhaps as a result of widespread examination malpractices, corruption, and inadequate finance. There have been multiple grievances expressed by various individuals across different platforms over the declining quality of education throughout all three tiers or degrees of education in Nigeria. It is well acknowledged that graduates from Nigerian higher education institutions often exhibit deficiencies in their skills, rendering them unemployed, unproductive, and lacking proficiency in both oral and written communication using basic English grammar. Higher education is being attributed to all the vices in Nigerian society. Nevertheless, these public viewpoints contradict the endeavours and assertions of the several levels of government, as well as the statements made by higher educational institutions during their graduation ceremonies and other assemblies where annual reports are presented. Hence, the author will thoroughly analyse the elements that contribute to the effective management of human resources in Nigerian tertiary education institutions and propose effective ways to address these issues.

### **Institutional factors and Organisational Effectiveness**

Each institution of higher education (HEI) possesses a clearly stated objective that it aims to accomplish within a specified period. Frequently, these elements are articulated within their strategic plans. When there are signs that these goals are not being met or may not be met based on the data at hand, it becomes clear that the Higher Education Institution (HEI) is not functioning well. Therefore, it is vital to take appropriate actions to rectify the situation. Consequently, organizations worldwide persist in their pursuit of enhancing institutional effectiveness and performance. According to Willems et al. (2014), the concept of organizational performance encompasses the evaluation of a firm's market position and its capacity to effectively address the needs of its stakeholders. According to Slack et al. (2010), organizational performance can be defined as the extent to which a company's operations effectively achieve its performance goals and satisfy the demands of its consumers. HEI, similar to other organizations, endeavours to cultivate a highly skilled workforce in order to achieve optimal performance.

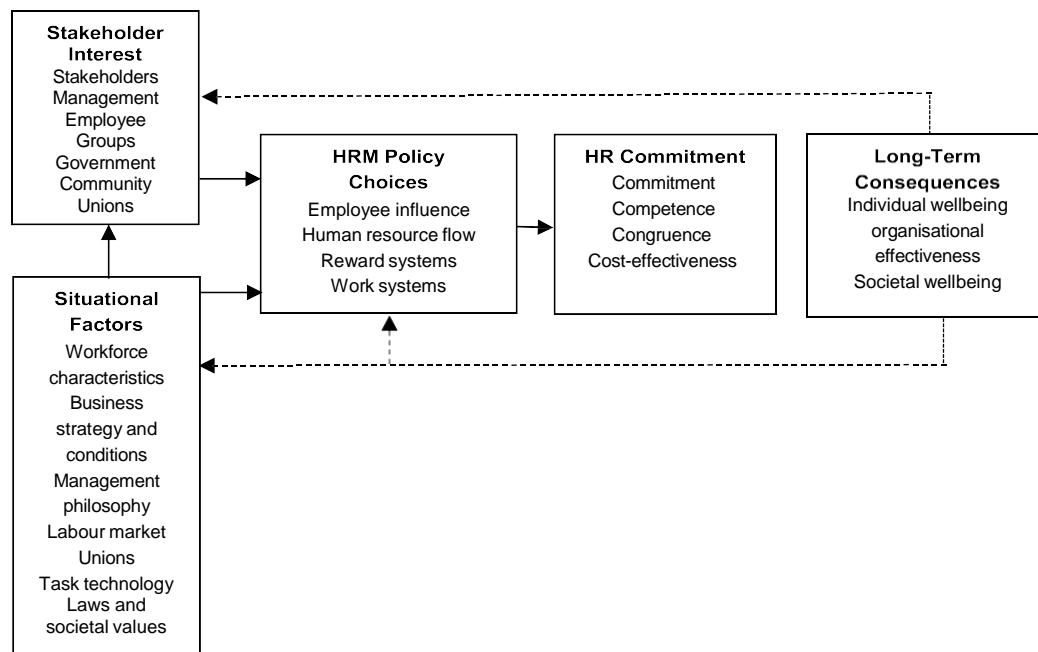
#### **1. Human resources management**

Higher education institutions (HEIs) globally are expected to possess operational human resources (HR) systems that are well integrated into their management framework. This phenomenon does not occur in emerging nations such as Nigeria (Adelaja, 2024). HR is currently undergoing a transformation from its previous function of people management. Higher education institutions in Ghana frequently lack sufficient resources to implement efficient Human Resource Management Systems (Asmond et al., 2022). Insufficiently skilled professionals are frequently available to oversee the HR departments. However, studies indicate a connection between efficient and high-quality human resource management (HRM) and the progress of institutions (Hayton, 2005; Sun et al., 2007; Messersmith & Guthrie 2010; Batt & Colvin 2011; Zhang et al., 2012; Fu et al., 2015). Research has consistently demonstrated a positive correlation between employee performance and several HR management systems, including recruiting, training, selection, remuneration, and benefits. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these HR systems is contingent upon the presence of a robust and operational HR department (Ferguson & Reio Jr, 2010; Lee et al., 2010; Jiang et al., 2012; Noe et al., 2017). There is a scarcity of research regarding the impact of HR on the effectiveness of institutions in Nigeria. The majority of research conducted in Ghana has mostly concentrated on the

relationship between human resources and productivity and performance (Ashmond et al., 2022; Kusi et al., 2020).

### *Conceptual Framework for HRM*

The Harvard model in Figure 1 is adopted as a conceptual framework for this study. Several experts led by Michael Beer in 1984 at Harvard University initially developed the model.



The Stakeholder Interest represents major stakeholders at our public universities, such as employees, administrators, labour unions, and the government. Situational elements include: labour regulations, work ethics norms in society, and worker characteristics, all of which are common in Nigeria's higher education sector. The foundation of HR management is HRM policy, and labour laws, university acts, statutes, and policies guide all organizations, including HEIs. The results of any HR strategy are crucial, particularly when it comes to how it helps employees be competent, dedicated, and cost-effective, among other factors that increase productivity, according to literature review. Last but not least, the long-term goal of any HR strategy should be to guarantee institutional growth, staff well-being, and effectiveness, while taking situational and stakeholder interests into account.

The crucial function of human resources (HR) in maintaining institutional efficiency lies in its responsibility to train and develop the next generation of thinkers and innovators for transformative development. This is achieved through the presence of HR personnel and administrators. Each Higher Education Institution (HEI) bears the responsibility of selecting, training, and developing its human resources through its Human Resources (HR) department in order to attain a competitive edge. In his article on HR's Role in Organisational Effectiveness, Vanderpyl (2018) observed that HR departments are apparently perceived as the enforcers of an organization, serving as the inflexible bond that safeguards it against legal disputes and unethical employees. However, HR leaders should also recognize their responsibility as constructing and appreciating personal networks that enhance their organization's effectiveness. High performance work systems (HPWSs) refer to the integration of HR practices. The aforementioned phrase refers to a strategic term within the field of human resources (HR) that encompasses a collection of HR strategies designed to augment the capabilities, motivation, and prospects of employees in order to get a competitive edge

(Huselid, 1995; Pfeffer, 1998; Pak & Kim, 2018). The enhancement of employees' job knowledge and skills is referred to as High Performance Work (HPW) (Sourchi & Liao, 2015). According to this concept, a firm can enhance its competitiveness by utilizing High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) to enhance the integration of HR operations. This integration aims to increase the competitive advantage of the business by equipping employees with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively carry out their job tasks. This perspective aligns with the notion that High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) are designed to optimize employee performance in order to attain organizational objectives by effectively managing their skills and potential (Heffernan & Dundon, 2016).

## **2. Effective communication**

The first aspect is communication and engagement, which refers to the capacity to effectively communicate, establish connections, collaborate in teams, and accomplish professional duties by engaging with fellow employees and consumers (Fu, 2013). The Higher Education Institution (HEI) has interconnected departments and faculties. Effective communication among personnel is crucial to ensure their understanding of the dynamics and differences within each unit. It encompasses the capacity to comprehend the organizational structure and effectively navigate through its hierarchical levels to get or distribute information. Given that communication systems are present in every organization, it is imperative for employees to possess the ability to effectively access and utilize information flow within both lower and higher levels of management (Aiyadh et al., 2015). In the field of human resources, these communication capabilities provide employees with the foundation for their endeavours to attain productivity.

## **3. Career development**

Career development is an additional aspect of university administration that can be regarded as a strategic approach to leveraging human resources in the long run. It refers to the actions taken by an organization's HR department to enhance employees' job security by extending their length of employment, fostering learning and performance enhancement throughout their career, providing opportunities for promotion and job role diversification, and ensuring that job achievements lead to a sense of satisfaction and overall life contentment (Martins et al., 2011). These practices should be integrated, internally consistent, and mutually reinforcing in order to enhance both job and life satisfaction simultaneously, with a special focus on long-term outcomes.

The functions of training and development encompass the consistent provision of knowledge and skills to employees, as well as the facilitation of various opportunities such as seminars, continuing education, short courses, conferences, symposia, and mentoring. These initiatives aim to enhance the job knowledge and skills of employees (Mahdi et al., 2014; Joy, 2017). According to Joy (2017), career development involves the strategic management of employees' life, encompassing their objectives, present well-being, and future outcomes within the organization. Research findings have demonstrated that various human resource interventions, including training, performance management, and career development, exert a significant impact on the enhancement of individuals' capacities, ultimately leading to improved organizational effectiveness (Kehoe & Wright, 2013; Sung & Choi, 2014; Potnuru & Sahoo, 2016). According to Clardy (2008), organizations employ human resources interventions to foster favourable behaviour in individuals and influence their knowledge, skills, and attitudes, hence potentially enhancing productivity and performance.

#### **4. Rewards system**

Rewards encompass several forms of remuneration, such as compensation, the distribution of supplementary perks, pensions, allowances, as well as intangible advantages in the form of equity, reputation, and acknowledgment (Abutayeh, 2017 & Joy, 2017). According to the two-factor theory of motivation, employees receive appropriate rewards when their intrinsic and extrinsic demands are satisfied. The field of performance management focuses on understanding the relationship between rewards, training, and development initiatives and their impact on performance. It also involves implementing strategies to enhance productivity over time (Mahdi et al., 2014).

#### **5. ICT infrastructure**

According to Adelaja (2024), ICT is one of the most important tools for 21st-century social and economic growth (Traynor, 2003). Due to its worldwide relevance, several countries have transformed their ICT industries to help other important sectors in efficiency, productivity, and transparency, creating jobs, improving governance, and boosting social and economic growth. Nigeria established the Ministry of Communication Technology in 2011 to improve ICT cooperation and development. This National ICT Policy outlines the inputs needed to strengthen all productive sectors and transform Nigeria into a knowledge-based and globally competitive nation in line with National Vision 20:20 (NITEF, 2010). To successfully implement ICT policies, programs, and instructional use in Nigerian schools, especially higher institutions, personnel must be familiar with work component operational skills.

Vanetta and Fordham (2004) found that personnel time and technology training affect organisation technology utilization. They said personnel trainers and administrators should provide significant educational technology training and help improve teaching. Norris, Poirot & Soloway (2003), also stressed access to technology. Thus, understanding institutional factors that influence personnel ICT uptake and integration is important. Support, financing, training, and infrastructure affect personnel technology uptake and integration at the school level. Personnel professional development is crucial to computer integration in the organisation. ICT training programmes improve personnel computer skills (Bauer & Kenton, 2005; Franklin, 2007; Wozney, Venkatesh, and Abrami (2006)), attitudes toward computers (Keengwe & Onchwari, 2008), and ability to reorganize technology and how new technology tools affect student learning. Although infrastructural support is important, school technology leadership is a better predictor of personnel computer technology use (Anderson & Dexter, 2005). Yee (2000) believes a leader who executes technology plans and shares a vision with personnel encourages technology use in organisations. For personnel to use ICT effectively, Smarkola (2007) advocates strong leadership to push well-designed technology programs in schools (Lai & Pratt, 2004). Becta (2008) wrote on the impact of ICT on basic school teaching in the UK and the importance of excellent leadership. Additionally, Becta (2008) identified five elements that schools needed to properly use ICT (Lai & Pratt, 2004). These included ICT resources, teaching, leadership, general teaching, and school leadership.

#### **6. Technical, Vocational Education and Training programmes**

Universities today cannot ignore introduction of Technical, Vocational Education and Training programmes for the national Human Capital Development. The significance of vocational education for individuals and society at large cannot be overstated. According to the research conducted by Shavit and Muller (2000) as well as Polat et al. (2010), vocational education has been shown to enhance the likelihood of students securing gainful employment. Furthermore, according to Colley et al. (2003), vocational education has been shown to not only enhance the probability of securing work but also equip individuals with the essential information, technical expertise, and behavioural proficiency required to

enhance and sustain job prospects. Vocational education not only aids in obtaining and retaining employment, but also in generating new jobs via innovation (diffusion of technology), production, research, and development (Toner, 2010; Adebayo, 2024).

Vocational education has garnered significant attention from the international policy community over the last decade, to the extent that it is now widely seen as an essential element of development (McGrath, 2012). In addition to helping students become ready for a variety of careers, Hyslop (2001) noted that it is also very important for their social lives. Vocational education enhances prospects for worldwide competitiveness and solves the problem of poverty, according to Igbinedion and Ojeaga (2012). According to Uwamaiye and Clark (2003), vocational education fosters professionalism by exposing students to the intricacies of the workforce and providing them with the necessary skills.

The national development policies of several nations have placed a high value on vocational education. Ojimba (2012) elucidated that this is because of its effect on the development of human capital. Enyekit et al. (2011) conducted research that highlights the role of vocational and technical education in fostering the acquisition of workforce skills. Based on the findings of Arthur-Mensah and Alargarja (2013), it can be inferred that there is a promising outlook for a country that is capable of producing self-sufficient graduates equipped with the essential competencies required for sustainable human capital development. These competencies are contingent upon the effective implementation of vocational and technical education. According to Wallenborn (2010), there is a growing recognition of the need for human capital development and vocational education in response to emerging trends in political, social, ecological, and global development.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

An important factor in the accomplishment of educational objectives is human resources. In Nigerian schools and higher education institutions, the availability of institutional factors is a prerequisite for effective and efficient administration that will enable the achievement of staff and student objectives as well as postsecondary educational goals. It is the perspective of the authors that if the stakeholders in tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria wish to attain the aims of tertiary education, the following recommendations are to be put to action.

- ❖ Institutions need to establish a system for implementing high performance work systems by using the input they received.
- ❖ It is necessary to carry out functional audit once more. The HR systems and procedures, such as career development, training and development, and organizational development are examined in this process.
- ❖ Government should increase its budgetary allocations to TVET to increase the capacity of human and materials resources in most tertiary institutions.
- ❖ Government should take a meticulous look at the provision of adequate modern facilities in technical colleges and replace the obsolete ones.

In order to attain postsecondary education goals, it is imperative that Nigeria and other countries implement the twenty characteristics listed in this paper.

Finally, HEI needs to allocate enough funds for HR-related operations, effective communication, career development, rewards system, ICT infrastructure in order to maintain institutional effectiveness.

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