

# STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AND THE MANAGEMENT OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN BENUE STATE OF NIGERIA

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## Abstract

*This study investigated influence of staff development programmes on the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised 6,805 academic staff from 12 tertiary institutions of learning in Benue State. A sample of 681 academic staff was selected from five higher institutions of learning and used for the study. The selection was done using a simple random sampling technique. A 10-item structured four-point rating scale questionnaire titled "Influence of Staff Development Programmes Questionnaire (ITLSQ)" was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts, two in Educational Management and one in Measurement and Evaluation in the Faculty of Education, Benue State University, Makurdi. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained through trial testing which yielded reliability coefficient of 0.89. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of goodness of-fit was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings indicated that staff development programmes such as: induction and mentoring influences the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria. It was recommended among others that authorities of tertiary institutions should make it their top priority in addressing the issue of induction programme as an important support mechanism for newly employed staff of their institutions. This will help in enhancing their readiness, confidence and commitment to work to reduce fear among newly appointed staff.*

**Keyword:** Staff development programmes, management of tertiary institutions, induction, mentoring

## Introduction

Nigeria like other countries of the world recognizes education as the major instrument for effecting national development. It is regarded as a catalyst and a means of achieving growth and development. This is because the socio-economic, political and technological advancement of any nation depends greatly on its educational system. It is recognized as an instrument par excellence for achieving growth, progress and national development, (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013). This therefore, underscores the value being placed on the quality and standards which encompasses quality learning, resources inputs, instructional process, effective management, monitoring and evaluation as well as manpower capacity development in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

The educational enterprise involves development of human intellect, technical skills, character and effective citizenship. Consequently, the issue of proper management of education has become a matter of concern for the government, educational institutions and other stakeholders in order to meet expectations of the society (Ayeni, 2010). The quest for improvement in education service delivery necessitated the need for staff development in the education sector. This is to ensure substantial achievement of recognized and measurable learning outcomes of students in schools, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills (UNESCO, 2002).

The importance of staff in any organization particularly tertiary institutions cannot be overemphasized. This is why Ede (2000:120) posits that, "the staff are the life wire of the institutions." This means that there can be no establishment without staff. The efforts, skills and attitudes of the people need to be sharpened from time to time to optimize their efficiency and effectiveness to enable them face greater challenges. However, as important as the staff is to every organization, merely recruiting and selecting high-potential workforce does not guarantee that they will perform their duties effectively. Staff who does not know what to do or how to do it cannot perform effectively even if they want to (Amadi, 2013). Therefore, it is the responsibility of the school managers to ensure that the staff knows what to do and how to do it. This may only be possible through staff development programmes.

Generally, staff development programmes are the various means by which all the categories of staff working in an organization be it education or not, are encouraged to improve their capabilities and be more effective in their areas of assignment. According to Obioma (2006), staff development is an organizational effort aimed at helping an employee to acquire basic skills required for the efficient execution of the activities or functions for which he/she is hired. Nwachukwu (2009) adds that staff development deals with the activities undertaken to expose an employee to perform additional duties and assume positions of importance in the organizational hierarchy. It is a process designed to improve job understanding, promote more effective job performance and establish future goals for career growth.

Staff development is a process that attempts to provide employees with information, skills and understanding of the organization and its goals (Ivancevich, 2010). It also aids an employee to continue to make the necessary positive contribution to the success of employees' organization in terms of his/her good performance on the job. Lawal (2004) also observes that staff development programmes are important aspects of development process that deal with the art of acquiring skills in areas that are relevant to their profession. The

objectives of staff development programmes are to ensure the promotion of professional growth, improve pedagogical skills, keep teachers abreast of new knowledge, meet particular needs such as curriculum development and orientation, leadership responsibility, new teachers to adjust to teaching field, promote mutual respect among staff and recognizes the need for modern teaching methods (Madumere-Obike, 2007).

Stating the need for employee development, Gani (2013) notes that the functions of academic and non-academic staff in tertiary institutions are not only multiple, but also continuously changing in modern societies. This suggests the need for this category of staff to continuously undertake relevant development programmes. The competencies of management staff are usually observed in their interactions with other staff, their leadership roles their assessment of other staff, in dealing with disciplinary issues as well as in other college activities. The academic staff of the institutions undertakes the function of teaching and assessing the students among others. Gani, further stresses that these categories of staff can be developed through orientation, induction, in-service training, conferences, seminars, workshops and further educational studies particularly in educational management and public administration. These development programmes are expected to improve upon the leadership skills and human relation abilities of management staff as well as update the teaching staff with the modern teaching methods, skills and strategies which may enhance effective and efficient management of tertiary institutions.

Management of tertiary institutions refers to the means by which higher educational institutions are operated, organized and managed (Ogbogu, 2013). On the other hand, Bleiklie (2007) asserts that the management of tertiary institutions deals with how higher educational institutions steer themselves, as well as the process used to manage them in such a way as to lead to effective performance in achieving designed outcomes, goals and satisfaction of stakeholders. The above definitions imply that management of tertiary institutions entails all the processes used to ensuring the attainment of tertiary institutional objective in the most effective and efficient manner making use of resources prudently and in the most cost-effective manner. Therefore, management of tertiary institutions in this context means the process of coordinating all the resources of tertiary institutions through planning, organization, controlling, maintaining school facilities and discipline to ensure school attendance and effective teaching and learning in order to attain school objectives.

As speculated by relevant educational stakeholders in the study area there are various approaches to staff development such as: induction, mentoring, in-service training, and workshop which seem to have influence on the management of tertiary institutions in the study area. This is because, these approaches or programmes seem to only to motivate the staff but also enhance their commitment as well as effective and efficient performance in the institutions.

Induction is one of the staff development programme approaches which seem to have influence on the management of tertiary institutions as speculated by educational stakeholders in the study area. According to Mathias (2004) induction is a planned introduction of new employees to their jobs, their co-workers and culture of the organization. Mabaso (2012) found that there is a significant relationship between effective induction programme and staff productivity. It was also revealed that there is a significant relationship between an effective induction programme and staff turnover rate. Furthermore, there is a significant relationship between an effective induction programme and lecturing strategies. This finding also correspond with Robertson (2010) who notes that

staff induction activities are designed to provide new-starters with the information they need, as well as getting them up to speed on how the organization works. Robertson further states that induction processes are vital to ensuring that new staff are productive as quickly as possible, and should play a key role in knowledge management initiatives. Despite this, most institutions have inadequate or ad-hoc staff induction processes, with many relying solely on staff just 'working it out as they go. According to Salau, Falola and Akindode (2014), induction ensures a new employee is provided with information and assistance when commencing employment with an organization. Clearly outlining what the organization stands for and requires, reducing the risk of regulatory breaches and enabling employees to respond effectively to new responsibilities. The authors further stresses that induction is the process of receiving employees when they begin work, introducing them to the institution and their colleagues, and informing them of the activities, customs and traditions of the institution.

Mentoring as observed by the researcher is another staff development programme which seems to have influence on the management of tertiary institutions in the study area. Mentoring is a strategy in which highly experienced teachers in a school are assigned a number of less-experienced ones to serve as their mentors or professional guides. In their study, Aladejana, Aladejana and Ehindero (2006) found that mentoring among university academics operates mostly in an informal and unstructured manner. The mentoring relationships that take place among university lecturers are usually informal and unstructured. Mentees identified some advantages in the relationship, such as: serving as confidant; assistance in writing research papers; promotion; making social connections, opportunities for funding and/or external jobs and protection from victimization. However, some disadvantages of such relationship were identified and include overprotection by the mentor, dividing the faculty into political camps, maintaining the status quo and inheriting the mentor's enemies. Multiple and same same-gender mentoring were found to be more common and more successful than single and cross-gender mentoring.

In the opinions of Okon and Anderson (2002), staff development programmes such as: seminars, workshops, in-service training and induction among others help to foster continued professional growth of staff in institutions of learning. These help staff to keep abreast with new developments in their field. Staff development programme is informed by the fact that if staff are to perform well in their responsibilities in their institutions, they must have opportunities for continuing staff development programmes, advancement and improvement in their chosen career. This lack of staff development programmes may cause set-back in efficient and effective management of tertiary institutions. Such developments may have been the case with many tertiary institutions in Nigeria in which the area of study seems not to be an exception. It is against this background that the researcher deemed it necessary to investigate the influence of staff development programmes on the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State with particular focus on induction, mentoring, in-service training and workshops?

### **Statement of the Problem**

Concern has been expressed by educational authorities and stakeholder such as: school managers, staff, students, parents, planners and policy makers over the level of irregularities noticed among staff of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria in the performance of their duties such as: poor lesson preparation, poor discipline of students,

irregular taking of students' attendance, attending to class and teaching, taking students in co-curricular activities, assessment and marking of students' scripts, giving of feedback to students, and ineffective management of classrooms. Others include: staff inability to plan and deliver lectures and use of appropriate teaching methods for students' understanding as well as students' administration and discipline. All these have created worry among stakeholders particularly as it pertains to effective and efficient management of tertiary institutions in the study area.

In respect to the above observed irregularities, one may ask if school administrators are the ones not performing their duties well to enhance effective and efficient management of their tertiary institutions. Or could it be as a result of factors such as non-involvement of staff of tertiary institutions in staff developmental programmes such as induction and mentoring? It seems that not much has been done by the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria to utilize these programmes to enhance employees' job performance for quality education. The problem of the study therefore is: To what extent do staff development programmes influence the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of staff development programmes on the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. find out the influence of induction on the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria.
2. ascertain the influence of mentoring on the management of tertiary institutions.

### **Research Questions**

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. To what extent does induction influences the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria?
2. To what extent does mentoring influences the management of tertiary institutions?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 level of significance.

- Ho<sub>1</sub>. Induction has no significant influence on the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>. Mentoring has no significant influence on the management of tertiary institutions.

### **Research Method**

The study adopted descriptive survey design. The design according to Orodho (2005) gathers data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of the existing conditions, identifying the standards against which existing conditions can be compared and determining the relationship that exists between specific events. Survey design is also chosen as appropriate for this because it aims at studying phenomena from either a group of people or items by collecting and analysing data from the people considered being a representative sample of the entire population in the study area. The study was carried out in Benue State. The population of the study comprised 6,805 academic staff from

12 tertiary institutions of learning in Benue State. A sample of 681 academic staff was used for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used for selection of the sample. A 10-item structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled “Influence of Staff Development Programmes Questionnaire (ITLSQ)” was used for data collection. The questionnaire was validated by three experts, two in Educational Management and one in Measurement and Evaluation all from the Faculty of Education, Benue State University, Makurdi. A reliability study was conducted on 20 teachers in secondary schools in Benue State that were not part of the sample for the study and a reliability coefficient of 0.89 was obtained which affirmed that the instrument is reliable and can be used for field study hence Emaikwu (2015) asserts that the reliability of 0.60 and above is considered adequate to use an instrument for field study.

The data collected was analysed using simple descriptive statistics of mean scores and standard deviation to answer the two research questions. A mean cut-off point of 2.50 was used for decision making. The hypotheses were tested using chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test of goodness of fit at .05 level of significance. The decision was that, if the calculated ( $\chi^2$ ) value was greater than the p-value, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted and vice versa.

## Results and Findings

This section presented and discussed the results of the study.

### Research Question 1:

To what extent does induction influence the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria?

The data that provided answer to the research question are presented on Table 1.

**Table 1:**  
*Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Academic Staff on the Influence of Induction on the Management of Tertiary Institutions in Benue State of Nigeria*

Item No	Item Description	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Induction is designed to help staff settle into the new surroundings of the institutions as quickly as possible.	230	381	20	41	3.19	0.76	HE
2.	Effectively inducted employees have more realistic job expectations, which prevent conflict between their colleagues and superiors.	291	312	57	12	3.31	0.70	HE
3.	There is clear definition of line of responsibility and line of authority for new staff in the institution.	328	311	14	19	3.41	0.67	HE
4.	Staff induction activities are designed for the purpose of getting	343	301	11	17	3.44	0.66	HE

	staff up to speed on how the institution works to achieve her objectives.								
5.	Induction processes are vital to ensuring that new staff of the institution are productive as quickly as possible.	319	299	33	21	3.36	0.72	HE	
<b>Cluster Mean</b>						<b>3.34</b>		<b>HE</b>	

**Source: Field Study 2018**

Table 1 shows that items 1-5 had mean scores of 3.19, 3.31, 1.46, 3.41 and 3.36 with corresponding standard deviations of 0.76, 0.70, 0.67, 0.66 and 0.72 respectively. Based on the criteria for decision making, it means that all the items were rated above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that respondents agreed that to a high extent, induction is designed to help staff settle into the new surroundings of the institutions as quickly as possible. They agreed that to a high extent, effectively inducted employees have more realistic job expectations, which prevent conflict between their colleagues and superiors. They agreed with the statement that to a high extent, there is clear definition of line of responsibility and line of authority for new staff in the institution. Staff induction activities are designed for the purpose of getting staff up to speed on how the institution works to achieve her objectives. Moreover, they agreed that to a high extent, induction processes are vital to ensuring that new staff of the institution are productive as quickly as possible. The cluster mean of 3.34 was also above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that to a high extent, induction influence the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria.

**Research Question 2:**

To what extent does mentoring influences the management of tertiary institutions?  
 The data that provided answer to the research question are presented on Table 2.

**Table 2:**  
**Mean Ratings and Standard Deviation of Academic Staff on the Influence of Mentoring on the Management of Tertiary Institutions**

Item No	Item Description	VHE	HE	LE	VLE	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
6.	Mentoring enhances staff professional growth which result to better performance in the institution.	343	289	17	23	3.42	0.71	HE
7.	Mentoring helps younger and less experience staff to improve on their performance in the institution.	327	314	21	10	3.43	0.63	HE
8.	Mentoring offers support for staff to assist them in adapting to life in institution.	336	317	11	8	3.46	0.59	HE
9.	Mentoring creates an opportunity for new staff in understanding the expectations their institution.	407	239	18	8	3.56	0.61	VHE
10.	Mentoring helps in the resolution of challenges of the institution.	353	301	6	12	3.48	0.61	HE

**Cluster Mean**

**3.47**

**HE**

**Source: Field Study 2018**

Table 2 shows that items 6-10 had mean scores of 3.42, 3.43, 3.46, 3.56 and 3.48 with corresponding standard deviations of 0.71, 0.63, 0.56, 0.61 and 0.61 respectively. Based on the criteria for decision making, it means that all the items were rated above the cut-off point of 2.50. This means that respondents agreed that to a high extent, mentoring enhance staff professional growth which results to better performance in the institution. They agreed that to a high extent, mentoring help younger and less experience staff to improve on their performance in the institution. They also agreed with the statement that to a high extent, mentoring offers support for staff to assist them in adapting to life in institution. They agreed that to a very high extent, mentoring create an opportunity for new staff in understanding the expectations their institution. Furthermore, they agreed that to a high extent, mentoring helps in the resolution of challenges of the institution. The cluster mean of 3.47 was also above the cut-off point of 2.50. This implies that to a high extent, mentoring influences the management of tertiary institutions

**Hypotheses Testing**

**Hypothesis 1:**

Induction has no significant influence on the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria.

**Table 3:**

**Chi-square test of the Influence of Induction on the Management of Tertiary Institutions in Benue State of Nigeria**

Opinions	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Level of Sig.	df	$\chi^2$ -cal	P-value	Decision
SD	19	168.0	-149.0	0.05	3	475.3	0.00	Sig.
D	35	168.0	-133.0			1		
A	299	168.0	131.0					
SA	319	168.0	151.0					

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 168.0.

Table 3 reveals that  $\chi^2$ -cal=475.31 at df=3 and p = 0.00. Since p-value of 0.00 < 0.05 at 3 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis which states that induction has no significant influence on the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria is therefore, rejected. This implies that induction has significant influence on the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria.



**Hypothesis 2:**

Mentoring has no significant influence on the management of tertiary institutions.

**Table 4:**

***Chi-square test of the Influence of Mentoring on the Management of Tertiary Institutions***

Opinions	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	Level of Sig.	df	$\chi^2$ -cal	P-value	Decision
SD	10	168.0	-158.0	0.05	3	576.89	0.00	Sig.
D	16	168.0	-152.0					
A	303	168.0	135.0					
SA	343	168.0	175.0					

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 168.0.

Table 4 reveals that  $\chi^2$ -cal = 576.89 at df = 3 and p = 0.00. Since p-value of 0.00 < 0.05 at 3 degree of freedom, the null hypothesis which states that mentoring has no significant influence on the management of tertiary institutions is therefore, rejected. This means that mentoring has significant influence on the management of tertiary institutions.

**Discussion of Findings**

The first finding of this study revealed that induction has significant influence on the management of tertiary institutions in Benue State of Nigeria. This finding is in line with Mabaso (2012) who found that there is a significant relationship between effective induction programme and staff productivity. It was also revealed that there is a significant relationship between an effective induction programme and staff turnover rate. Furthermore, there is a significant relationship between an effective induction programme and lecturing strategies. This finding also corroborates with Robertson (2010) who notes that staff induction activities are designed to provide new-starters with the information they need, as well as getting them up to speed on how the organization works. Robertson further states that induction processes are vital to ensuring that new staff are productive as quickly as possible, and should play a key role in knowledge management initiatives. Despite this, most institutions have inadequate or ad-hoc staff induction processes, with many relying solely on staff just ‘working it out as they go’. The researchers also observe that induction is very important in ensuring effective and efficient management of tertiary institutions in that, it does not only orients new staff on their on the job in terms of making them to know their job description and specification but also make the feel part and parcel of the institution. This tends to motivate them towards putting in their best in their job.

The second finding of the study indicated that mentoring has significant influence on the management of tertiary institutions. This finding confirms with Aladejana, Aladejana and Ehindero (2006) who found that mentoring among university academics operates mostly in an informal and unstructured manner. The mentoring relationships that take place among university lecturers are usually informal and unstructured. Mentees identified some advantages in the relationship, such as: serving as confidant; assistance in writing research papers; promotion; making social connections, opportunities for funding and/or external jobs and protection from victimization. However, some disadvantages of such relationship were identified and include overprotection by the mentor, dividing the faculty into political

campus, maintaining the status quo and inheriting the mentor's enemies. Multiple and same-gender mentoring were found to be more common and more successful than single and cross-gender mentoring. Furthermore, the finding agrees with Sokan, Ekpunobi, King and Aleshin (2012) who posit that teacher mentoring is school based initiative which provides focused instruction for un-certificated, new, and old teachers. Beginning teachers need initial preparations in their subject matter, fluency in the language of instruction, knowledge on how to use instructional materials, and some basic classroom management and reflection skills. Most of these skills are best learned through on-the-job practice with coaching, and close supervision while on the job. The researcher observed that mentoring gives staff of the university more confidence on the job, increase their perfection and make them more productive in performing their responsibilities. This is because, they are been guided by the right thing to do at the right time by their mentee.

### Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that teaching practice has significant impact on students' lesson planning and lesson notes in secondary schools in Benue State, Nigeria.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended as follows;

1. Appropriate tertiary institutions authorities should make it their top priority in addressing the issue of induction programme as an important support mechanism for newly employed staff of their institutions. This will help in enhancing their readiness, confidence and commitment to work that will reduce fear among newly appointed staff.
2. School administrators should ensure that mentoring is used as a framework for training of staff. There is also every need to provide adequate guidance and counselling in relation to mentoring provision in all tertiary institutions so as to enhance staff mastery of their work so that achievement of institutional goals will be made easier.

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