

Workplace Barriers and Teaching Staff Productivity in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria

¹Ogude E. E., ²Egwunyenga E. J. and ³Asiyai R. I.

¹Department of Primary Education,

Delta State College of Education, Mosogar.

^{2 & 3}Department of Educational Management and Foundations,

Delta State University, Abraka.

Abstract

This paper investigated workplace barriers and teaching staff productivity in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria. It was guided by two research questions and one hypothesis. This study adopted the ex-post-facto research design. The population of the study consist of six hundred and fifty-three (653) teaching staff Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria. From the above figure, three hundred and twenty-seven (327) respondents were sampled from and represented 50% of the whole population. Two separate questionnaires were developed by the researchers for data collection and titled “Workplace Barriers Questionnaire” (WBQ) and “Teaching Staff Productivity Questionnaire” (TSPQ) respectively. The questionnaires were subjected to expert judgement, thus, establishing its face and content value. However, the reliability indices of the questionnaires were further established and it yielded .79 and .83 respectively. Data obtained were analysed using mean rating and Pearson r. at significance level of .05. Findings showed that workplace barriers were significantly related to teaching staff productivity, also teaching staff productivity is high in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria. Accordingly, the researchers recommended amongst others that management of Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria, should employ mechanism that could help decrease workplace barriers but would improve teaching staff productivity.

Keywords: Workplace Barriers, Teaching Staff, Productivity, Colleges of Education.

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I. Introduction

Colleges of Education are institutions which offer teacher training programme at the tertiary level of education. The need to professionalize teaching to meet with the dynamics of national development, among other needs, led to the establishment of Colleges of Education. At present, the federal and state government have established many institutions which issue the Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE). The main aim of establishing Colleges of Education is to produce potential teachers with appropriate leadership qualities, teachers with the knowledge, skills and attitudes which will enable them to contribute to the growth and development of their communities in particular and their nation in general. Also, to produce teachers who have sound mastery of their subject areas and the ability to impart such knowledge to their students among others (FRN, 2013). Colleges of education are directed by academic and non-teaching staff to meet up with the goals of teacher education as stated by the Federal Republic of Nigeria and among others, to produce highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for the basic levels of the country's educational system.

Generally, it is believed that teaching staff are the ones who play fundamental and vigorous role in the educational system particularly in tertiary institutions, Colleges of Education inclusive. Each member of the teaching staff is expected to enhance the learning environment through instruction, applied research, scholarly activities, and service that support the institutional mission. It is a basic principle that every member of the teaching staff at all times be held responsible for competent and effective productivity of his or her duties or multitasking expectations and foster mutual relationships with management, peers, students, and the college community at large.

Also, primary duties of teaching staff in Colleges of Education include effective classroom teaching, academic course advising and counselling of students, participation in departmental committee work and meetings, continuous development of the curriculum through students assessment, applied research or scholarly activity, service such as assist admitted students and initiatives designed to help students succeed academically and providing input on matters relating to curriculum development and the learning environment as well as other assigned duties. Although, services to college committees, either through election or appointment with

consent, should not interfere with duties related to regularly-scheduled classes and other work assignments related to primary work responsibilities. It simply means that teaching staff productivity will involve all the activities carried out by teaching staff to achieve the desired effect on students and college community. It involves the extent to which the teaching staff participates in the overall running of the institution in order to achieve the expected mission and vision stated by the institution. In other words, productivity is the accomplishment of institutional mission.

In striving to achieve primary duties of teaching staff in Colleges of Education some factors such as workplace barriers may influence it. Workplace barriers are those variables such as poor policy implementation, delegation of responsibility, multitasking, inadequate facilities, poor communication, collaboration and poor office environment which may directly or indirectly lead to decline in teaching staff productivity in Colleges of Education. It is essential to state that teaching staff spend nearly two-thirds of their working hours at workplace and an estimated 60% of the world's population is accessible directly or indirectly through the workplace (Batt, 2009). Most teaching staff desire to be at workplace daily but when they perceive fear of barriers which they encounter in the workplace they wish that a new day never comes. Teaching staff in Colleges of Education have complained of poor policy implementation, improper delegation of responsibility or favouritism on delegation of responsibility, multitasking, poor facilities and poor office environment. The aforementioned seems to hinder teaching staff in Colleges of Education to be productive.

Academic productivity is the rate at which lecturers achieve individual given objectives about the institution goal achievement. The level of lecturer's productivity differs from one lecturer to another. These differences may not be connected to the motivating factors use in higher institutions ranging from welfare scheme, health scheme and promotion or performance appraisal (Abdulkareem, 2015). Also, lecturers undergo higher education qualification programmes and publish in accredited journals, textbooks, articles, documents and service to the community as these provide the basis for promotion to higher level in the service. Thus when a lecturer's skills are developed through various programmes, like seminars, workshops, mentoring, further education, induction courses and establishment of adequate reference libraries, their productivity is enhanced, as well as that of the institutions.

Multiple development issues confront higher education, spanning from policy formulation through implementation, monitoring and evaluation of results in connection to resources invested and service delivery. Despite the fact that the development of additional institutions has expanded parents' and children's access to higher education, it is also true that weak students have enrolled in institutions and other institutions, and their performance is subpar. Professors and lecturers are overworked and have limited time to prepare courses, supervise students, attend international conferences when finances are available, and do research. In universities where government-sponsored and privately-sponsored programmes coexist, the teaching staff is overburdened by the habit of teaching longer hours to gain more cash (Mushemeza, 2016).

In several African nations, however, political instability caused by power disputes has diminished the space of educational institutions. In fact, tertiary institutions in Angola, Nigeria, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have failed or are on the verge of collapse (Teferra and Altbach 2004). In general, globalisation has posed new problems to tertiary institutions and the provision of higher education. A variety of problems or obstacles facing higher education institutions amid technological transformation, diminished capability, continuous economic crises, and conventional structural adjustment. How to reconcile autonomy and viability, growth and excellence, fairness and efficiency, access and quality, authority and accountability, representation and responsibility, diversity and difference, internationalisation and indigenization, global presence/visibility and local anchoring, academic freedom and professional ethics, privatisation and the public purpose, teaching and research, community service.

All of these statements are true and pertain to the most quickly increasing higher education sector in low- and middle-income nations. Therefore, ensuring improved service delivery seems to be problematic. Academic production (excellent teaching, research, publishing, and dissemination), doctorate training, and professional competence comprise service delivery in this instance. This is due to the fact that the creation of a well-functioning institution, the growth and stability of the academic profession, and the advancement of Africa in the twenty-first century are directly related to the quality of the teaching staff.

Governments of African countries have built legal tools and regulatory agencies to preserve the quality of higher education. However, implementation of the necessary standards remains a mess. The Institutions Act of 1985 created the Commission for Higher Education in Kenya (CHE). The CHE focuses a significant emphasis on the academic focus, with quality assurance mechanisms designed to promote academic standards in programme delivery. Both private and public universities are supposed to satisfy the criteria specified for institutions of higher education with regards to entrance requirements, course duration, qualification levels of enrollment of students, quality problems, minimum academic qualifications for staff, infrastructural facilities, and ethical norms by which teaching staff should be regulated. Alemu et al. (2010) mention Thaver (2004).

According to Section 119 of the University and Other Tertiary Institutions Act of 2001 in Uganda, "no University or Tertiary institution may engage a lecturer or other person hired for the purpose of teaching or

delivering instructions to students whose credentials do not comply to the criteria stipulated by the NCHE by regulations." Statutory Instrument No. 50 of 2010 outlines the requirements. All institutions including postsecondary institutions are expected to establish public employment, promotion, and termination policies. Compliance with this legal document permits institutions to create quality assurance procedures and sustain quality control (Mushemeza, 2016).

Higher education in Ethiopia is governed by Proclamation No. 351/2003 - "the Higher Education Proclamation." Public and private institutions are controlled by the same laws. Similarly, in Sudan, the Higher Education Reform Act of 1990 established the National Council of Higher Education and Research (amended in 1993 and 1995). It is empowered with extensive authority to formulate policies and create programmes that are in keeping with the government's broader policy objectives (Abdalla and Elhadary 2010).

In several African nations, governments have adopted laws requiring institutions to respect academic freedom (the right of every person, faculty member, and student to pursue knowledge freely). Teaching staff who enjoy this freedom are expected to teach, learn, speak, and write without interference; establish and implement research agendas; and hold and express scholarly-relevant opinions without interference from university administration, the government, civil society, funders, or parents. These principles are common across the African continent (Kampala Declaration, 2010). In certain nations, such as Sudan, the legislation is restrictive of academic freedom. The Higher Education Act provides that the President is the Chancellor of all higher education institutions, having the authority to appoint and remove vice-chancellors and their deputies, as well as the chairs of university councils and the majority of council members. African nations should encourage academic freedom as a matter of principle and practise if higher education institutions are to make the anticipated contribution to state formation (Mushemeza, 2016).

There is a disagreement on whether the state or government should shoulder the majority of higher education funding in Africa. There is also the possibility of promoting public-private partnerships in funding higher education. While advocating public-private partnerships, Mamdani (2007) cautions of "the danger/tendency to transform the academic curriculum in response to market pressures, naively and uniformly failing to differentiate between privatisation and commercialization." The author contended, and rightfully so, that "commercialization of higher education inhibits attempts to construct a research university, the only institution capable of providing the institutional foundation for sustaining intellectual activity." Since the 1990s, a succession of strikes have centred on the topic of financing and, in particular, the well-being of personnel at different institutions. Low morale and low self-esteem, resignation to join higher paying institutions after being sponsored for advanced degrees, low productivity and poor outputs notably in research and innovations, restricted time allocation to research and publishing leading in staff stagnation in postings, and inability to pay home utility, food, school tuition, and health care costs are only a few of the adverse repercussions of inadequate recompense in the form of salary (Mushemeza, 2016).

It has been noted (Tettey, 2006) that as the decade before retirement approaches, some academic personnel become quite worried about the financial uncertainties that often follow retirement. Even if they do not get a substantial pension, many choose to leave academics in a timely manner and choose higher-paying employment that are more likely to allow them to save sufficient funds for a more pleasant retirement. Other financial constraints include institutions' rising operating expenses, which need judicious use of secured resources and cost management. Institutions are required to mobilise resources from both internal and external sources. Similarly, smart use of resources requires appropriate preparation, honest, constructive attitudes and behaviour, and daring budget management (use of a well-designed budget framework).

Given these realities of the 21st century, many stakeholders in institutions must be cognizant of the imbalances/gaps between what is required and what is accessible, what is required and what is achievable given resource restrictions, and what is ideal and what is actual. Institutions in Africa, especially new and private ones, have significant infrastructure needs/demands (both physical and technological). The yearly expansion in student population necessitates the addition of lecture halls, ICT labs, bigger libraries, teaching staff offices, and recreational facilities. The governance/management issue is another another obstacle faced by global organisations. Institutions have distinct governing bodies, including university councils, council boards, and senior management. Such governance structures are crucial for participation and democratic government in general. According to Hsuan Feng (2007), institutions must be administered attentively, responsibly, and professionally in a suitable environment in order to maintain and transmit fundamental values to future generations.

Generally, higher education is facing multiple of development challenges ranging from policy design to implementation, monitoring and assessment of the outcomes in relation to resources invested and service delivery. Lecturers and Professors are overloaded with little time space to prepare for lectures, mentor students, attend an international conference when funds are allowed and conduct research. In institutions where government sponsored programmes run parallel to those privately sponsored ones, the teaching staff is overwhelmed by the practice of teaching more hours to earn an extra income (Mushemeza, 2016). The pressures placed on teaching staff can be functional for the organization and dysfunctional for the employee and hence,

expose employees to barriers. Academic work is divided into teaching, research, and leadership with a high administrative workload (Barkhuizen & Rothman, 2016). Higher education institutions have been plagued by radical changes, namely, mergers of institutions downsizing and restructuring, an increase competition and a decrease in staff morale (Kovner & Neuhauser, 2014). Higher education institutions are dependent on the intellectual capital and the productivity of their employees (Oshagbemi, 2010). The career of academics globally is under great pressure, as their image and status of their careers are declining, and are marred by increase work stress, job dissatisfaction, and a decline in productivity to the organization (Anderson, Richard & Saha, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

Teaching staff in Colleges of Education seems to be under pressure to achieve their educational mission and vision which include but not limited to inculcating knowledge in students and improve their academic achievement. While teaching staff in Colleges of Education are striving to achieve the above aims, there is an outcry in the society about graduates of Colleges of Education that they cannot impart knowledge when they find themselves in teaching profession. The given reason being that students are not properly prepared for future endeavour in the teaching profession. Some teaching staff have expressed their grievances with reference to workplace barriers which could impact on their job productivity. In light of the above, it is the aim of this study to investigate how workplace barriers could influence teaching staff productivity in Delta State Colleges of Education.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to give the study a direction.

1. What are the identifiable workplace barriers in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria?
2. What is the level of teaching staff productivity in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypothesis was formulated from the research questions raised

1. There is no significant relationship between workplace barriers and teaching staff productivity in Delta State Colleges of Education.

II. Methods

This study adopted the ex-post-facto research design. The population of the study consist of six hundred and fifty-three (653) teaching staff in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria. From the above figure, three hundred and twenty-seven (327) respondents were sampled from and represented 50% of the whole population. Two separate questionnaires were developed by the researchers for data collection and titled “ Workplace Barriers Questionnaire” (WBQ) and “ Teaching Staff Productivity Questionnaire” (TSPQ) respectively. The questionnaire contained information relevant to the aim of the study and respondents were requested to rate in four point scale of Very High (VH=4), High (H=3), Low (L=2), and Very Low (VL=1) for Teaching Staff Productivity Questionnaire and strongly agree (SA=4), agree (A=3), disagree (D=2), and strongly disagree (SD=1) for Workplace Barriers Questionnaire. The questionnaires were subjected to expert judgement, thus, establishing its face and content value. However, the reliability indices of the questionnaires were further established and it yielded .79 and .83 respectively. Data obtained were analysed using mean rating and Pearson r. at significance level of .05.

III. Results

Research Question 1: What are the identifiable workplace barriers in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation analysis on identifiable workplace barriers

S/N	Workplace barriers experience by teaching staff	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	A failure in communication	2.74	.83	Agree
2.	Poor execution of the policy	2.71	.61	Agree
3.	Too much work to do	2.87	.81	Agree
4.	Insufficient facilities	2.97	.81	Agree
5.	Poor working environment	2.76	.93	Agree
6.	Unreliable supply of power	2.57	.81	Agree
7.	Inadequate staff remuneration	2.84	.58	Agree
8.	Facilities for information and communication technology that are not up to par	2.68	.46	Agree

9.	Conditions for promotions	2.58	.58	Agree
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Data in Table 1 shows mean and standard deviation analysis on identifiable workplace barriers. The data revealed that respondents agree on items with mean scores above 2.50 benchmark. Thus, identifiable workplace barriers in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria are a failure in communication, poor execution of the policy, too much work to do, insufficient facilities, poor working environment, unreliable supply of power, inadequate staff remuneration, facilities for information and communication technology that are not up to par and conditions for promotions.

Research Question 2: What is the level of teaching staff productivity in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation analysis on level of teaching staff productivity

S/N	Teaching staff productivity	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Student academic counselling	3.06	.43	High
2.	Oversee a student project.	3.38	.59	High
3.	Participate in department meetings and team tasks.	2.95	.69	High
4.	Attend meetings of the school board.	3.44	.56	High
5.	Create successful internship programmes.	3.50	.53	High
6.	Create projects that emphasise community objectives and build connections that encourage community engagement.	2.64	.65	High
7.	Give advice-seeking services	3.45	.57	High
8.	fulfil the obligations outlined by the institution's authorities	3.44	.57	High
9.	Carry out the tasks that the department head has given.	3.31	.61	High
10.	monitoring students' teaching practice	3.36	.59	High
11.	monitoring students' work experience	3.00	.67	High
12.	Create programmes that give community needs first priority.	2.88	.78	

Data in Table 2 shows mean and standard deviation analysis on level of teaching staff productivity. The data revealed that respondents rated high on all the items with mean scores above 2.50 benchmark. It could be summarised by saying that teaching staff productivity was high on student academic counselling, oversee a student project, participate in department meetings and team tasks, attend meetings of the school board, create successful internship programmes, create projects that emphasise community objectives and build connections that encourage community engagement, give advice-seeking services, fulfil the obligations outlined by the institution's authorities, carry out the tasks that the department head has given, monitoring students' teaching practice, monitoring students' work experience, create programmes that give community needs first priority in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between workplace barriers and teaching staff productivity in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria.

Table 3: Pearson r on relationship between workplace barriers and teaching staff productivity

		Workplace barriers	Teaching staff productivity
Workplace barriers	Pearson Correlation	1	.731*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.482
	N	327	327
Teaching staff productivity	Pearson Correlation	.731*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.482	
	N	327	327

According to Table 3 above, the relationship between workplace barriers and teaching staff productivity was positive with $r=.731$ and significance $P=.482$. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between workplace barriers and teaching staff productivity in Delta State

Colleges of Education, Nigeria. was rejected. Thus, a significant relationship between workplace barriers and teaching staff productivity in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria.

IV. Discussion of Results

Finding revealed that identifiable workplace barriers in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria are a failure in communication, poor execution of the policy, too much work to do, insufficient facilities, poor working environment, unreliable supply of power, inadequate staff remuneration, facilities for information and communication technology that are not up to par and conditions for promotions. This finding is also in line with Mushemeza, (2016) who revealed that inadequate remuneration in form of salaries has resulted into several unfortunate consequences particularly; low morale and self-esteem, resignation to join better paying institutions after being sponsored for advanced degrees, low productivity and poor outputs especially in research and innovations, limited time allocation to research and publication resulting into stagnation of staff in posts and inability to pay household utility, food, school fees and health care bills regularly. This result is consistent with Edet and Ekpoh (2017) whose findings revealed that the major barriers faced by staff meeting of deadlines, delayed examination result, excess workload. This result is consistent with Quirk, Crank, Carter, Leahy and Copeland (2018) study revealed that financial limitations, a busy and stressful atmosphere, and an unwillingness to invest in worker health and well-being are all obstacles to service implementation. Access to health and well-being programmes may be challenging, and a lack of time is one of the identified barriers to worker involvement.

Finding also shows that teaching staff productivity was high since they engage themselves with student academic counselling, oversee a student project, participate in department meetings and team tasks, attend meetings of the school board, create successful internship programmes, create projects that emphasise community objectives and build connections that encourage community engagement, give advice-seeking services, fulfil the obligations outlined by the institution's authorities, carry out the tasks that the department head has given, monitoring students' teaching practice, monitoring students' work experience, create programmes that give community needs first priority. This finding agrees with Nkedishu (2020) who discovered teachers productivity was high particularly when task assigned to workers were delivered, teaching students, preparing lesson note, making students scripts, preparing students results, ensure that discipline is maintained within the school and regular to school. This finding agrees with Nwamadi and Ogbonna (2021) who examined the academic staff productivity in selected universities in South West, Nigeria the study indicated a high level of academic staff productivity. This finding agrees with Oladejo (2022) who established that the level of academic staff performance was high.

Finding further revealed that there is a significant relationship between workplace barriers and teaching staff productivity in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria. This finding concurs with Oseremen & Osemeke, (2015) who discovered rivalries, jealousies, personality clatters, role definitions; and brawls for power and goodwill as forms of leadership conflict. This finding also concurs with Osman (2021) who revealed that communication ranked as the highest leadership conflict factor fellows by rewards, resources, and management practices. The result further revealed that there was a significant relationship between employee performance and leadership conflict (scarce resources, management practices, & rewards) and also confirmed that staff performance would increase in third-party strategies within the organization.

V. Conclusion

In conclusion, workplace barriers significantly influence teaching staff productivity in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria. Teaching staff productivity is high but could be influenced by other variables.

VI. Recommendations

This paper recommended the followings:

1. Management of Colleges of Education in Delta State, Nigeria should make working environment conducive for their staff.
2. Teaching staff should assist management of Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria to suggest effective mechanism to decrease workplace barriers in their institutions.
3. Teaching staff in Delta State Colleges of Education, Nigeria should uphold their job productivity such that it will not decrease etc.

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