

MANPOWER PLANNING AND STRATEGIC GOALS ACHIEVEMENT OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTHWEST, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated the relationship between manpower planning and strategic goals achievement in public universities in Southwest Nigeria. Specifically, it examined the level of strategic goals achievement, the extent of manpower planning, and how manpower planning predicts strategic goal attainment. A descriptive survey design was employed, involving 600 academic and non-academic staff selected through a multistage sampling procedure across six universities (three federal and three state) in three randomly chosen states. Data were gathered using two validated and reliable instruments: the Questionnaire on Manpower Planning (QMP) and the Questionnaire on Strategic Goal Achievements of Public Universities (QSGAPU). Descriptive and inferential statistics, including Pearson correlation and multiple regression, were used for analysis at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that public universities achieved their strategic goals to a high extent (average mean = 2.81), with strengths in areas such as graduate employability, ICT infrastructure, and community service. The extent of manpower planning was also rated high (average mean = 2.87), though staff welfare was identified as a weakness. A significant positive relationship was found between manpower planning and strategic goal achievement ($r = 0.864$, $p < 0.05$), with manpower planning variables jointly accounting for 93.9% of the variance in strategic goals achievement. Staff welfare packages emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.515$). Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that manpower planning significantly influence the achievement of strategic goals in public universities in Southwest, Nigeria. The study recommended that universities enhance staff welfare, make strategic goals explicit to staff, and intensify efforts to improve global rankings.

Keywords: Manpower planning, Strategic goals, Achievement, Public universities

Introduction

The existence of clear organisational goals is central to both management and educational research. While early studies have long emphasised this, aspects of how goals are formed, manifested, and influenced within institutions remain under-explored. In universities, performance and success are often measured against the clarity and achievement of strategic goals (Kotlar & De Massis, 2013). Success, in this context, reflects how well these goals whether financial, non-financial, substitute, or complementary are met. Strategic goals in a university's planning process are essential, along with defining key success factors and strategic scope. According to Utulu (2007), these goals drive decision-making, resource allocation, budgeting, individual and team objectives, and institutional planning across departments such as IT, HR, and marketing. They also set benchmarks for measuring results.

Universities generally define their strategic goals to unify manpower towards achieving educational effectiveness. These goals, often similar across institutions, reflect the common objectives outlined in national education policies. For instance, the Association of African Universities (2011–2015) identified core strategic plans such as enhancing knowledge production, improving ICT infrastructure, and standardising data collection across member universities. Adetunji (2015) listed the strategic goals of Ekiti State University as including building academic programmes aligned with community needs, recruiting highly qualified academic staff, equipping students with globally competitive skills, aligning ICT initiatives with institutional objectives, improving staff and student welfare, and creating a robust research culture. These goals underpin the university's mission and help determine its global standing.

Many universities aspire to world-class status by ensuring effective teaching, character-building, credible admissions, entrepreneurship, infrastructural growth, and internally generated revenue. Being “world-class” implies high global rankings, visibility, and academic excellence. Salmi and Liu (2011) argued that achieving such status demands efficient manpower planning, which remains elusive for many public universities in Southwest Nigeria. Universities also contribute to societal welfare by producing skilled graduates who drive economic, cultural, and social development. To achieve this, they must attract top students, offer relevant courses, adopt innovative teaching, and create fulfilling student experiences. These elements embedded in the strategic goals of most Southwest Nigerian universities, define their path to academic excellence.

New curricular developments in 2012, such as the introduction of postgraduate coursework and future-focused educational reforms, show a readiness for global competitiveness. Kousha, Thelwall, and Rezaie (2015) noted that these initiatives reflect a broader educational vision, consistent with the pedagogical and strategic aspirations of universities in the region. Manpower planning is indispensable for managing institutional workforce effectively. More than just numbers, it involves distributing and utilising qualified personnel efficiently. It ensures institutions have the right staff in the right positions at the right time, with the appropriate skills and motivation. Globally, there is increased focus on human resource planning in educational institutions.

Manpower planning helps institutions determine current and future workforce needs. According to Dharamvirsinh, Sarita, and Prashant (2013), humans are the most critical and unpredictable organisational resource. Matching the right people with the right jobs is a pressing challenge. Harvey and Bowin (2006) outlined that manpower planning serves two main purposes: optimising current human resources and projecting future needs. Without proper manpower planning, institutions struggle to anticipate recruitment needs, retirement schedules, and retraining requirements. Obasan and Yomi (2011) emphasised that effective planning reduces recruitment errors and management costs. Igbinomwanhia (2010) added that planning ensures the availability of appropriately skilled individuals at all levels of the institution.

Failure to deploy competent staff at the right time and cost leads to inefficiencies and potential institutional collapse. Dharamvirsinh and Prashant (2012) highlighted the need for continuous monitoring and adaptation to technological changes in workforce management. Institutions must determine personnel quality, distribution, and cost to maintain smooth operations. Each university requires a variety of personnel: academic, administrative, technical, and clerical. Pre-determined qualifications and experience levels are vital for optimising staff utility and institutional satisfaction. Jones, George, and Hill (2000) noted that the greatest asset of any university is its human resources. Unfortunately, many institutions neglect this crucial element of development.

Susan (2012) described manpower planning as encompassing recruitment, direction, welfare, and organisational culture. It ensures employees contribute productively to institutional goals. Despite these benefits, achieving strategic goals remains challenging for many public universities in Southwest Nigeria. Utulu (2019) reported that these universities still rank poorly on global indices. For instance, Ekiti State University ranks 3018th globally and 4305th in terms of impact. The University of Ibadan ranks 1198th globally and 2628th for impact; Obafemi Awolowo University ranks 1503rd and 2228th respectively, while the University of Lagos ranks 1711th and 3873rd.

These figures, drawn from Webometrics (2021), reflect the institutions' global presence, research activity, and digital impact. Gunn and Hill (2008) explained that Webometrics rankings rely on indicators like visibility and online engagement. Sadlak (2011) further asserted that research outputs, web presence, and information communication technology development are key metrics. Strategic goals define the path to academic success, while manpower planning ensures the journey is feasible. Without skilled and motivated human capital, even the most ambitious institutional strategies remain unrealised. Therefore, universities must prioritise human resource development to compete globally, improve rankings, and ultimately fulfil their core mission of education, research, and community development. The study examined the relationship between manpower planning and strategic goals achievement of public Universities in Southwest, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined:

1. the level of strategic goal achievement in universities in Southwest, Nigeria

2. the level of manpower planning in universities in Southwest, Nigeria.

The following research questions were raised to guide the study

1. What is the level of strategic goal achievement in universities in Southwest, Nigeria?
2. What is the level of manpower planning in universities in Southwest, Nigeria?

The following hypothesis were formulated to guide the study

1. There is no significant relationship between manpower planning and strategic goal achievement.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised all public universities in Southwest Nigeria, which consisted of six states: Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo. To obtain a representative sample, a multistage sampling technique was employed. In the first stage, the six states were stratified into three groups based on geographical axis and background similarities: Lagos and Ogun formed one axis, Oyo and Osun another, and Ondo and Ekiti the third. From each of these strata, one state was randomly selected. In the second stage, purposive stratified random sampling was used to select two universities - one federal and one state from each of the chosen states, yielding a total of six universities (three federal and three state institutions). At the final stage, proportionate sampling was employed to select 100 academic and non-academic staff members from each of these universities, making a total of 600 participants. This sampling approach ensured fair representation of the population and enhanced the generalisation of the findings. Two research instruments tagged “Questionnaire on Manpower Planning (QMP)” and “Questionnaire on Strategic Goal Achievements of Public Universities (QSGAPU)” were used to obtain relevant data for the study. “Questionnaire on Manpower Planning (QMP)” consisted two sections: Section A collected demographic data while Section B contained items related to manpower planning. Questionnaire on Strategic Goal Achievements of Public Universities (QSGAPU)” contained section A and B, with the latter containing items focused on assessing the strategic goal achievements of public universities. Face and content validity was used for the study. The instruments were validated by experts in educational management. Test-retest method of reliability was used for the study. The instruments were administered on 60 staff members from a university not included in the study sample, with the instruments administered twice at a two-week interval. The resulting Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficients were 0.85 for the QMP and 0.79 for the QSGAPU, indicating high reliability and suitability for the study. Data collected from the instruments were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as mean scores, frequency counts, percentage scores, and standard deviations were used to answer the research questions. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypothesis. The hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Level of achievement of strategic goals by public universities in Southwest, Nigeria

S/N	Item	Mean	Decision
1	In the latest University ranking, my university is ranked a world-class University	1.79	Low extent
2	My university is often rated high among the southwest Universities	2.57	High extent
3	The students in my university are well supervised to carry out meaningful research work comparable to a world-class research	2.97	High extent
4	Most of the graduates from my university are often found worthy in learning in the labour market	2.75	High extent
5	The graduates of my university are often found worthy in character in the society	2.87	High extent
6	Entrepreneurial skills are taught to students in addition to other course works in my university	2.75	High extent
7	My university is staffed with well-trained academic workers	2.76	High extent
8	My university provides small-scale enterprises services to the communities around	3.09	High extent
9	The admission of students into my university is strictly based on academic competence	3.18	High extent
10	Most of the graduates from my university are found relevant and employable in the labour market	3.02	High extent
11	My university has well developed ICT infrastructural facilities	3.08	High extent
12	Most of the students' academic works in my university are computer based	3.03	High extent

13	The academic staff in my university are well remunerated	2.46	Low extent
14	Fringe benefits are given to members of academic staff in my university to ensure their welfare	2.95	High extent
15	My university has well-equipped hospital to care for the need of staff and student	3.16	High extent
16	My university has recreational facilities to care for students' welfare	2.99	High extent
17	My university enjoys appreciable internally generated revenue from its investment in small-scale business enterprises	2.51	High extent
18	My university has witnessed appreciable expansion in terms of infrastructural facilities in the recent years	2.50	High
19	My university has adequate academic staff to handle the various academic courses	2.59	High
20	Political instability on the part of government poses a serious disruption to strategic goal achievement of my university	3.08	High
Total		56.10	
Average		2.81	High

Table 1 showed the level to which public universities are able to achieve strategic goals in Southwest, Nigeria. The table indicated that item 1 (in the latest university ranking, my university is ranked a world-class university) and item 13 (the academic staff in my school are well remunerated) were rated Low with an average mean score of 1.79 and 2.46 respectively. Items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 were rated high with an average mean score of 2.57, 2.97, 2.75, 2.87, 2.75, 2.76, 3.09, 3.18, 3.02, 3.08, and 3.03 respectively. In the same vein, items 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20 were rated high with mean score of 2.9, 3.16, 2.99, 2.51, 2.50, 2.59 and 3.08 respectively. The overall level of public universities achievement of

strategic goals was rated high with an average mean score of 2.81. Hence, level to which public universities are able to achieve strategic goals in Southwest, Nigeria.

Table 2: Level of manpower planning in universities in Southwest, Nigeria?

Variables	Mean	Remark
Employment programme	2.83	High
Induction/on-the-job training	3.17	High
Staff welfare packages	2.46	Low
Control and assessment of manpower plan	3.03	High
Total	11.49	
Average	2.87	High

Table 2 presents the level of manpower planning in Public universities in Southwest, Nigeria. The table shows that all variables has mean score higher than the cut-off point. Hence, the level of manpower planning in Public universities in Southwest, Nigeria

Testing of hypothesis

Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between manpower planning and strategic goal achievement in Universities in Southwest, Nigeria

Table 3: Showing the relationship between manpower planning and strategic goals achievement

school students

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r _{cal}	Pvalue
Manpower Planning	94	89.6809	17.57394	0.864*	0.000
Strategic goals achievement	94	56.1066	9.97726		

*P<0.05

Table 3 shows that r-cal (0.864) is greater than r-tab (0.178) at 0.05 level of significance. The result is significant (p-value < 0.05) and the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there was a significant relationship between manpower planning and strategic goals achievement.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that the level to which public universities are able to achieve strategic goals in Southwest, Nigeria was high. The study also revealed that the level of manpower planning in public universities in Southwest, Nigeria was high. The findings of the study showed that there was significant relationship between manpower planning and achievement of strategic goals in public universities in Southwest, Nigeria. This finding confirmed Mathias and Jackson (2004) position that human resource planning must be linked to the overall strategy of the organization. This finding equally affirmed Armstrong (2010) postulation that the achievement of strategic goals is the concern of universities and human resource planning is very essential for the achievement and attainment of the goals.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that manpower planning significantly influence the achievement of strategic goals in public universities in Southwest, Nigeria

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that management of public universities should ensure that the strategic goals are made explicit to all members of academic staff so that they can jointly work towards its actualization.

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