ADDRESSING SOCIAL COSTS AND INTERNAL EFFICIENCY IN OGUN STATE-OWNED UNIVERSITIES HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

State-owned universities in Ogun State, Nigeria, have grappled with escalating social costs and internal inefficiencies in the development of their academic staff's human capital, hindering national progress. Social costs involved direct government expenses on subventions and TETFund allocations, alongside indirect burdens like salary delays, strikes, and self-financed training, eroding motivation and productivity. Internal inefficiencies manifest in high student-lecturer ratios, bureaucratic delays, and resource wastage, leading to low graduation rates and skill-market mismatches. Grounded in Human Capital Theory, Social Cost Theory, and Internal Efficiency Theory, this position paper examines cost implications, resource utilization, efficiency linkages, and reform strategies. It advocates integrated policies to diversify funding, streamline governance, and enhance welfare, mitigating financial strains and brain drain while boosting research output. In conclusion, unchecked social costs and inefficiencies perpetuate underperformance, but reforms can transform these institutions into innovation hubs, elevating societal returns and Nigeria's development. The study recommended that the government should diversify funding via public-private partnerships, allocating 15-20% of budgets to staff development; and governing councils should enforce merit-based recruitment for 20-30% faculty growth, optimizing workloads

Keywords: Human Capital Development, Social Cost, Internal Efficiency,

Introduction

Higher education promotes the development of human capital, which in turn spurs innovation, socioeconomic advancement, and economic prosperity (Becker, 1964).In the context of developing economies like Nigeria, where universities are tasked with producing a skilled workforce to drive national development, the interplay between investments in education and their broader societal returns becomes particularly salient. Schultz (1961) and Becker (1964) have defined human capital development as making conscious investments in education, training, and health to improve productivity for both individuals and groups. However, this process is riddled with inefficiencies and rising social costs in Nigeria's higher education system.

Universities such as Tai Solarin University of Education (TASUED) and OlabisiOnabanjo University (OOU) in Ogun State generate skilled workers, but they also struggle with internal inefficiencies and social costs that impact the operations and well-being of academic staff (Omoregie& Hartnett, 2020).Social costs include direct and indirect government expenses via subventions, TETFund allocations, and staff development budgets. Inadequate funding, infrastructural deficits, and high student-lecturer ratios impose strains on government and students (Omoregie& Hartnett, 2020).Broader social costs encompass societal impacts from higher education investments, including government burdens due to low internally generated revenue (IGR), leading to salary delays, facility neglect, and staff strikes (Ogunyemi, 2021). These erode motivation and productivity. Internal efficiency involves resource utilization for outcomes like graduation rates, research productivity, and graduate employability (Psacharopoulos&Patrinos, 2018). In Ogun State, inefficiencies appear as low graduation rates, strike-extended calendars, and skill-market mismatches (Adeyemi&Akpotu, 2020). Factors include lecturer shortages, heavy workloads, infrastructure gaps, administrative delays, and high dropouts. Efficiency depends on how productive, satisfied, and dedicated staff members are, as well as how creative they are in their instruction (Sotiropoulos&Patrinos, 2018).

Human capital development enhances staff skills through education, training, and professional growth (Becker, 1964). Key drivers include postgraduate access, research opportunities, and conducive environments. Institutions should offer training, mentorship, and incentives (Sotiropoulos&Patrinos, 2018).

Social cost of human capital development includes societal expenses beyond direct costs, like opportunity costs and inequalities. It encompasses externalities from economic activities (Pigou, 1920; Coase, 1960). Government education spending positively impacts GDP (Adeleke&Anuolam, 2023). It involves resource investments not in market prices (Sutton, 2016) and ethical risks (Michael, 2023). Negative consequences include pollution and inequalities (Paul, 2014; Joseph, 2015; Pigou, 2016). Mismanagement depletes resources (Ostrom, 2014); monopolies harm consumers (Tirole, 2017); instability affects well-being. In universities, it is costs are borne by society, institutions, and government in staff development.Internal efficiency optimizes resources for outputs (Hamel, 2018; Regina, 2020). It manages resources to minimize waste (Ejiogu, 2016).Its resource allocation adeptness (Smith, 2016) and maximizing output with minimal input (Adekoya, 2014). In human capital, it utilizes resources for skill enhancement, optimizing training and engagement.This introduction explores how addressing social costs and internal efficiency can improve human capital outcomes at state-owned universities in Ogun State.

The theoretical foundations of this study on addressing social costs and internal efficiency in human capital development within Ogun State-owned universities are anchored in three key frameworks: Human Capital Theory (HCT), Social Cost Theory (SCT), and Internal Efficiency Theory (IET). Human Capital Theory, originally advanced by Theodore Schultz in 1961 and further developed by Gary Becker in 1964, asserts that investments in education and training function as capital accumulation, generating long-term returns by boosting individual productivity, innovation, and overall economic growth (Psacharopoulos&Patrinos, 2018). These theoretical underpinnings shed light on the persistent challenges in Ogun state-owned universities, such as OlabisiOnabanjo University (OOU) and Tai Solarin University of Education (TASUED). For instance, Human Capital Theory (HCT) explains how education investments should yield enhanced productivity among academic staff, yet in Nigeria, these returns are often eroded by external factors, including COVID-19-related disruptions that widened access inequalities, interrupted learning, and halted human capital growth.

Social Cost Theory (SCT) highlights the necessity of internalizing such externalities through targeted policies, like performance-based funding, to curb inefficiencies that amplify societal burdens (Coase, 1960). In Ogun State, where these universities act as vital centres for regional development, tackling these interconnected problems demands a comprehensive strategy: establishing sustainable funding systems, refining governance to eliminate administrative hurdles, and implementing welfare measures to keep skilled talent in place.

The relevance of these theories to this study is multifaceted and central to its analytical framework. HCT provides a rationale for prioritizing investments in academic staff development, directly linking enhanced skills to improved teaching, research, and national progress, which is critical for diagnosing why funding shortfalls in Ogun state-owned universities lead to low productivity and brain drain.

Internal Efficiency Theory (IET) complements this by focusing on resource optimization, enabling the study to assess how administrative bottlenecks and infrastructural deficits contribute to wastage, thus guiding recommendations for reforms that boost outputs with minimal inputs. Together, these theories not only illuminate the root causes of social costs and inefficiencies in Ogun state-owned higher education system but also inform practical solutions, ensuring the study contributes to policy reforms that foster sustainable human capital development and regional economic resilience.

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the social cost and internal efficiency of human capital development among academic staff in state–owned universities in Ogun State, Nigeria. Thestudy explores the human capital development in state-owned universities that face challenges due to social costs, funding constraints, and internal inefficiencies. Poor governance structures, bureaucratic delays, and inadequate infrastructure limit staff productivity and performance.

Insufficient financial investment in staff training and research, while some support from organisations like TETFund, exceeds the demand for development opportunities.

Extensively, this will aid government agencies, education ministries, and policymakers in understanding the financial burden of human capital development for academic staff, guiding policy formulation on funding, staff welfare, and research grants. It will also help address workplace challenges, salary structure issues, and career development opportunities, promoting better teaching quality and university rankings.This study focused on the social cost and internal efficiency of human capital development among academic staff in state-owned universities in Ogun State, Nigeria, and examined the financial implications of training and development on government funding and institutional support.

Conceptual Clarification

Human Capital Development

Human capital development, sometimes referred to as human resource development, centres on how people enhance their organisational and personal skills, knowledge, and capacities to guarantee a more seamless transition between work and education (Agwu, 2014). It is mainly concerned with developing the skills, knowledge and competencies of people and it is a people-oriented concept (Park, 2015). Smith (2013)

Social Cost

The social cost refers to the total cost borne by society, including both private costs incurred by individuals or businesses and external costs that affect the broader community. Pigou (1920) introduced the concepts of social cost, emphasising that market activities often generate externalities-costs or benefits that impact individuals who are not directly involved in the transaction. Coase (1960) later expanded on this idea arguing that social cost arise from conflicts over resource use and can be managed through bargaining and property rights, rather than solely through government intervention. Recent studies have explored the various dimensions of social cost. Adeleke and Anuolam (2023) conducted an econometric analysis and found that government expenditure on education has a significant and positive impact on Nigeria’s real GDP. Their outcomes emphasize the need for sustained investment in education to drive long-term economic growth.

Internal Efficiency

The concept of internal efficiency within the educational system involves the optimal use of financial and material resources (input) in producing its outputs. However, internal efficiency as a concept has been viewed, defined and described by different scholars. Gary Hamel (2018) viewed internal efficiency as the degree to which an organiation's internal process and systems are optimized for performance, efficiency and effectiveness.

Prior Studies

Empirically, Amie-Ogan and Pepple (2021) investigated the role of human capital development variables, such as sabbatical programmes and ICT training, in enhancing the performance of academic staff in River Universities.The findings indicated that sabbatical programmes significantly improve teaching effectiveness and scholarly productivity, while ICT training enhances lecturers' confidence and efficiency in task execution. Ologunde, Asaolu and Elumilade (2022) examined the effect of human capital development programs on academic staff retention in selected private universities in South-West, Nigeria. The study revealed that opportunities for continuous professional development and career advancement are key factors in retaining qualified staff. This finding suggests that institutions prioritizing the growth and development of their academic personnel are more likely to maintain stable and committed workforce (researchgate.net). A study by Mohammed and Firas (2016) explored the relationship between university education and human capital development in Nigeria. The findings demonstrated a positive and significant impact of university education on human capital development, emphasizing the role of higher education in enhancing individuals' skills and productivity. This underscores the necessity for continuous investment in university education to foster economic growth and development (oajournals.fupress.net).Adedeji and Bamidele (2021) examined the role of government funding in enhancing academic staff development in Nigeria public universities. The study found that inadequate and inconsistent funding from government sources has led to poor staff training opportunities, low research output, and reduced academic productivity. The study further revealed that TETFund interventions have significantly improved access to postgraduate training, conference sponsorships, and research grants, but bureaucratic bottlenecks and delays in fund disbursement often hinder optimal utilization.

This study aligns with the Social Cost Theory, as it highlights the financial burden on universities when the government fails to provide sufficient funding, leading to inefficiencies in human capital development. Ogunode (2022) investigated the relationship between internal efficiency and workforce retention among academic staff in public universities. The findings indicated that inefficient management of training programmes, lack of career progression and poor working conditions contribute to high faculty turnover rates. Many academic staff leave for better –paying or international research opportunities, leading to brain drain and knowledge loss.The study highlighted the necessity of efficient university administration systems to track training advancement, enable prompt promotions, and develop stronger incentives for employee retention.This study supports the Internal Efficiency Theory, which emphasises the importance of resource optimisation in achieving desired educational outcomes.

In Ogun State universities such as OlabisiOnabanjo University (OOU) and Tai Solarin University of Education (TASUED), similar issues manifest through lecturer overloads and limited access to professional development, exacerbating brain drain as skilled staff seek better opportunities elsewhere. Research on human resource development in Nigerian universities highlights that ineffective utilization stems from mismatched skills deployment and lack of continuous training, with a case study of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, indicating that only 40-50% of academic staff engage in optimal research due to administrative burdens and funding constraints (Ozioko, 2015). This inefficiency not only hampers individual productivity but also affects institutional goals, as underutilized staff contribute to low research output and poor graduate employability.

To address these inefficiencies and enhance academic workforce productivity in Ogun State-owned universities, several evidence-based strategies can be implemented. First, adopting targeted staff development programs, such as workshops and in-service training, has been shown to improve job performance by 25-30%, as demonstrated in a study of secondary school teachers in Uyo, Nigeria, where regular training correlated with higher motivation and efficiency (Ekpoh et al., 2013). In Ogun State, universities could establish mandatory annual training modules focused on digital pedagogy and research skills, potentially reducing workload inefficiencies by integrating technology for administrative tasks. Second, implementing performance-based incentives and conflict resolution mechanisms can boost productivity; a study on teacher productivity in Nigerian public schools recommends motivational strategies like timely promotions and resource provision to achieve better learning outcomes (Emunemu&Isuku, 2018). For Ogun institutions, this could involve linking salary increments to research publications and teaching evaluations. Third, techno-stress management strategies, such as providing IT support and workload balancing, have proven effective in enhancing employee productivity in tertiary institutions, with a Rivers State study showing a 35% improvement in output through stress reduction programs (Nwinyokpugi&Kpakol, 2020). Applying this in Ogun State could include university-wide wellness initiatives. Lastly, evidence from a private institution in Nigeria shows that talent management techniques, such as succession planning and innovation training, increase academic staff innovation by 40%. These techniques also promote productivity (Salau et al., 2018). Ogun State universities should adopt these to create a more dynamic workforce, ultimately aligning with national development goals.Problems with work environments at Nigerian universities, particularly those in Ogun State, include excessive workloads, poor facilities, and interpersonal disputes, all of which lower employee morale and productivity.Salary structure issues exacerbate these, with irregular payments, low remuneration compared to inflation, and a lack of performance-linked incentives leading to frequent strikes and dissatisfaction. A study on organisational climate in North Central Nigerian universities found that poor salary structures contribute to 50% of work-related attitudinal problems, fostering absenteeism and reduced commitment (Ajeigbe, 2021).

In Ogun State, academic staff at OOU and TASUED face similar issues, where delayed salaries disrupt academic calendars, as evidenced by national trends where salary disputes account for over

60% of industrial actions (Fejoh, 2016). Furthermore, post-COVID-19 challenges like work-life imbalance have intensified emotional exhaustion, with a study in Ekiti State universities showing that inadequate salary adjustments lead to 30% lower performance among academic staff (Ogundipe et al., 2022).To mitigate these, universities should reform salary structures through indexed adjustments tied to economic indicators and introduce conflict management training. Career development opportunities for academic staff in Nigerian universities are limited by funding shortages, bureaucratic hurdles, and a lack of mentorship, hindering progression and innovation. In Ogun State institutions, lecturers often self-fund conferences and advanced degrees, leading to stagnation. A study on frontline employees' perceptions in Nigerian contexts shows that perceived career growth opportunities reduces turnover intention by 40%, emphasizing the need for structured paths (Ohunakin et al., 2018). Another analysis of academic staff in public universities highlights that mentoring programmes increase organisational commitment by 35% (Egbuta&Ogueyungbo, 2022).Enhancing these opportunities requires institutional policies like sponsored sabbaticals and partnerships for international exposure. Research on career development in Nigerian academics recommends integrating lifelong learning, improving retention by 28% (Ojo, 2018). For Ogun State, TETFund allocations could fund targeted programs, fostering a progressive academic culture.Promoting better teaching quality in Nigerian universities involves adopting innovative pedagogies, continuous training, and quality assurance mechanisms to align with global standards. In Ogun State, challenges like outdated curricula and limited ICT integration hinder effectiveness. According to a study that promotes e-learning for best practices, university involvement in Nigeria increased by 30% (Obuekwe&Eze, 2017).

Another emphasizes stakeholder roles in quality enhancement, recommending collaborative evaluations (Asiyai, 2015).Strategies include ICT integration and faculty development, with evidence from Nigerian studies showing 25% quality gains through supervision (Onuh&Ofojebe, 2020). Ogun State universities could implement peer reviews and digital platforms for sustained improvement.Improving university rankings in Nigeria requires focused efforts on research output, internationalization, and infrastructure. Ogun State institutions lag due to low visibility and funding.

Advocating for integrated reforms

In this paper, the study firmly advocate for the implementation of integrated reforms aimed at substantially reducing the escalating social costs associated with human capital development while simultaneously enhancing internal efficiency within Ogun State's state-owned universities. These reforms are not merely incremental adjustments but a comprehensive overhaul designed to address the root causes of systemic failures, fostering a more sustainable, productive, and equitable higher education ecosystem. By integrating policy changes across funding, governance, technology, and staff welfare, Ogun State can transform its universities, such as OlabisiOnabanjo University and Tai Solarin University of Education, into resilient institutions that effectively cultivate skilled academic staff, drive innovation, and contribute to national socio-economic progress. This position is grounded in the recognition that unchecked social costs and inefficiencies perpetuate cycles of underperformance, brain drain, and diminished institutional relevance, ultimately undermining Nigeria's broader developmental aspirations. To substantiate this stance, we present four interconnected arguments, each highlighting critical challenges and underscoring the urgency of reform.

Argument 1:Human capital development faces social costs due to heavy reliance on limited government subsidies and insufficient internal revenue. This leads to delays in staff salaries, infrastructure maintenance, and industrial strikes, affecting public finances, productivity, trust, and economic pressures. Financial burdens erode motivation and foster a culture of disenchantment. Public-private partnerships, endowment money, and alumni contributions should be given top priority in diversification initiatives in order to reduce financial strains and make investments in staff competencies.

Argument 2: Ogun State-owned universities face inefficient resource utilization due to bureaucratic processes, resulting in underutilized funds for staff training, research grants, and infrastructural upgrades. This inefficiency leads to unused funds and a cycle of human capital development initiatives receiving only fractional support. Government funding's impact is curtailed by inconsistencies, discouraging long-term planning and ad hoc decision-making. Reforming requires streamlining administrative protocols and regular audits.

Argument 3:High social costs and low internal efficiency in universities lead to operational disruptions like strikes and brain drain among academic staff. Inefficient funding models and societal externalities strain budgets, compromising core functions like teaching and research. Strikes halt progress and impose additional costs on society. Inefficient management practices fuel staff turnover, depleting intellectual capital and creating vacancies. Addressing this requires data-driven assessments and proactive retention policies to restore efficiency and stabilize the workforce.

Argument 4:To reform Ogun State-owned universities, strategies should include expanded Tertiary Education Trust Fund grants, digital platforms for administrative and pedagogical purposes, competitive salary incentives, and infrastructure investments. Performance-based allocations, digital platforms, salary incentives, and infrastructure investments will optimize returns on investment, promote self-sufficiency, and position Ogun State universities as models of excellence in Nigeria's higher education landscape. These strategies will also address foundational deficits and foster a meritocratic culture.

Conclusion

Human capital development in Ogun State-owned universities is hindered by high social costs and internal inefficiencies. These costs include direct fiscal burdens on government subventions and Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) allocations, as well as indirect societal repercussions like disrupted academic calendars, diminished staff motivation, and escalating brain drain. These inefficiencies result in low research output, skill mismatches with labour market demands, and prolonged graduation timelines, limiting the universities' contributions to Nigeria's socio-economic advancement and global competitiveness. To address this, integrated reforms are needed, including overhauling funding mechanisms, implementing governance restructuring, and prioritizing staff welfare policies. These reforms can mitigate inefficiencies and enhance productivity, ensuring Ogun State-owned universities remain resilient and equitable in the educational ecosystem. Ogun State-owned universities can harness its academic workforce's potential, drive innovation, promote inclusive growth, and contribute to sustainable development by investing in these areas.

Recommendations

1. The government should prioritize diversifying funding sources beyond subventions and TETFund by fostering public-private partnerships and endowment funds, while increasing allocations to at least 15-20% of university budgets for staff development programmes to reduce social costs and enhance efficiency in Ogun State-owned universities.
2. The governing council should enforce recruitment of additional qualified lecturers in key disciplines, aiming for a 20-30% faculty increase over five years, and optimize utilization through workload redistribution policies to align with NUC benchmarks, thereby alleviating inefficiencies and minimizing brain drain.
3. School management should mandate and fund annual conferences, seminars, and workshops focused on digital pedagogy and research skills, ensuring TETFund sponsorships to bridge skill gaps and boost academic productivity in state-owned institutions.
4. The government should enforce strict merit-based systems for admissions, promotions, and evaluations across OgunState-owned universities, incorporating verifiable performance indicators to minimize wastage rates and promote equitable human capital development.
5. The governing council should decentralize governance by granting greater autonomy in resource management and decision-making, while establishing interfaces between researchers and public officers to facilitate knowledge-sharing and reduce bureaucratic inefficiencies.
6. School management should actively encourage private sector participation in funding, curriculum design, and infrastructure projects, leveraging partnerships to address resource shortfalls and align educational outputs with market needs for sustainable growth.

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