

Management Needs of Department Heads and Sustainable Academic Programmes in Taraba State University, Jalingo

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to examine the management needs of department heads and sustainable academic programmes in Taraba state university, Jalingo. Correctional research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised all 44 Heads of Department (HODs) make up 31 male Heads of Department and 13 female Heads of Department. The sample size for the study was all the 44 HODs because the size was manageable. The instrument used for data collection was a researchers self-developed questionnaire titled "Management Needs of Department Heads and Sustainable Academic Programmes Questionnaire" (MNDHSAPQ). The MNDHSAPQ contains 16 items on a 4 point modified rating scale of Very High Extend (VHE), High Extend (HE), Low Extend (LE) and Very Low Extend (VLE)). The MNDHSAPQ was validated by two experts in department of Educational Foundations. Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Jalingo. The reliability coefficient of the MNDHSAPQ yielded 0.81 using Cronbach alpha estimate method. The MNDHSAPQ was administered and retrieved by the researchers with the help of one research assistant in each of department. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using Pearson movement product correlation. The findings showed that there was a significant influence of funding needs and material needs on the sustainable academic programme at Taraba State University. Based on the study's findings, it was recommended among others that the University should source for ways of generating internal revenue to fund academic programme for school productivity.

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Introduction

Sustainability is the ability for the continuous existence of any programme or project to achieve its goals. That is the ability to make judicious use of the available resources both human and materials and replace the old and outdated with the current to achieve a long lasting and stable system of enormous benefits. This can be achieved by maintaining all the available resources for the betterment and continuous co-existence of the various academic programmes. The academic programme is one of the several educational services universities offer to their admitted students. An academic programme is a

predefined learning path consisting of certain courses with and/or without practical work organized by an educational institution for eligible admitted students. Vlăsceanu, Grünberg, & Pârlea, (2007), remarked that academic programme is "a core, modular component of higher education including all the activities (design, organization, management, as well as the process of teaching, learning, and research) carried out in a certain field and leading to an academic qualification.

Academic programmes are sustained by infusing into its curriculum innovations that equip individuals with critical

knowledge and skills needed for the contemporary management, to ensure for the development of virile academic programme that caters for the needs of the Head of departments.

Taraba State University has ten Faculties with forty four academic departments and undergraduate programmes offered at undergraduate level in all the faculties as well as remedial studies, diploma, sandwich and Institute of Distant Education and Life-long Learning (IDELL). Postgraduate programmes are offered at the university. The University like any other Nigerian university operates the Course Credit Unit System. The ability to sustain these programmes depends on the department heads, like availability of appropriate material resources, financial resources, good human resources as well as community relation, high academic excellence among students, sound discipline among staff and students, systematic student development and transformation among others. Unfortunately, it appears that sustainability of academic programmes seems to be difficult in terms of funds and material resources management, funds appropriation and material resources meagerness seemed to be the challenges of sustaining academic programmes. Ikegbusi and Iheanacho (2016) attributed that the failure of sustaining academic programmes in Nigeria to several factors such as shortage of lecturers, inadequate training, inadequate funding, inadequate material resources and poor motivation. They also include lack of basic infrastructure, lack of leadership and administrative will, lack of adequate and accurate statistics, funding problems, embezzlement, bureaucratic bottle-neck of civil service and poor attitude to work (Alike, 2016). Similarly, Blanco-Ramírez & Berger, (2014) argued that sustainable academic programme in

developing nations is affected by the scarcity of resources (funding and material) and government policies that do not allow universities to decide independently on academic, administrative, and financial aspects. Failure to meet the management needs of HODs serve as hindrance for achieving sustainable academic programmes. Sustaining academic programmes can be achieved through meeting the management needs of HODs by providing adequate and required resources (human, material and finances)

The Head of Department (HOD) is regarded as the administrative head of a department in any level of education, be it basic, secondary, or tertiary, with diverse administrative functions that contribute to the sustainability of short and long-term academic programmes. The HODs struggle on how to source for scarce resources due to the growing demands of academic programme. They become victims of multiple management need decisions, which demand effective personnel management, establishing incentives for academic and non-academic staff, hiring of part time lecturers and administrative staff, supervising and evaluating departmental staff. Other responsibilities required by the HODs is to accomplish pedagogical demands by setting lecture hours by courses, providing adequate teaching and learning resources, maintaining department infrastructures, meeting the financial costs of department, budgeting, and evaluation of the entire department administrative activities. Bush (2013) argues that the HODs must have the ability to provide the needed direction and instruction to the subordinates. This is to enable the sustenance of academic programmes. When the resources needed for management by HODs are in short supply, the sustainability of academic programme will also be affected.

Management Need is the arrangement of available and adequate human, financial, physical and material resources for achieving the desired academic programme. Lipham (2016) and Nwadiani (2012) remarked that HODs needs could be human resources which are academic staff and non-academic staff with different area of specializations and roles, who are employed to work in the tertiary institutions are in dear need of material resources, financial resources and physical resources as well as facilities and equipment that could facilitate teaching and learning. Also, resources such as duplicating papers, pens, ball pens, laboratory consumables, students' workbooks, textbooks, journals and their likes needed for the day to day management of the department are in short supply, thereby hampering sustainability of academic programmes in tertiary institutions. The performance of the HOD can be sustained through the proper utilization of funds and material resources in the achievement of the academic programme. The sustainability of depends largely on the capacity of the HODs to harness and use the funds and material resources needed in the department for effective management.

Funding of academic programmes is properly required for its survival. The success of any academic programme depends very much on the way the financial inputs are managed. Funding can be a form of financial support given for sustaining academic programmes. The provision of money in cash or kind helps in meeting the need of academic programmes. Academic programmes needs to be funded to achieve management Needs of HODs. Funds are required to harness and maintain both human and material resources that are highly imperative for the development and sustainable academic programmes. Academic programmes are expensive

programmes that require adequate financial provision for proper implementation to pave way for the production of highly qualitative, viable and functional graduates, the institution's operational mode, the lecturers' attitude and the department's infrastructural development. In the same vein, Ilo in Utoware & Kren – Ikidi (2014) submitted a study that funding is a major obstacle to the quality, growth, and progress of academic programmes. Also, Njoku (2014) advocated that the absence of funding does not only hamper implementation but also affect the quality of students in Nigerian universities. Sustainable academic programmes in its entirety has to do with level of input in relation to standard curriculum, proper funding, provision of enough facilities, and adequate supply of qualified manpower.

In a study by Chijioko, Enaohwo, & Ohia, (2017) remarked that funding is an essential ingredient that contributes to the success of any university education all over the world. The level of funds available to the HODs can determine the quality and quantity of resources that will be available for teaching, research, and community development. Similarly, Iqbal, Ashfaq and Moosa, (2022) conducted a study to examine Students' perceived quality of academic programmes in higher education institutions in Pakistan. The results show that most of the students believe that the quality of the academic programmes is not up to par as a whole. Onyeche (2018) conducted a study with the aim of investigating alternative sources of funding and management of public universities in the Niger Delta States of Nigeria. The finding revealed that other funding sources in public universities of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria could be tapped to enhance the finding of academic programmes and projects. Similarly, Nwabueze, Bako, and Nweke, (2020)

conducted a study to analyze the Management of Internal and External Factors towards the Realization of Quality outputs from Universities in Enugu State. The findings of the study revealed that donor agencies are involved in the provision of research facilities in university institution, employing experienced/ skillful workers for institutional development and quality outputs, school administrators making wise decisions to fulfill the requirements of university outputs, and having strong financial sources to expand and sustain academic programmes for quality outputs.

Material resources as described by Usman (2016) are the tangible resources that can easily be seen and observed in any educational institution, such as classroom, staff office, vehicles, health centres, library, laboratories, instructional facilities and so on which directly or indirectly contributes to the achievement of academic programmes. The school system may not attain its set out programmes without proper management of materials resources. No school can operate in a vacuum, the buildings, furniture, teaching aids, and several other materials are needed before a school can be said to be operational. Material resources in a department involves a coordinated effort of HODs to effectively manage the available material resources in the department to sustain academic programmes through careful planning, organizing, controlling and evaluating available material resources in the school. A study by Akerele (2013) submitted that there must be adequate provision of material resources appropriate to academic programmes being offered and the quality and adequacy of classrooms, library holding recent books and periodicals and other learning resources, well-equipped laboratories, and information technology should be assessed

at regularly. Osuji and Iheanyichukwu (2021) carried out a study to determine material resource management for effective teaching/learning in tertiary education in South-South States of Nigeria. The findings of the study showed that planning, organizing, controlling and coordinating were agree by respondents as needed in management of material resources for effective teaching/learning in tertiary education. Also, the findings revealed that there was no significant difference in mean responses of the respondents on the planning, organizing, controlling and coordinating strategies for proper management of material resources for effective teaching/learning in tertiary education. Also, a study conducted by Osarenren-Osaghae1 and Irabor (2012), to access the availability and adequacy of human and material resources for the teaching and learning of skill-based courses in Nigerian Public Universities. The finding amongst other findings was that: the material resources on ground for the teaching and learning of skill-based courses in Nigerian Public Universities did not match the minimum standard requirement recommended by the National Universities Commission for sustaining academic programmes in the university.

Statement of the Problem

In the year 2008, when the university was established, there were fewer academic programmes with adequate management needs of department heads to sustain the fewer academic programmes for quality university education. In the subsequent years of the expansion of the university more academic programmes were introduced. There seemed to be inadequate management needs of department heads to sustain academic programmes. Sustainability of academic programmes in Taraba State University, Jalingo appears to

be extremely difficult for department heads as material resources and financial resources seemed to be inadequate for sustaining academic programmes to the extent that most of the academic programmes of the various departments have not been accredited since the establishment of the university in 2008.

Despite the lauded idea of expanding academic programmes such as Degree, PGD, Sandwich and IDELL to compete favourable with other Universities of the world, there seemed to be problems of department heads needing to sustain and maintain these academic programmes. The low turnout of admission into these programmes appears to be constituted to the sustainability of these programmes. Some academic programs seem to be disappearing to the national museum that can only be accessed by few individuals.

Some of the heads of department struggle to provide funds and materials resources to sustain their department's academic programs. Many department heads do not have required funding and materials resources to sustain academic programmes thereby hampering the sustainability of academic programmes. The present situation has raised concerns in some stakeholders about Taraba State university education on sustainability of the state of academic programmes in the university. Against this background, the researchers were interested in carrying out the study on the management needs of department heads and sustainable academic programmes in Taraba state university, Jalingo.

Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine the management needs of department heads and sustainable academic programmes in Taraba state university, Jalingo. Specific objectives of the study were to examine:

1. Funding needs of departmental heads and sustainable academic programmes in Taraba state university, Jalingo.
2. Material needs of departmental heads and sustainable academic programmes in Taraba state university, Jalingo

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. To what extent does funding needs of department heads relate with sustainable academic programmes in Taraba state university, Jalingo?
2. To what extent does material needs of department heads relate with sustainable academic programmes in Taraba state university, Jalingo?

Hypotheses

The following hypothesis were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Funding needs of department heads do not significantly relate with sustainable academic programmes in Taraba state university, Jalingo.
2. Material needs of department heads do not significantly relate with sustainable academic programmes in Taraba state university, Jalingo.

Research Method

Correlational research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised all 44 Heads of Department (HODs) make up 31 male Heads of Department and 13 female Heads of Department. The sample size for the study was all the 44 HODs because the size was manageable. The instrument used for data collection was a researchers self-developed questionnaire titled "Management Needs of Department Heads and Sustainable Academic Programmes Questionnaire" (MNDHSAPQ). The MNDHSAPQ contains 16 items on a 4 point modified rating scale of Very High Extend

(VHE), High Extend (HE), Low Extend (LE) and Very Low Extend (VLE)). The MNDHSAPQ was validated by two experts in department of Educational Foundations. Faculty of Education, Taraba State University, Jalingo. The reliability coefficient of the MNDHSAPQ yielded 0.81 using Cronbach alpha estimate method. The MNDHSAPQ was administered and retrieved by the researchers with the help of one research assistant in each of department. The research questions were

Results

Research Question 1

To what extent does department heads' funding needs relate with sustainable academic programmes in Taraba state

answered using descriptive statistics involving mean and standard deviation with a decision rule of 2.50. A mean of 2.5 and above was adjudged to represent an influence on the statement, while a mean below 2.5 was adjudged to represent no influence on the statement. The benchmark of 2.50 for each item was considered to have influence and this was represented by "Agreed" while a mean of 2.50 and below was considered to have No influence and was represented by "Disagreed.

university, Jalingo? Descriptive statistics involving mean and standard deviation were deployed to answer the research question, and the results are presented in table one.

Table1: Respondent's responses on the influence of funding needs for the sustainability of academic programmes at Taraba State Universities.

Descriptive Statistics					
Items	Funding needs	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Funds are needed for training and retraining of staff for academic sustainability	44	2.98	1.07	Agreed
2	Funding are needed by the school for payment of staff salaries	44	2.80	1.11	Agreed
3	Funds are needed for school infrastructure	44	3.05	.98	Agreed
4	Funds are needed to update school laboratories for effective service delivery	44	3.00	.94	Agreed
5	Funds are needed for the running of day-to-day cost of the school	44	2.93	1.08	Agreed
6	Funds are needed for equipping of school laboratories	44	2.91	1.18	Agreed
Mean total impact		44	2.95	1.10	Agreed

The result of item one (1) based on the decision rule agreed that funds are needed for training and retraining of staff for academic sustainability with a mean rating = 2.98; SD=1.07. Similarly, the result in item two (2) agreed that funding are needed by the school for payment of staff salaries (mean rating = 2.80; SD=1.11). Item three also agreed that funds are needed for school infrastructure (mean rating = 3.05;

SD=.98). Same for item four which also showed that funds are needed to update school laboratories for effective service delivery (mean rating = 3.00; SD=.94). Furthermore, result of item five based on the decision rule also agreed that funds are needed for the running of day-to-day cost of the school with a mean rating = 2.93; SD=1.08, while item six also revealed that funds are needed for equipping of school

laboratories (mean rating = 2.91; SD=1.18). In conclusion, the summation of the mean ratings (mean rating =2.95; SD=1.10) of all

Research Question 2

To what extend does material needs of department heads relate with sustainable academic programmes in Taraba state

the items revealed that funding needs enhanced sustainability of academic programmes at Taraba State University.

university, Jalingo? To answer the research question, descriptive statistics involving mean and standard deviation was deployed, and the results are presented in table two.

Table 2: Respondent's responses on the influence of material needs for the sustainability of academic programmes at Taraba State Universities.

Descriptive Statistics					
Items	Material needs	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
1	Laboratories are needed for a sustainable academic program	44	3.05	1.09	Agreed
2	Writing materials are not needed for an academic program to be effective	44	2.59	1.09	Agreed
3	Well-equipped classroom are needed for an academic program to be sustainable	44	2.91	.91	Agreed
4	A well-equipped library are essential for a sustainable academic program	44	2.66	1.14	Agreed
5	Instructional tools are not necessary for a program to be sustainable	44	3.25	.89	Agreed
6	Audiovisual gadgets enhance school academic program	44	2.57	1.28	Agreed
	Mean total impact	44	2.84	1.07	Agreed

The result of item one (1) based on the decision rule agreed that Laboratories are needed for a sustainable academic program with a mean rating = 3.05; SD=1.09. Similarly, the result in item two (2) agreed that Writing materials are not needed for an academic program to be effective (mean rating = 2.59; SD=1.09). Item three also agreed that Well-equipped classroom are needed for an academic program to be sustainable (mean rating = 2.91; SD=.91). Same for item four which also showed that a well-equipped library are essential for a sustainable academic program (mean rating = 2.66; SD=.1.14). Furthermore, result of item five based on the decision rule also agreed that instructional tools are not necessary for a program to be sustainable with a mean rating = 3.25; SD=.89, while item six also revealed that Audiovisual gadgets enhance school academic program (mean rating = 2.57; SD=1.28). In conclusion,

the summation of the mean ratings (mean rating =2.84; SD=1.07) of all the items revealed that material needs enhanced sustainability of academic programmes at Taraba State University.

Hypotheses testing

4.2.1 Hypothesis one

This research hypothesis stated that there is no significant influence of funding needs on sustainability of academic programmes at Taraba State Universities. The independent variable of this hypothesis was funding needs while the dependent variable was sustainability of academic programmes. The dataset for the two continuous variables was collated and analyzed using Simple regression statistics in testing the hypothesis and the results are presented in table 3.

Table 3: Summary of data and simple regression analysis on the influence of funding needs on sustainable academic programmes in Taraba State Universities

del	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
	.299 ^a	.089	.068	2.32191		
ANOVA ^b						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	22.203	1	22.203	4.118	.049 ^a
	Residual	226.433	42	5.391		
	Total	248.636	43			
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	23.274	1.672		13.922	.000
	Funding needs	.145	.072	.299	2.029	.049

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainable programme

The simple regression analysis on table 3 showed the effect of funding needs in predicting sustainable academic programme at Taraba State Universities produced an adjusted R² of .068. This implies that 6.8 percent of the variance on the dependent variable (sustainable academic programme) can be predicted from the independent variable (funding needs). The F-value value of 4.118 of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) obtained from the regression table with a p-value of .049 with 1 and 42 degrees of freedom at .05 significance level showed that the null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore signifies that funding needs significantly predicted sustainable academic programme. The result therefore implies that there was a

significant influence of funding needs on the sustainable academic programme at Taraba State Universities.

Hypothesis Two

This research hypothesis stated that material needs have no significant influence on sustainability of academic programmes at Taraba State Universities. The independent variable of this hypothesis was material needs while the dependent variable was sustainability of academic programmes. The dataset for the two continuous variables was collated and analyzed using Simple regression statistics in testing the hypothesis and the results are presented in table 4.

TABLE 4: Summary of data and simple regression analysis on the influence of material needs on sustainable academic programmes in Taraba State University

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
	.395 ^a	.156	.136	2.23550		
ANOVA ^b						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Regression	38.743	1	38.743	7.753	.008 ^a
Residual	209.893	42	4.997		
Total	248.636	43			
Coefficients ^a					
(Constant)	21.547	1.843		11.692	.000
Material needs	.205	.074	.395	2.784	.008

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainable programme

The simple regression analysis on table 4 showed the effect of material needs in predicting sustainable academic programme at Taraba State Universities produced an adjusted R^2 of .136. This implies that 13.6 percent of the variance on the dependent variable (sustainable academic programme) can be predicted from the independent variable (material needs). The F-value value of 7.753 of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) obtained from the regression table having a p-value of .008 with 1 and 42 degrees of freedom at .05 level of significance showed that the null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore signifies that material needs significantly predicted sustainable academic programme. The result therefore implies that there was a significant influence of material needs on the sustainable academic programme at Taraba State University.

Discussion

The sustainability for the continuous existence of any programme for achieving her goals lies on the funding and material needs of the programme. That is the ability to make judicious use of the available resources both human and materials and being able to replace the old and outdated with the current so as to achieve a long lasting and stable system that is of enormous benefits. This can be achieved by maintaining all the available resources for

the betterment and continuous co-existence of the various academic programmes. This result is in tandem with Ikegbusi and Iheanacho (2016) who noted that the failure for sustaining academic programmes in Nigeria stems from stems from not just adequate funding and provision of materials resources but shortage of lecturers, inadequate training, and poor motivation, stressing that lack of basic infrastructure, lack of leadership and administrative will, lack of adequate and accurate statistics, funding problems, embezzlement, bureaucratic bottle-neck of civil service and poor attitude to work are some of the major factors contributing to unsustainable academic programmes. Sustainable academic programme in developing nations is affected by the scarcity of resources (funding and material) and government policies that do not allow universities to decide independently on academic, administrative, and financial aspects (Blanco-Ramírez & Berger, 2014)). Management Need is the arrangement of available and adequate supply of human, financial, physical and material resources for the achievement of desired academic programme. Lipham (2016) and Nwadiani (2012) remarked that HODs needs could be human resources which are academic staff and non-academic staff with different area of specializations and roles, who are

employed to work in the tertiary institutions are in dear need of material resources, financial resources and physical resources as well as facilities and equipment that could facilitate teaching and learning. Also, resources such as duplicating papers, pens, ball pens, laboratory consumables, students' workbooks, textbooks, journals and their likes needed for the day to day management of the department are in short supply, thereby hampering sustainability of academic programmes in tertiary institutions. Chijioke, Enaohwo, & Ohia, (2017) remarked that funding is an essential ingredient that contributes to the success of any university education all over the world. The level of funds available to the HODs can determine the quality and quantity of resources that will be available for teaching, research, and community development.

Recommendations

From the result of the study the following recommendation were reached:

The government should make adequate funding avenues available for effective and efficient sustainability of academic programmes.

The school should source ways to generate internal revenue to fund academic programme for school productivity.

The school, the government and public spirited individuals should support the school by providing material resources for the sustainability of academic programme.

Conclusion

From the result standpoints of the study, the major findings are highlighted as follows:

Provision of funds are needed for training and retraining of staff, payment of staff salaries, purchase of laboratories and library facilities in order to enhance the sustainability of academic resources.

Provision of laboratories, a well-equipped library, instructional tools, writing materials, and other relevant worthwhile human and material materials are essential for the sustainability of academic program of any tertiary institution.

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