HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND ACADEMIC STAFF TURNOVER IN PUBLIC HIGHER INSTITUTIONS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract
The study sought to determine the human resource management practices in public (Federal and State government owned) higher institutions in Lagos State from 2001-2010 and the extent to which the same affected turnover in the institutions. The study was anchored on ex-post facto and descriptive research designs. It was guided by two research questions and two hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population was 3,333 academic staff as at 2010 (Federal higher institutions=1960; State higher institutions=1373). A sample of 474 academic staff (Federal=190; State=284), was drawn using stratified random sampling technique and consisting of only those staff that had spent a minimum of 10 years in service at their respective institutions. Two instruments used for data collection were questionnaires developed by the researchers. They are entitled Human Resource Management Practice Questionnaire (HRMPQ) and Records Observation on Academic Staff Turnover from the Institutions. Experts in measurement and evaluation assisted in ensuring the face validity of the instruments. The reliability of HRMPQ was ascertained using test re-test method within an interval of two weeks. The result was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and which yielded r=0.89.All the 474 copies of the instrument administered were properly completed, successfully retrieved and used for data analysis. Data were analyzed using percentages, mean score, Spearman correlation, and the General Linear Model (Univariate Analysis of Variance). These were supplemented with post hoc tests, tables and graphs. The results obtained showed that there is high turnover in both Federal and State higher institutions in Lagos State. However, there is significant difference between of human resource management practices based on types of higher institutions. Also, a significant difference existed between the means of the elements of human resource management practices; There was a strong negative correlation between human resource management practices and academic staff turnover in State higher institutions which was not statistically significant. Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that there should be increase in funding to higher institutions especially State owned ones; that career development opportunities be made for academic staff; and that promotion of deserving academic staff should be effected without undue delay, especially if such staff have met the required minimum standard for promotion

Keywords: Human resource management practices, Academic staff turnover, Retention.

Introduction

High productivity is one of the focal points of effective organizations worldwide. On the contrary, staff turnover is a serious concern for organizations because of its negative effect on productivity in terms of quality and quantity of production. One can therefore say that high productivity encourages organizations to remain in business while high staff turnover can make organizations run down. Both productivity and staff turnover are products of human resource management practices in organizations. The more pleasant and satisfying such practices are to workers, the higher will be productivity and the lower will be staff turnover, if any at all.

Human resource management practices influence employee skills through the acquisition and development of a firm's human capital, to (Snell & Dean (1994). Snell and Dean further argued that providing formal and informal training experiences, such as basic skills training, on-the-job experience, coaching, mentoring and management development can further influence employees' development.

The effectiveness of even highly skilled employees will be limited if they are not motivated to perform. However, human resource management practices can affect employee motivation by encouraging them to work harder and smarter. These suggest that the behaviour of employees within organizations has important implications for organizational performance and that human resource management practices can affect individual employee performance through their influence over employees' skills and motivation and through organizational structures that allow employees to improve on how their jobs are performed. In line with this, Armstrong (2000) suggests an overall human resource plan for organizations which should consider the following measures meant to counteract skill shortages and reduce number of young people entering the labour market.

Looking at factors that can make workers put in their best to productivity in an organization and reduce turnover, Aina (2005) suggests a number of motivating factors such as increased salaries and wages, incentive systems, work ethics, quality and style of supervision of management, knowledge and skills of workers and the reward system of management. Perhaps, it could be said that management's long-standing concern with motivation stems from the fact that low worker motivation is thought to be reflected in such circumstances as low productivity, strikes, personal conflicts between supervisors and their subordinates, absenteeism, and high labour turnover.

Chapman's theory of vocational choice as explained by Allen and Griffeth (1999) is of interest to the focus of the study. The theory of vocational choice posits that "vocational satisfaction, stability and achievement depend on the congruence between one's personality and work environment". Further analysis of this theory in relation to retention and attrition shows that factors like genetic endowment and special abilities, environmental conditions and events, learning experiences and

task approach skills explain why individuals change occupations throughout their lives. High involvement work practices, a principle under human resource management practices and personnel activities, is premised on the fact that the employees are the most important element in the structure of an organization. This principle, when implemented, ensures the survival of the organization. It is therefore imperative that institutions plan and implement programmes that will achieve stated objectives by obtaining, retaining and developing the quantity and quality of human resources they need and whose personality are in congruence with the work environment

Based on the above analogy, academic staff retention and attrition in higher institutions would therefore be a function of personal characteristics, educational preparation, initial commitment to teaching, quality of teaching experience, social and professional integration into teaching, and external influences. By implication, it is essential for organizations to plan the quality of workers serving as inputs into the system, put up measures that will guarantee their retention, motivate and develop them. As depicted by Fig 1 such measures and their results are ideally encapsulated by the human resource management practices of such organizations along with their contradiction and the opposite results in a mirror form.

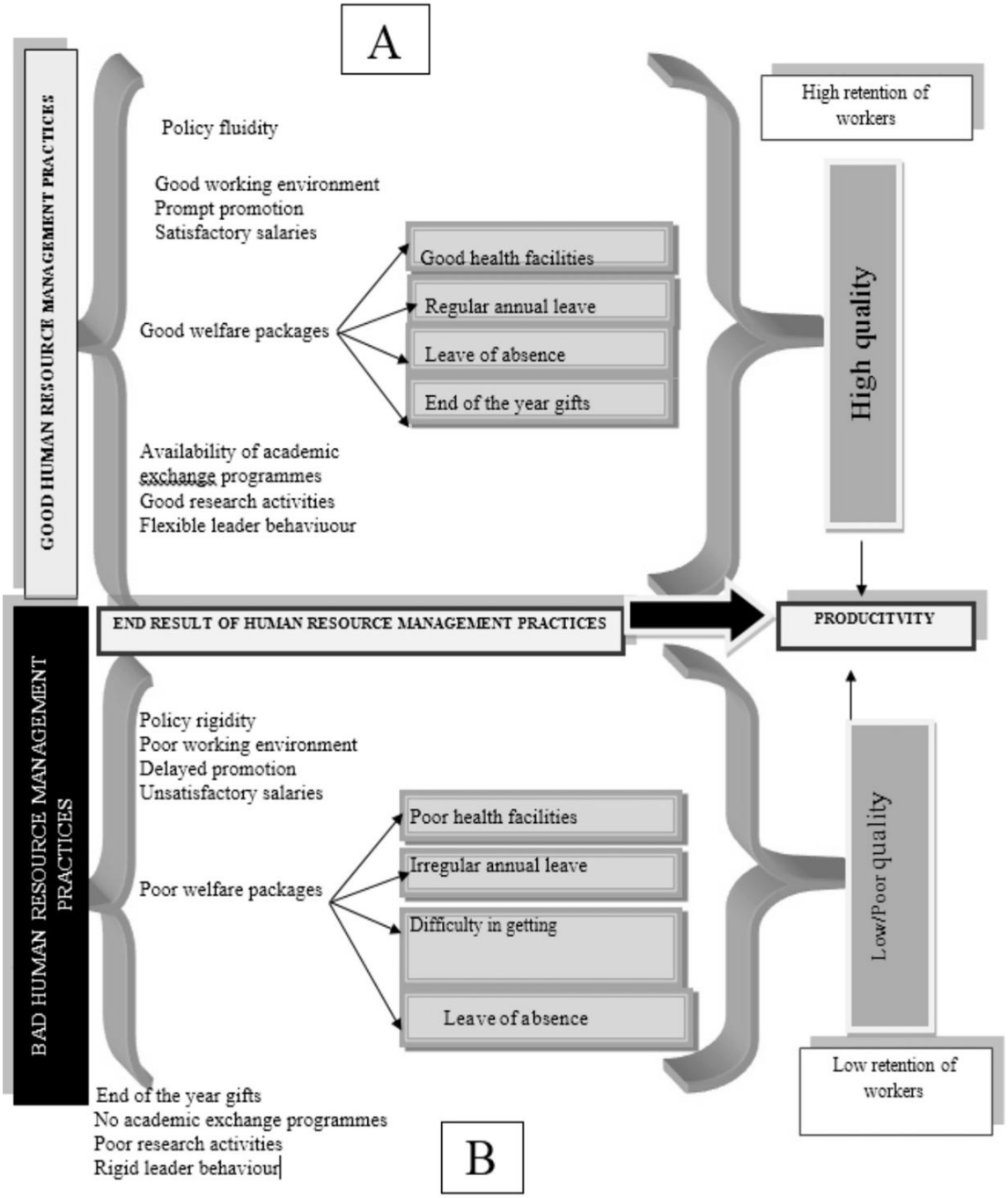

Fig. 1: Human resource management practices, workers' retention and productivity – A theoretical framework (Researcher, 2014)

Figure 1 represents the mirror image of some of the human resource management practices available in organizations, labelled here as A and B. Portion A shows good human resource management practices made up of policy fluidity (or flexibility) of the organization , good working environment, prompt promotion, satisfactory salaries, good welfare packages, availability of academic exchange programmes, challenging research activities, and flexible leader behaviour exhibited by the organization's leader(s). Portion B of Figure 1 is diametrically opposed portion A. All things being equal, portion A would encourage high retention of workers (of good quality) and consequently lead to quality productivity. Whatever the style of human resource management practices adopted, the end result is expected to produce quality output. This will however depend on the quality of the input right from the planning stage.

A number of authors have explored the links between individual human resource management practices and other variables, such as organizational financial performance. For example, Cascio (1991) and Flamholtz (1985) argue that the financial returns associated with investments in progressive human resource management practices are generally substantial. The use of performance appraisals (Borman, 1991) and linking such appraisals and compensation have also been consistently connected with increased firm's profitability (Gerhart and Milkovich, 1992). Scholars have consistently found that the use of human resource management practices positively or negatively enhances an affects some other organizational variables. Specifically, extensive recruitment, selection and training procedures, formal information sharing, attitude assessment, job design, grievance procedures, and labour-management participation programmes, as well as performance appraisal, promotion and incentive compensation systems that recognize and reward employees' merit have all been widely linked with valued organizational-level variables. These policies and procedures have been labelled high performance work practices by the United States Department of Labour (1993).

There have been series of reports and complaints about academic staff members leaving Nigerian higher institutions for greener pastures, explaining the implications for the nation's general growth and development (Okebukola, 2002). Some of the causes have been traced to human resource management practices in such organizations, which has generally been categorized as favourable, unfavourable or satisfactory. Every organization, including, higher educational institutions will prefer to retain its best hands at work, especially academic staff. When organizations adopt high involvement work practices, workers will find it difficult to leave such organizations and the reverse will be the case when organizations hardly involve workers in decision making, especially on matters relating to their welfare. An important implication with respect to using or retaining workers, regarded as critical human assets, is employee retention. Employees are

deemed critical in high-involvement institutions because these institutions will be employee-centered by design. To facilitate this approach, high involvement institutions use human resource practices that develop and support a workforce which is self-programming and self-managing.

Using these descriptions as a base, a number of issues arise here with reference to higher institutions of education in Lagos State, which are at the peak of academic institutions and which stand as pillars that hold the structures of national development. It is worthwhile to examine the human resource management practices that are in these institutions made up of Federal and State Universities; Federal and State Polytechnics; and Federal and State Colleges of Education. Questions may also be raised as to the extent to which these practices encourage academic staff to remain on their jobs or leave for greener pastures and how these practices reflect in the job environment of academic staff. Do these practices negatively affect state owned higher institutions more than their federal counterparts? These are questions that underlie the problem of this study.

The study sought to find out the status of human resource management practices existing in all the public higher institutions in Lagos state and to determine the academic staff turnover (partial and permanent) in the institutions.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What form of relationship exists between human resource management practices and academic staff turnover between Federal and State higher institutions in Lagos state?
2. What are the differences in human resource management practices in higher institutions in Lagos State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between human resource management practices and academic staff turnover in higher institutions in Lagos State
2. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of human resource management practices in Federal and State higher institutions in Lagos State

Method

The mixed design of *ex-post facto* and descriptive research designs was used in this study. This is because the researcher did not manipulate any of the variables regarding the study at hand. The events involving the variables had

already occurred and the respective data were collected thereafter from the sampled institutions

The study population was made up of all the academic staff of all the seven public higher institutions in Lagos state. This included the University of Lagos, Akoka, Yaba, Lagos State University, Ojo, Federal College of Education (Technical), Akoka, Yaba, Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Otto-Ijanikin, Yaba College of Technology, Yaba, Akoka, Lagos State Polytechnic, Ikorodu, and Michael Otedola College of Education, Noforija, Epe. The study population was 3,333 academic staff made up of 1,960 academic staff in the federal higher institutions and 1,373 academic staff in the state higher institutions within the time frame of the study (2001-2010).

Six institutions were sampled and this includes the University of Lagos, Akoka, Yaba, Lagos State University, Ojo, Federal College of Education (Technical) Akoka, Yaba, Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Otto-Ijanikin, Yaba College of Technology, Yaba Akoka, and Lagos State Polytechnic, Ikorodu. Thus, Michael Otedola College of Primary Education was therefore not part of the sample. The sample sizes for these institutions were 190 academic staff for the federal institutions and 284 academic staff for the state institutions totaling 474 respondents representing one- third of the population.

Two instruments were used to collect data for the study. These are a researcher-constructed questionnaire tagged 'Human Resources Management Practices Questionnaire' (HRMPQ) and Records Observation on Academic Staff turnover from the Institutions . The HRMPQ has four sections: A, B, C and D. Section A sourced the personal information of the respondents. The elements in this section sourced information about respondents' name of institution, institution's nomenclature, institution's status, educational qualification, academic cadre, gender, year of employment into the institution as a lecturer, and experience as a lecturer. Section B, broken down into 5 sub-sections (B_1- B_5), consists of items on the institutions' pillars of human resource management practices. All these were encapsulated by variables such as 'management's policy fluidity (B_1), management/staff relationship (B_2), state of environment, welfare structure (B_3), research activities (B_4), and other human resource management practices' (B_5). In all, there were 43 items in section B. Section C required respondents to state any other human resource management practices adopted by their institutions in the period under review which were meant to improve productivity and retain academic staff. In section D, respondents were required to tick, as appropriate, the type of academic staff turnover experienced in terms of high or low, good human resource management practices and bad human resource management practices, if applicable.

The other instrument was Records Observation which was constructed to obtain records from various institutions on turnover of staff (partial and permanent) between 2001 and 2010. Specifically, these records were collected from the

institutional staff records released by the Academic Planning units or the Personnel/Establishment Divisions of the institutions under study. The records showed academic staff who had gone on sabbatical, leave of absence, and those who permanently resigned due to the human resource management practices of the institutions from 2001 to 2010.

The questionnaire HRMPQ was validated by experts. The second instrument which was used to collect data from the institutions' records was adjudged valid as it was meant to collect already existing data from the primary source

The reliability coefficient of HRMPQ was established using the test-retest method. This involved a two-time administration of the instrument, allowing for a period of two weeks interval. Data from the two separate times of administration were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis. A coefficient of 0.89 was obtained which is considered high enough and ensured consistency of the instrument for the study. The second instrument (Records Observation) was also considered reliable by expert judgment for collection of required primary source data. On the scheduled dates copies of the Human Resource Management Practices Questionnaire (HRMPQ) were administered and collected back from participants of the spot. All the 474 copies of the instruments administered were successfully completed, retrieved and used for data analysis. Data were analysed using percentages, arithmetic mean, spearman correlation and general linear model (univariate analysis of variance).

The summary of human resource management practices in the sampled institutions was examined. Elements of human resource management practices considered by the study include policy fluidity (which shows the extent to which management is proactive to situations/ challenges through policies which are consonance with workers survival or the growth of the institutions), management/staff relationship (which shows the connection/ flow of relationship and communication between management and staff members to produce cordial relationship or otherwise), academic environment (which shows how conducive and stress free academic environment is in relation to academic activities, this element shows the extent to which academic staff members are satisfied with facilities within their institutions to make their jobs of teaching research and community services easy, a reflection of management's ingenuity), welfare (this implies how management teams show concern through prompt payments of staff salaries, annual increments, bonuses, health services, housing facilities, leaves,(annual, sabbatical, training, leave of absence) among others.) and research activities (which shows how management encourages research activities in higher institutions especially the support given to academic staff members without PhD through the provision of necessary facilities). See Table 1.

Results

Research Question 1

What form of relationship exists between human resource management practices and academic staff turnover between Federal and State higher institutions in Lagos state?

Table 1:Valued Elements of Human Resource Management Practices in Higher Institutions in Lagos State between 2001 and 2010 (in %)

	Institutions							
	Federal				State			
	UNILAG	FEDCOLL	YABATECH	Mean	LASU	AOCOED	LAGOSPOLY	Mean
Policy fluidity	68.72	69.9	67.21	68.61	66.39	67.87	72.2	68.8
Mgt./staff relationship	71.97	68.58	68.95	69.83	62.4	69.14	71.88	67.81
Academic environment	55.61	53.24	65.01	57.96	54.85	50.78	55.48	53.70
Welfare	60.68	66.25	70.29	65.74	60.23	60.16	64.67	61.69
Research activities	68.72	68.65	74.84	70.74	60.59	67.38	68.01	65.33
MEAN AVERAGE				**66.58**				**63.47**

The result provided that in general, the higher institutions in Lagos state scored 68.7% on policy fluidity (68.6% and 68.8% for Federal and State institutions respectively); 68.8% for management/ staff relationship (69.8% and 67.8% for federal and state institutions respectively); 55.8% for Academic environment (58.0% and 53.70% for federal and state institutions respectively); 63.71% for welfare (65.74% and 61.69% for federal and state institutions respectively); and 68.03% for Research activities (70.7% and 65.3% for federal and state institutions respectively). Overall, the human resource practices for higher institutions in Lagos State were 66.6% for Federal Institutions and 63.47% for State institutions respectively, hence irrespective of the type of institution it was 65.02%.

On a comparative note, the Federal higher institutions have a slight edge over their State counterparts, under the period of review in terms of valued elements of human resource management practices going by mean value of 66.58% as against the 63.47% of the state. An illustration of this difference in terms of implementation of human resource management practices in these institutions is presented in Fig 2.

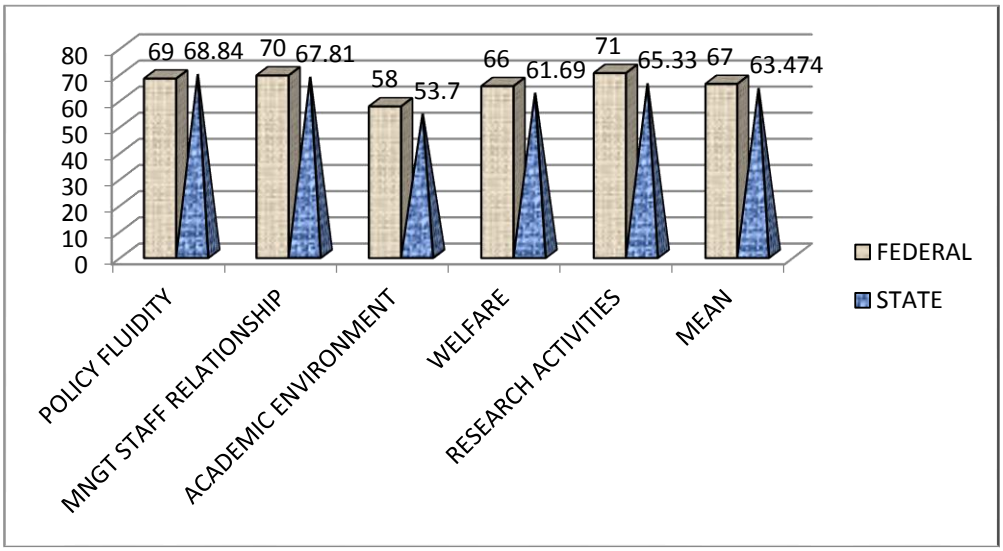

Fig.2: **Mean values of human resource management practices between federal and state higher institutions in Lagos State**

As mentioned earlier, federal higher institutions have higher mean value than their state counterparts. This indicates that the federal higher institutions have better human resource management practices than state higher institutions.

Research Question 2

What form of relationship exists between human resource management practices and academic staff turnover between federal and state higher institutions in Lagos State?

Table 2: Human Resource Management Practices and Academic Staff Turnover between Federal and State Higher Institutions in Lagos State

Institutions	Federal		State	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Academic Staff	33.20	6.797	32.20	7.190
Human resource Practices	66.58	5.172	63.47	6.119

An inverse relationship was observed between human resource management practices and academic staff turnover in higher institutions. When there are good or pleasant human resource management practices there is low turnover. It was also noted that the federal institutions had better human resource management practices than their states counterparts with a mean value of 66.58% and 63.47% and with Standard Deviation (SD) of 6.797 and 7.190 respectively.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between human resource management practices and academic staff turnover in higher institutions in Lagos State.

In order to test this null hypothesis, the General Linear model (Univariate Analysis) was applied to compare and contrast the human resources management practices between the Federal and state higher institutions in Lagos State. Thus, the scores on the elements of human resource practices was the dependent variable for which the type of institutions (Federal and state) performances where contrasted, using a 2 X 5 factorial design.

Table 3: Summary of Correlation Analysis between Human Resource Management Practices and Academic Staff Turnover in Higher Institutions in Lagos State

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	r.cal	r.val	Decision
Academic Staff Turnover	5	32.20	7.190				
				8	-.800	.104	*
Human Resource Practices	5	63.47	6.119				

* Significant at 0.05 Level (2 tailed)

Table 3 results returned a mean of 32.20 academic staff turnover for State higher institutions, with a standard deviation of 7.190 and mean of 63.47 and standard deviation of 5.172 for human resource management practices. There was a strong negative correlation between human resource management practices and academic staff turnover in State higher institutions which was not statistically significant ($r_s(5) = .600, p>.05$**)**

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the mean scores of human resource management practices in Federal and State higher institutions in Lagos state.

The Spearman correlation was employed to test the second hypothesis. The data obtained in respect of human resource management practices in State higher institutions and the academic staff turnover in the institutions for the same time period was analyzed.

Table 4: Summary table of tests of between-subjects effects on differences between the means of human resource management practices in Federal and State higher institutions in Lagos State

Source	Type III SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	PEtaSqd	Nt. P	O P[b]
Corrected Model	842.392[a]	9	93.599	6.535	.000	.746	58.815	.998
Intercept	126841.016	1	126841.016	8855.988	.000	.998	8855.988	1.000
Type of Institution	72.199	1	72.199	5.041	.036	.201	5.041	.570
Elements of HRP	740.513	4	185.128	12.926	.000	.721	51.702	1.000
*Type of Instn * Elements of HRP*	29.679	4	7.420	.518	.723	.094	2.072	.148
Error	286.453	20	14.323					
Total	127969.860	30						
Corrected Total	1128.844	29						

a. R Squared = .746 (Adjusted R Squared = .632)

b. Computed using alpha = .05

From Table 4, the result of the tests of between subjects effects that were performed revealed that significant differences existed between the means of human resource practices for the type of institutions ($F(1, 20) = 5.041$, $p<.05$). The results further provided that significant difference existed between the means of the elements of human resource practice, $F (4, 20) = 12.926$, $<.05$ (see Table 4).

The results of the main effects were however not substantiated by the interaction effect result which provided that no significant difference existed between the means of human resource practices between Federal and State higher institutions in Lagos state ($F (4, 20) = .518$, $p >.05$).

A post hoc test, Duncan test, (see Table 5), that was performed on the mean scores for the elements of human resource practices in the tertiary institutions, in general revealed that three homogeneous groups existed: the mean for academic environment formed the first homogeneous group; the mean for welfare and research activities formed a second homogeneous group while the means for research activities, policy fluidity and management/staff relationship formed the third homogeneous group. The means for welfare was homogeneous to the first and the last groups. The ordering of the means was management/staff relationship > policy fluidity > research activities > welfare > academic environment.

Table 5: Post hoc (Duncan) test on the means of elements of human resource practices in Federal and State higher institutions in Lagos state

Elements of Human Resource Practices	N	Subset 1	2	3
Duncan[a,,b]				
Academic Environment	*6*	55.8283		
Welfare	*6*		63.7133	
Research Activities	*6*		68.0317	68.0317
Policy Fluidity	*6*			68.7233
Management-staff Relationship	*6*			68.820
Sig.		***1.000***	***0 .062***	***0 .737***

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.
Based on observed means.
The error term is Mean Square(Error) = 14.323.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 6.000.
b. Alpha = .05.

Discussion

The result provided that in general, the human resource management practices for higher institutions in Lagos State irrespective of the type of institution was 65.02% (66.6% for Federal Institutions and 63.47% for State institutions respectively). Considering the individual elements of human resource practices however, the higher institutions in the state scored 68.7% on policy fluidity (68.6% and 68.8% for Federal and State owned institutions respectively); 68.8% for management staff relationship (69.8% and 67.8% for Federal and State institutions respectively); 55.8% for Academic environment (58.0% and 53.7% for Federal and State institutions respectively); 63.71% for welfare (65.74% and 61.68% for Federal and State institutions respectively); and 68.03% for research activities (70.7% and 65.3% for Federal and State institutions respectively.

Examination on the level of efficiency on each element showed that the higher institutions had the best performance in the area of management/staff relationship. This was followed by policy fluidity, then, a research activity, which was followed by welfare, while academic environment had the least score. The result of the test of the null hypothesis revealed that significant differences existed between the mean ratings of human resource management practices based on the type of institutions. In other words, the federal and state owned higher institutions performed differently, with the advantage on the side of the federal institutions.

The results further provided that significant difference existed between the means of the elements of human resource practice. In other words, the level of performance on the elements of human resource practices differs significantly. The

performance on research activities, policy fluidity and management/staff relationship made a similar category that was better than the performance on welfare and research activities, which formed a second category, while the performance on Academic environment stood out as the last and seems not to have been properly attended to by the institutions.

There was however, no significant difference between the mean scores of human resource management practices between Federal and State higher institutions in Lagos State. In other words, the differences that existed in the human resource practices between the federal and state owned institutions were found to be insignificant as they performed similarly on the overall basis, which even then is considered not to be good enough though they are not poor as well.

Braindrain or labour turnover, according to Okebukola (2002) is one of the major challenges facing higher education in Nigeria. As observed in this study therefore, turnover rate in Lagos State tertiary institutions reflect an environment where according to Caplan and Teese (2007) employees feel they are taken advantage of, are undervalued or ignored, helpless or unimportant. Other factors may include inadequate salaries, allowances, housing and promotions (Kamara & Kamara, 2002).

The managers appeared to be impersonal, arbitrary and demanding thus making employees to become alienated, especially, where managers are irresponsive to employee's needs and wants, and making a poor handling of major corporate events, such as mergers or layoffs. It is important therefore, that the human resource practices in Lagos State tertiary institutions (that is, federal and state alike) be scrutinized so as to avoid losing experienced and formidable skilled workforce (Caplan & Teese, 2007; Kamara 2002; Khatri, Budhwar & Fern, 1999).

The null hypothesis two was rejected as significant relationship was observed. This implied that the management practices is the major reason for the turnover that occurs in the Federal and State higher institutions in the state. This perspective finds support in the works of Arthur (1994) and Santhappraj (2005) who found that human resource management practices that is commitment versus control, interacts with turnover to affect the impact on productivity and on employee departure, while pleasant organizational practices are positively related to staff turnover. In other words, the high turnover in Federal and State higher institutions in Lagos State can be accounted for by poor working environment. This situation should be improved upon if the retention of lecturers must be ascertained.

Conclusion

It was concluded that human resource practices between the federal and state owned institutions were found to be insignificant as they performed similarly on the overall basis, which even then is considered not to be good enough though they are not poor as well. Hence, the process of academic staff members moving from one institution to another was a result of bad human resource management practices

in higher institutions resulted into total loss to the academia after investing much in the staff invested much time and resources on such staff.

`Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are made.

1. University management should ensure that promotion of deserving academic staff university management should ensure that effected without undue delay, especially if such staff have met constituted minimum standard for promotion.
2. The State government should adopt, as a matter of principle or policy, the construction of capital projects annually to meet the physical projects' needs of higher institutions owned by the State. This should include housing projects.
3. Management teams of public higher institutions should always adopt proactive human resource management strategies based on emerging needs.
4. Management teams must recognize workers as the most paramount element in the quest for growth and development in the institutions. In this regard, workers' views about turnover should regularly be sought and the challenges constantly addressed. It may not be associated with salaries, showing concerns for staff welfare and actualizing the best Human Resource Management Practices may produce the desired results.
5. The institutions management should set aside a period or date in each semester or session when staff members can hold 'get-togethers', a form of leisure or relaxation, to encourage group cohesion. This can guarantee workers' retention. Merit should be recognized and commended, by organizing merit/honours awards as this will help promote excellence and serve as a motivation strategy.

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