

Role of Administrators in the Training and Monitoring of Attendance of Staff on Hybridization of Learning in Universities in Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study looked at how university administrators in Nigeria's Enugu State are contributing to the increasing hybridization of education. The paradigm used in the study was quantitative. It used a descriptive survey research design specifically. The sample size is 40 university administrators. Two theories served as the study's compass. The application of Skinner's Reinforcement Theory and Expectancy Theory was the study's key component. Data were gathered directly from respondents using a sixteen-item questionnaire. A statistical tool for analysis was the t-test. The study's conclusions showed that personnel at both public and private universities were trained and retrained by their management. They also monitor their staff attendance to work for punctuality, among others. Findings also revealed that administrators do not bear the cost of all needed training and retraining programmes, and they also do not provide proctors for monitoring students' examinations. Based on these results, the researchers suggested that administrators at universities should seek funds to help cover the expense of funding training and retraining. For effective monitoring of staff on hybridization of learning, university administrators should ensure that they provide course proctors to monitor students during online examinations. These will enable the administrators to perform their roles efficiently to ensure effective hybridization of learning in their universities.

Keywords: University, hybridization of learning, administrative roles; training and monitoring of attendance

Introduction

Education is an inevitable machinery for inculcating national and global development of a country. Education, therefore, is a natural right of every individual in the society. In Nigeria education follows a structured system with various levels. According to the Federal Government of Nigeria (2013) in its National Policy on Education, these levels comprise early childhood education, primary education, secondary education, tertiary education, technical and vocational education and adult and non-formal education. Drawing from Saleh (2017), universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, and monotechnics are examples of tertiary education.

Every society knows that universities are essential for a country's development and progress. In Nigeria, university education is a vital aspect of the country's educational system. It critically plays an important role in shaping the nation's future. Ahmed (2013) argued that it is a well-accepted

and experimentally demonstrated fact that rapid economic and social progress cannot be ensured in a nation unless its population have received a good education and proper training. According to Babalola (2009), it is also well known that colleges around the globe are businesses that create and disseminate knowledge, or the public good. The researcher persisted in emphasizing that teaching, learning, and research have always been at the centre of universities' knowledge production. Thus, it is thought that for university education to fulfil the purpose for which it was created, it needs to be well planned. In Enugu State there are three public universities and four private universities all these help to provide quality education to the community.

In today's world, education has advanced technologically at a fast rate and very flexible. It is even more advanced following the COVID-19 pandemic. Logically, it will follow that university education has also advanced. As a result, university learning is becoming more hybridized due to students' increasing desire for flexible learning resources that enable them to study at home or on the go.

Hybridization in learning is not a recent programme, today it is believed to be associated with COVID-19. However, it had been used as soon as telecommunications became popular. According to Remond (2017), educational programmes were offered on radio and television and they were referred to as distance learning. The use of media to allow for the temporal and spatial separation of the teaching and learning processes is known as distance education (Caldes, 2000).

The term "hybridization," which was adopted and made popular to describe the teaching approach that combines in-person and virtual instruction, is evidence that the arguments against in-person vs remote learning have come to an end (Remond et al., 2020; Knauf & Falgas, 2020). Online and in-person learning activities are combined in hybrid learning. This is an educational approach where some students participate electronically from home, while others attend lectures or seminars in person as usual. According to Mark and Felina (2022), the COVID-19 pandemic has altered the nature of education in all educational institutions worldwide and sparked a desire among academics and practitioners to address the issues raised and develop novel approaches to the delivery of online instruction.

To put it simply, hybrid learning is when teachers teach students simultaneously in both online and offline settings (Okon, 2023). Hybrid refers to a "mixture". According to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, a hybrid is something that is created by combining two or more distinct elements. Under the hybrid learning paradigm of education, some students participate in in-person

classes while others participate digitally from their homes or offices (Owllabs, 2021). For the success of hybrid learning there should be increased student engagement and improved learning performance this can be achieved if the management and personnel carry out their duties efficiently. Therefore, for effective handling of this innovative form of learning teachers who are to handle it must be trained and retrained, and their attendance to classes must be also monitored for punctuality.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to determine the degree to which administrators in the institutions located in Enugu State, Nigeria, carry out their duties of staff attendance monitoring and training on hybridized learning. Both in-person and virtual learning are here to stay in the post-COVID-19 age. The hybridization of learning, as it is called, is becoming more and more popular in universities and is seen as a positive innovation in education.

Therefore, the problem of this study was to determine the degree to which administrators carry out their duties of staff attendance monitoring and training regarding the hybridization of learning for sustainability and efficacy.

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to investigate the role of administrators in implementing hybrid learning. Its specific objectives were to:

1. Determine the administrative role of staff training for efficient hybridization of learning in the universities.
2. Establish the administrative role of monitoring attendance for punctuality in hybridization of learning in universities.

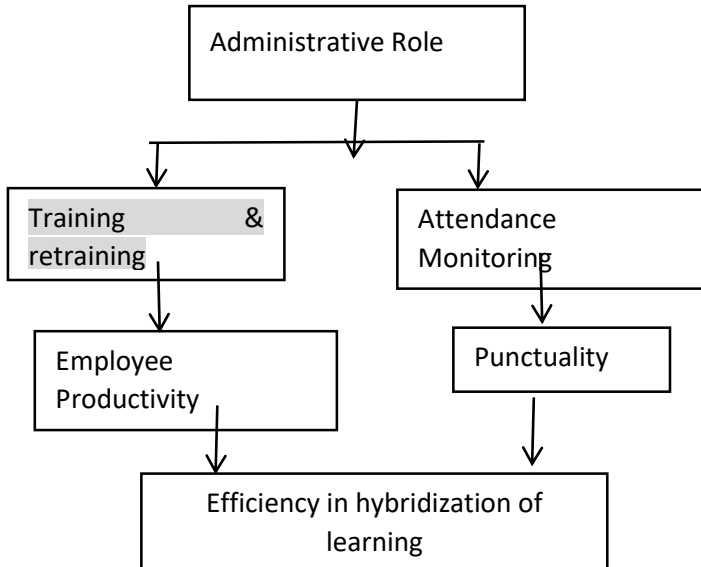
Research Hypotheses

Ho₁: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of administrators of public universities and administrators of private universities on their administrative role of training staff for efficient hybridization of learning in the universities.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of administrators of public universities and administrators of private universities on their administrative role of monitoring attendance for punctuality in hybridization of learning in universities.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Framework



Source: Etukokwu (2021)

Professional development in teacher education has been seen as an essential attempt to improve teaching skills, according to Okon (2023). The researchers also stated that several educators have undertaken several initiatives to investigate novel approaches for motivating aspiring educators, students, practicing educators, and experienced educators to advance their level of teaching proficiency. Training is the advancement in a teacher's career that comes from gaining more experience and conducting a methodical analysis of their instruction. It ought to take a lifetime to complete. One of the most potential avenues for improving education is through in-service training provided by the university. Goals, content, training methodology, and context should all be included in training (Che 2014). The researcher noted that one of the administrator's primary responsibilities is training.

The process of training staff members to become more proficient in each job by teaching them new ideas, norms, or attitudes is known as training. Ofoburuku (2015) goes on to define it as the skills and knowledge—as well as the growth of mental faculties and character—acquired through methodical instruction delivery aimed at enhancing workers' productivity within a company. Since it has the power to enhance performance at the individual, managerial, and organizational levels, training plays a critical administrative role. Training at universities is meant to fill in skill gaps so

that the best possible teaching services are always given without expensive errors (Etukokwu, 2021).

An adequately trained teacher has the confidence to make big decisions effectively and efficiently that aids the smooth running of the institution. Training is not just tailored to the professional field of an employee, training can also be organized in other areas to teach employees how to handle stress, tension, conflict and frustration in the workplace that may impede the smooth running of the organization (Etukokwu, 2021). So more than just providing the necessary skill needed to complete a task, training also provides social and mental skills to handle the challenges that may come with the job. According to Hanaysha (2016), employee productivity is a measure of a worker's or a group of workers' efficiency.

According to Ofoburuku and Nwakoby (2016), productivity is measured as the output produced by a defined input of an employee. The success of an organization is measured against its productivity as it is closely tied to the profits of the Organization as well, this is why many organizations pay very specific attention to the productivity of their employees. Furthermore, Etukokwu (2021) noted that productivity of an employee can be improved when all gaps have been identified and training is provided to plug the identified gaps.

A key component of improving teachers' professionalism in relation to their goal of raising the calibre of their job is training. Teachers will be introduced to innovative concepts and cutting-edge resources through in-service training, which can enhance hybrid learning. As a result, training ought to be proactive as opposed to reactive. The training's efficacy is contingent upon its customisation and adherence to positive notions. Strong leadership is necessary for in-service training at universities in this regard, as emphasised by Che (2014). According to Hacer (2012), an administrator's ability to lead effectively is correlated with their active participation in the school's learning and development process. The administrator should be dedicated to determining the instructors' training requirements and developing appropriate curricula in accordance with those demands. To get staff members to agree to attend the training, the school administration should also raise awareness of the necessity of in-service training for teachers. Instructor attendance at training needs to be encouraged and motivated (Ekpoh et al, 2013).

Another role of the school administrator is in attendance monitoring for punctuality in the schools. An administrator establishes the framework and structure for accomplishing goals to be aware of what is happening in the school for school improvement and for accountability to students, parents,

and the community. It is also the responsibility of the administrator to supervise/monitor the system to ensure that these goals are met through continuous monitoring and support.

An effective method of gauging employee punctuality is through attendance monitoring. This is because employee attendance directly affects an organization's overall success. Monitoring attendance will show which employees are constantly early, late or always giving excuses not to be at work. Failure to monitor attendance will give employees the leeway to be off work, thereby, neglecting the duties they are supposed to be performing (Etukokwu, 2021). There are several ways of monitoring attendance in an organization, in most places attendance can be monitored electronically, using a biometric attendance system. It can also be monitored by providing unique login credentials to employees who work with a computer at their jobs, in that way, if any employee fails to log in, it will raise a red flag (Thierry, 2018).

Attendance can also be monitored manually, using an attendance register, which is used in some institutions. The administrative officer, or Head of the department, according to Etukokwu (2021), uses the attendance register to monitor attendance and to put defaulting officers in order. Also, to ensure that employees do not abuse leaves, proper documentation are requested to back up some type of leave applications like, sick leave, maternity leave, exam leave, among others. In the private/ public sector, an administrative officer is appointed to keep track of all employees on leave to ensure that they do not overstay the approved number of days.

Punctuality in the workplace refers simply to being on time. It can further be explained as the ability to complete an assigned task within the time limit set for its completion. Making sure that workers show up for work every day and can finish their shifts is the goal of timeliness (Thierry, 2018). Punctuality increases respect among co-workers, helps one to imbibe strong work ethics and most importantly improves productivity and performance of an organization. Attendance monitoring is, therefore, used to deter employees from taking unnecessary excuses, using fake sick leaves and other means not to be at work, as these hamper work relationships and reduce productivity (Thierry, 2018).

Effective monitoring of hybrid learning will ensure that teachers and students are punctual to class for effective teaching to take place. According to Michelle (2024), face-to-face video technology, having a course proctor—someone who personally watches a student's actions through video conferencing to ensure a student is being honest and following policies—and designing coursework that reduces the need to monitor student work are some monitoring tools in hybridized

learning. One problem facing the expanding virtual education paradigm is specifically keeping an eye on the virtual classroom.

Theoretical Review

The foundation of this research is hinged on the application of expectancy theory (Fletcher & Williams, 1996) which proposes that behaviors result from conscious choices among alternatives, based on the expected utility and rewards of said behaviors. Expectancy theory consists of expectancy, instrumentality and valence. This theory therefore is mainly used for the monitoring of employee performance. Amongst others it is used to determine training needs, analyze the success of the training through the assessment of employee performance as it relates to achievement of organizational goals.

According to B.F. Skinner's 1938 reinforcement theory, as stated in Amutan (2014), an individual's behaviour is determined by the outcomes of their actions. According to Etukokwu (2021) if an employee is complemented for being early it may lead to the employee repeating good behaviour. However, if there is removal of positive consequences it will reduce the likelihood of an employee repeating an undesirable behaviour like late attendance to school.

Review of Empirical Studies

Mbiye, Egessa, and Musiega (2014) looked at staff training and how it affected workers' productivity in the public sector. The aim of the research was to evaluate how employee productivity is affected by training approaches. The study's methodology included conducting interviews and using a questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the data analysis process. The results showed that staff productivity was positively impacted by training approaches. Present study is to determine if the administrators perform their role of training and retraining in the universities.

Asogwa (2014) also investigated the Enugu Civil Service's performance management system between 1999 and 2011. The study's goals were to identify the issues with performance management in the Enugu State Civil Service, evaluate the impact of performance appraisal on performance management, and look at the strategies used to improve performance management there. Data from a sample of 505 people was gathered through in-person interviews and a quantitative research methodology. The researcher suggested that state employees undergo training and retraining more frequently, particularly in the field of internet communication and

technology (ICT). The research is distinct from the current study since it is being conducted in Enugu State universities.

The impact of the Internal Monitoring System on teachers, attendance, attitudes, and performance was examined by Sajad and Zahida (2020). For the study, the researchers used a descriptive design. Included in the population was every elementary school teacher in District Mianwali. The tool used to acquire the data was a questionnaire. The results showed that instructors' attitudes and performance increased more than expected because of internal monitoring of attendance. The current study will investigate how administrators are involved in staff attendance tracking and training about hybridized learning in higher education.

In Etukokwu's (2021) study, employee performance in federal public health facilities in southeast Nigeria was investigated in relation to the performance management system. A survey design was used in the investigation. 25,810 health workers from five states in the southeast Geopolitical Zone were included in the study. Slovin's statistical technique was used to generate a sample of 394 participants for the study. The tool used to get the data was a structured questionnaire. Using the Statistical Package for Social Science, Ordinal Logistics Regression was used to evaluate the hypotheses. The results showed that, among other things, employee productivity is positively impacted by training and attendance monitoring. The present study is similar but was carried out in the universities in Enugu State.

After reviewing several relevant studies for this research, the investigators found that little research had been done on performance monitoring and training for university lecturers towards the improvement of hybrid learning, institutional efficacy, and 21st-century student success. Thus, the goal of this work is to close this gap that has been noted.

Methodology

The quantitative paradigm was used in the investigation. In particular, the descriptive survey research design was used. This design was justified by the desire to hear from some administrators on their roles in promoting staff training and keeping an eye on employees' timeliness. This study was conducted in Enugu state, Nigeria.

In Enugu State, there are public and private universities. The public universities are three; one federal-owned and two state-owned. There are also four privately owned universities. All the universities are approved by the National Universities Commission (NUC). Therefore, the total number of universities in Enugu State is seven. The staff of the quality assurance unit of the

universities will be used for this study as administrators. The population of the study was 60 administrators in public and 54 administrators in private universities, from which a sample of 20 administrators each were selected by simple random sampling technique for the study.

A sixteen-item questionnaire with eight clusters and a four-point attitude scale with options for strongly agreeing, agreeing, disagreeing, and disagreeing was used as the data collection tool. Three experts in educational administration and test and measurement face-validated the tool. After the instrument underwent additional pilot testing, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient formula was used to determine a test-retest coefficient of 0.82.

The information was gathered immediately and in person by the researchers. A 0.05 alpha-level hypothesis test was performed on the gathered data. The study's two null hypotheses were tested using the t-test statistics. Before collecting any data, the study's participants were asked for their agreement, which is compliant with ethical guidelines. The researchers tried to correctly credit all sources they cited.

Results

The researchers provided the results of their investigation based on the null hypotheses. The study, which examined the role of administrators in staff attendance monitoring and performance training related to hybridized learning at universities, was led by two null hypotheses. These are the study's findings:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of administrators of public universities and administrators of private universities on their administrative role of training staff for efficient hybridization of learning.

Table 1

Administrative role of training of staff in public and private universities

University	N	Mean	Sd	t	df	Sig (2 tailed)
Public	20	3.8	0.67			
Private	20	3.9	0.65	7.763	38	0.68

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Result: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of administrators of public universities and private universities on their administrative role of training and retraining of university staff (t = 7.763, df 38, p>0.05). Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

Table 2

Administrative role of attendance of staff for punctuality in hybridization of learning in public and private universities

University	N	Mean	Sd	t	df	Sig (2 tailed)
Public	20	3.6	4.514			
Private	20	3.7	5.741	7.815	38	0.816

Source: Fieldwork 2024

Result: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of administrators on their administrative role of attendance monitoring of staff for punctuality in hybridization of learning in universities ($t = 7.815, df = 38, p > 0.05$). Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypotheses.

Discussion of the Findings

Considering the administrative role of performance training and re-training of staff for efficient implementation of hybridization of learning in the universities, the findings show that both administrators of public and private universities have a well-structured training programmes. They are committed to training and development of the staff. The universities also invite experts to provide clear and logical training on hybridization of learning. The results support the findings of Mbiye et al. (2014), who suggested that employee training enhanced work quality, boosted self-confidence, increased job satisfaction, enhanced capacity to take on new tasks, assisted in adjusting to technological changes, and enhanced chances of promotion. The finding is also in line with application of expectancy theory of Fletcher and Williams which hinges on the fact that administrators determine training needs, they also noted that administrators analyze the success of the training through the assessment of the employees’ performance.

Based on the study's findings, the administrative function of staff training and retraining for the effective implementation of hybrid learning is not affected by the public or private character of the university. Therefore, both public and private universities organize training for their staff. However, the researchers found out that the administrators may not bear most of the training cost. On monitoring of attendance for punctuality the study revealed that administrators in public and private universities perform the duty. Administrators achieve success in such areas by formulating means of tracking attendance of employees, rewarding early attendance to school, sick leaves and excuse duties are closely scrutinized to avoid abuse and poor attendance is punished. The results

corroborated Amutan's (2014) reinforcement theory, which holds that an individual's behaviour is determined by the consequences of that behaviour.

Etukokwu (2021) pointed out that if an employee is complimented for being early to work it may lead to the employee repeating the good behaviour. To the researcher, if employees are however punished for lateness to work, they are likely to change their bad behaviour. The findings also revealed that both public and private universities enforce strict attendance to duty leading to punctuality in academic programmes. However, most universities have not provided course proctors to monitor students' online examinations.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the researchers concluded that university administrators should make use of their administrative expertise to make sure that faculty members receive current teaching methods training and retraining to improve hybridization of learning. Administrators also enforce strict attendance to classes which lead to punctuality in school activities like hybridization of learning. The administrators do not in some cases bear the cost of training and this leads to the failure of some staff not participating in the training. Administrators also have not efficiently provided a course proctor to monitor students' virtual learning.

In the light of these findings, the researchers recommend the following:

1. The university administrators should attract grants to the universities that could be used to sponsor staff for in-service training on modern tools for hybridization of learning.
2. University administrators should reach out to individuals especially philanthropists who would collaborate with them in funding training and retraining.
3. University administrators should put in place face-to-face technology and provide course proctor. This will ensure that staff and students are effectively monitored through video conferencing and that the students are honest and following policies.

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