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Role of University Administrators in Enhancing Lecturers Performance Towards Sustainable Development in Public Universities in Bayelsa State.

Dr. Gladys Ejimole Aleru

Department of Educational Management, Rivers State University, Nigeria.

Corresponding Authors' Email: gladys.aleru@ust.edu.ng

Abstract

The study examined the role of university administrators in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State. Two Objectives, two research questions and two Hypotheses guided the study. A total of 166 university administrators (Deans, Directors and Head of departments) of public universities in Bayelsa State for 2023/2024 academic session made up the population and sample for the study. The instrument for the study was a questionnaire developed on a five-point rating scale ranging from very low extent to very high extent. Three experts in Educational management and Measurement and Evaluation validated the instrument and the instrument test of reliability using Cronbach Alpha method yielded a coefficient of 0.79 and 0.83 respectively for the two sections of the instrument. Mean rating was used to answer the research questions, while Z-test was used to test the hypotheses. It was revealed among others that there is no statistically significant difference between federal and state universities in terms of how administrators organize training and workshops to enhance lecturers' performance towards sustainable development. Indicating that both types of institutions may be perceived similarly in their efforts to enhance lecturers' performance towards sustainable development. Based on the findings, it was recommended inter-alia that universities should strengthen their efforts by introducing more tailored and innovative training programmes; which should focus on sustainable development practices and address specific challenges faced by lecturers to further improve their performance.

Key Words: University Administrators' Role, Training, Workshops, Research Opportunities, Lecturers' Performance, Sustainable Development.

Introduction

Lecturers' performance is a critical variable in the educational sector, particularly in Nigerian universities. It encompasses the effectiveness, efficiency, and impact of lecturers in fulfilling their academic and administrative responsibilities. Understanding and enhancing lecturers' performance is essential for the overall quality of education and the achievement of institutional goals. Lecturers in Nigerian universities play multifaceted roles, including teaching, research, and community service. They are responsible for delivering curriculum content, guiding student learning, and fostering intellectual development. According to Adetunji and Ogunleye (2015),

lecturers' primary duty is to facilitate learning through effective teaching methods, continuous assessment, and provision of feedback to students.

In addition to teaching, lecturers engage in research activities, contributing to the advancement of knowledge in their respective fields. Research productivity is often a key indicator of lecturers' performance, as highlighted by Aina (2017), who emphasized that academic research not only enhances lecturers' knowledge but also enriches the educational content delivered to students. Several factors influence the performance of lecturers in Nigerian universities. These include institutional support, availability of resources, professional development opportunities, and work environment. Ololube (2013) identified that adequate funding, access to modern teaching aids, and supportive administrative policies are crucial for optimal performance.

Professional development is another significant factor. Continuous training and development programs help lecturers stay updated with the latest pedagogical techniques and research despite their pivotal role; lecturers in Nigerian universities face numerous challenges that can hinder their performance (Aleru, 2023; Aleru & Amaechina, 2016). These challenges include inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, heavy teaching loads, and insufficient research grants. Ejiogu (2018) pointed out that many lecturers struggle with balancing teaching responsibilities and research activities due to limited resources and time constraints. Moreover, the issue of job satisfaction and motivation also affects lecturers' performance. Ajayi and Ekundayo (2010) argued that factors such as low remuneration, lack of recognition, and poor working conditions, often stemming from ineffective administrative policies, contribute significantly to lecturers' dissatisfaction. This dissatisfaction can severely impact their commitment and effectiveness. University administrators play a crucial role in addressing these issues by implementing fair compensation structures, establishing recognition programs, and improving working conditions. By adopting these measures, administrators can enhance lecturers' job satisfaction, thereby boosting their performance and dedication to their academic duties.

University administrators play a pivotal role in enhancing lecturers' performance, which directly contributes to sustainable development in society. One of the key responsibilities of university administrators is providing the necessary resources and infrastructure that support high-quality teaching and research. This includes modern facilities, digital tools, and access to academic materials, which allow lecturers to engage in innovative teaching and knowledge dissemination. As noted by Adamu (2022), providing adequate resources significantly

improves lecturers' ability to deliver quality education, which is essential for societal growth. Furthermore, administrators promote continuous professional development by organizing workshops and training that keep lecturers updated on pedagogical advancements and emerging trends in their disciplines. This fosters a culture of lifelong learning and adaptability, critical for sustainability in education (Ogunleye, 2021).

In addition to resources and training, university administrators implement performance appraisal systems that evaluate lecturers' contributions to teaching, research, and service. These systems provide feedback for continuous improvement, guiding lecturers toward aligning their efforts with institutional goals that support sustainable development (Nwosu&Adeola, 2023). Equally important is the role administrators play in creating incentive structures, such as promotions and research grants, that recognize and reward excellence in teaching and innovation. These incentives motivate lecturers to engage in cutting-edge research and community service, both of which are vital for solving societal problems through sustainable practices (Olaniyi, 2020).

Workload management is another crucial aspect where administrators impact lecturers' performance. Ensuring that lecturers have a balanced workload allows them to focus on delivering impactful research and teaching without the risk of burnout. Moreover, fostering a collaborative environment through partnerships with industries and international organizations creates opportunities for lecturers to engage in interdisciplinary work, which is critical for addressing global challenges (Eze, 2022; Ololube (2013). Finally, by establishing policies that integrate sustainability into curriculum development and research agendas, university administrators guide lecturers in embedding sustainability principles into their teaching and research. This alignment ensures that universities contribute to the broader agenda of sustainable development, preparing graduates to be responsible global citizens (Ibrahim, 2023; Adegbesan, 2015).

Adeyemi and Uko-Aviomoh (2016) emphasized that university administrators who invest in regular workshops, seminars, and conferences significantly contribute to the professional growth of lecturers, thereby improving their performance. This perspective focuses on creating and supporting a conducive work environment, which is essential for lecturers to thrive and deliver high-quality education. Administrators are responsible for fostering a positive and supportive atmosphere, addressing concerns related to workload, work-life balance, and job

satisfaction. Ajayi and Ekundayo (2010) further observed that administrators, who engage with lecturers, actively address their concerns, and provide necessary resources create a more motivated and committed academic workforce. Effective policies and practices implemented by university administrators also play a crucial role in enhancing lecturers' performance. These policies may include those related to tenure, promotion, research funding, and performance evaluation. Ejiogu (2018) argued that transparent and merit-based policies boost lecturers' motivation and performance by ensuring that they are rewarded fairly for their efforts. Administrators who establish clear guidelines and procedures, and address challenges to academic advancement, help cultivate a culture of excellence within the institution.

Moreover, university administrators must proactively address the challenges that hinder lecturers' performance, such as inadequate infrastructure, limited research grants, and bureaucratic obstacles. Adeyemo (2017) noted that administrators who identify and work to mitigate these issues create a more conducive environment for lecturers to excel. By removing barriers and providing essential support, administrators enhance the overall effectiveness of their academic staff, ultimately contributing to the achievement of sustainable development goals.

University administrators also play a critical role in steering their institutions toward sustainable development. Their strategic decisions, resource allocation, and policy implementations greatly influence how universities engage with and promote sustainable development goals (SDGs). By embedding sustainability principles in governance and operations, administrators can drive the educational sector's contribution to a sustainable future. Aleixo et al. (2018) highlighted the importance of visionary leadership in higher education for fostering a culture of sustainability. Through a clear commitment to sustainability, administrators can align the university's objectives with global SDGs, ensuring that academic and operational activities support sustainable outcomes. This includes integrating sustainability into the curriculum, promoting interdisciplinary research on sustainability, and collaborating with external stakeholders to address local and global challenges.

Administrators, therefore, enhance lecturers' performance by organizing regular training, workshops, and seminars, which equip lecturers with the skills and knowledge necessary for advancing sustainable development. Additionally, they promote research opportunities, enabling lecturers to contribute more effectively to sustainability-focused academic and practical outcomes.

According to Tilbury (2011), university administrators play a key role in fostering professional development opportunities that equip staff and students with the skills and knowledge needed to address sustainability challenges. Continuous training and capacity-building programs can help lecturers incorporate sustainability concepts into their teaching and research. As noted by Tilbury (2011), education for sustainable development (ESD) requires building capacity at all levels of the institution. Administrators who support regular workshops, seminars, and training on sustainability can cultivate a knowledgeable and motivated academic community that actively contributes to sustainable development.

Similarly, creating a sustainable campus environment is another critical area where university administrators can make a significant impact. This involves implementing policies and practices that reduce the institution's environmental footprint and promote sustainable behaviours. Filho et al. (2019) highlighted that sustainable campus initiatives, such as waste reduction programs, water conservation measures, and sustainable transportation options, are vital for reducing the environmental impact of universities. Administrators who champion these initiatives demonstrate a commitment to sustainability and set a positive example for the wider community.

Another area is effective policies that are essential for embedding sustainability into the fabric of university operations. Lozano et al. (2015) argued that university administrators must develop and enforce policies that promote sustainable practices across all areas of the institution. This includes policies on energy use, waste management, procurement, and construction. As stated by Lozano et al. (2015), policy frameworks that support sustainability can drive systemic change and ensure that sustainability principles are consistently applied. Administrators who implement clear, actionable policies can create a robust foundation for sustainable development within their universities.

Existing research highlights the pivotal role university administrator play in shaping lecturers' performance in Nigerian universities, particularly through organizing training and workshops and promoting research opportunities for continuous professional development. There is a significant gap in understanding how university administrators can systematically address key elements, such as organizing training and workshops and promoting research opportunities, to optimize lecturers' performance, particularly in the context of sustainable development. While Adegbesan (2015) and Ololube (2013) discuss the importance of administrators having a clear vision and providing adequate resources, there is limited empirical evidence on how these

strategies can be effectively applied to maximize their impact on lecturers' contributions to sustainable development. Moreover, although Adeyemi and Uko-Aviomoh (2016) emphasize the need for continuous professional development through workshops and training programs, there is insufficient research linking these initiatives to measurable improvements in teaching effectiveness within the framework of sustainability.

Similarly, Ajayi and Ekundayo (2010) recognize the importance of creating a positive work environment for lecturers, but practical approaches to achieving this through administrative efforts, such as promoting research opportunities for sustainability, remain underexplored. Ejiogu (2018) highlights the significance of transparent policies in enhancing lecturer performance, yet there is a lack of research on how these policies can be effectively implemented to foster academic excellence in relation to sustainable development. Furthermore, Adeyemo (2017) points out challenges such as inadequate infrastructure and bureaucratic obstacles, but current literature does not offer comprehensive solutions for overcoming these barriers in a way that supports sustainability goals. This study seeks to address these gaps by examining the role of university administrators in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State. Specifically, it will explore how administrators organize training, workshops, and promote research opportunities to improve lecturers' capabilities and their contributions to sustainable development goals. By addressing these areas, the study aims to provide a clearer understanding of how university administrators can create an academic environment that supports sustainable development through enhanced lecturer performance.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, public universities in Bayelsa State have faced challenges that hinder the effective delivery of quality education and the achievement of sustainable development goals. Lecturers often struggle with insufficient resources, limited opportunities for professional development, and a lack of support for research initiatives focused on sustainability. These barriers diminish lecturers' ability to impart knowledge effectively and engage in innovative research that could drive progress in areas such as environmental conservation, poverty reduction, and quality education. One particular experience stands out: a colleague at a public university in Bayelsa State expressed frustration over the lack of institutional support for his research on sustainable agricultural practices—a topic with immense potential to benefit local communities. His efforts to secure funding were thwarted by bureaucratic delays, and his

opportunities for professional development were minimal, limiting his ability to innovate in his teaching and research. This experience, shared by many lecturers, underscores the need for university administrators to actively address these challenges through effective leadership, clear policy implementation, and strategic resource allocation. By creating an enabling environment that promotes sustainable development initiatives, administrators can transform lecturers' capacity to contribute to both academic excellence and societal progress. Therefore, it is evident that university administrators in public universities have not systematically addressed the critical factors that influence lecturers' performance towards achieving sustainable development goals. Thus, the study examines the role of university administrators in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the role of university administrators in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State. Objectively; the study sought to:

1. Examine the extent university administrators organize training and workshops in enhancing lecturers performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State.
2. Examine the extent university administrators promote research opportunities in enhancing lecturers performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. To what extent do university administrators organize training and workshops in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State?
2. To what extent do university administrators promote research opportunities in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State?

Hypotheses

The formulated hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of federal and state universities on the extent university administrators organize training and workshops in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of federal and state universities on the extent university administrators promote research opportunities in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was the analytic descriptive survey design. This study used the above design because the sampled strata were compared through the use of hypotheses. The population for this study was 166 administrators in public universities in Bayelsa state, which comprised 46 from federal university and 120 from state universities. The sample size of the study is the total population of academic administrators comprising of Deans, Directors, and Head of departments who have direct role with lecturers and are channel through which informed decisions are communicated to the lecturers. However, other categories of university administrators (principal officers) were excluded from this study.

Table 1: Sample Size of the Study

University		No. of Dean	No. of Directors	No. of HoDs	Total
Federal University Otuoke		9	3	34	46
Niger Delta University		14	9	40	63
University of Africa Bayelsa		4	4	23	31
Medical University		5	3	18	26
Total		32	19	115	166

Source: Institutional Directorate of Academic Planning

A researcher developed questionnaire titled "the role of university administrators in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in questionnaire (RUALPSDQ). The questionnaire is consisted of 12 items developed on a four (5) point rating scale of "Very Low Extent" to "Very High Extent". The instrument was subjected to content and face validation and reliability test which gave a coefficient stability of 0.79 and 0.83 respectively. The administration of the instrument was personally carried out by the researcher and research assistants who are institutional faculty officers. The criterion Mean of 2.50 was

used to rank the research questions responses, whilst responses with a mean value of 2.50 or higher would be classified as high extent and the formulated null hypotheses tested with Z-test at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent do university administrators organize training and workshops in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State?

Table 2: Summary of Mean Scores on the Extent University Administrators Organize Training and Workshops in Enhancing Lecturers' Performance towards Sustainable Development in Public Universities

S/N	Statement	Federal(N = 46)			State(N=120)		
		\bar{X}	SD	Remarks	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
1	University administrators regularly organize training sessions focused on enhancing lecturers' teaching methods towards sustainable development	3.11	1.11	H	2.86	1.13	A
2	Workshops provided by university administrators effectively equip lecturers with the skills necessary to integrate sustainable development concepts into their courses.	3.09	1.12	H	2.54	1.17	A
3	There are sufficient opportunities for lecturers to participate in training programs related to sustainable development, organized by the university administration.	2.76	0.96	H	2.6	0.93	H
4	University administrators ensure that the training and workshops offered align with global sustainable development goals (SDGs) to enhance lecturers' performance.	3.14	0.7	H	3	0.91	H
5	The workshops organized by university administrators provide practical strategies for lecturers to address sustainability challenges in their academic fields	2.5	0.8	H	2.52	0.62	H

6	University-sponsored training programmes have significantly improved lecturers' awareness and understanding of sustainable development issues.	2.67	0.7	H	2.67	0.7	H
Grand Mean		2.87	0.89	H	2.69	0.91	H

Table 2 above for research question 1, shows that respondents' remarks indicate "H" (high extent), suggesting that, in general, respondents agree with the statements, though the extent of agreement varies across items and between federal and state universities. The analysis indicates that lecturers in both federal (2.87 and 0.89) and state universities (2.69 and 0.91) generally perceive organising training and workshops in enhancing lecturers' performance to a high extent. However, there are differences in the degree of agreement, with federal university lecturers showing slightly higher mean scores on several items. The standard deviation values suggest moderate variability in responses, indicating a diversity of opinions among lecturers.

Research Question 2: To what extent do university administrators promote research opportunities in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State?

Table 3: Summary Of Mean Scores On The Extent University Administrators Promote Research Opportunities In Enhancing Lecturers' Performance Towards Sustainable Development In Public Universities

S/N	Statements	Federal(N=46)			State universities (N=120)		
		\bar{X}	SD	Remark	\bar{X}	SD	Remark
7	University administrators actively encourage lecturers to engage in sustainability-related research projects.	3.14	0.96	H	3.09	0.89	H
8	Adequate funding is provided by university administrators to support research focused on sustainable development.	3.09	1.12	H	2.54	1.12	H
9	University administrators create opportunities for interdisciplinary research collaborations aimed at addressing sustainable development challenges.	2.76	0.96	H	2.6	0.93	H
10	The university offers regular grants and research incentives	2.12	0.7	L	2.34	0.91	L

	that promote innovation and sustainability-focused research.							
11	University administrators provide necessary infrastructure (e.g., laboratories, research facilities) that supports lecturers' research on sustainability.	2.5	0.8	H	2.52	0.62	H	
12	There is institutional support from university administrators for lecturers seeking external grants for research on sustainable development topics.	2.32	0.75	H	2.45	0.7	H	
	Grand Mean	2.65	0.87	H	2.59	0.86	H	

Table 3 above for research question 2, shows that in most cases, respondents' remarks indicate "H" (high extent), suggesting that respondents generally agree with the statements. For item 10, the remark "L" (disagree) indicates that respondents do not agree that university offers regular grants and research incentives that promote innovation and sustainability-focused research. The analysis indicates that both federal (2.65 and 0.87) and state universities (2.59 and 0.86) respondents generally to a high extent that university extent university administrators promote research opportunities in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities. The standard deviation values suggest moderate variability in responses, indicating a diversity of opinions among administrators.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of federal and state universities on the extent university administrators organize training and workshops in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State.

Table 4: Z-Test On The Mean Scores Of Federal And State Universities On The Extent University Administrators Organize Training And Workshops In Enhancing Lecturers' Performance Towards Sustainable Development In Public Universities In Bayelsa State

Respondents	\bar{X}	SD	N	DF	Z-cal	Z-	Decision
Federal University	2.87	0.89	46	164	0.38	1.96	Not Significant
State Universities	2.69	0.91	120				

Table 4 presents the results of a Z-test comparing the mean scores of federal and state universities regarding the extent to which university administrators organize training and workshops to enhance lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State. The mean score (\bar{X}) for respondents from federal universities is 2.87, with a standard deviation (SD) of 0.89 and a sample size (N) of 46. For state universities, the mean score is 2.69, with a standard deviation of 0.91 and a sample size of 120. The degree of freedom (DF) is 164. The calculated Z-value (Z-cal) is 0.38, which is less than the critical Z-value (Z-critical) of 1.96 at a 0.05 significance level. Since the Z-calculated value falls below the critical value, the decision is that the result is not significant. This implies that there is no statistically significant difference between federal and state universities in terms of how administrators organize training and workshops to enhance lecturers' performance towards sustainable development. Both types of institutions appear to have similar levels of administrative efforts in organizing these developmental activities for lecturers.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in the mean scores of federal and state universities on the extent university administrators promote research opportunities in enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development in public universities in Bayelsa State.

Table 5: Z-Test on The Mean Scores Of Federal And State Universities On The Extent University Administrators Promote Research Opportunities In Enhancing Lecturers' Performance Towards Sustainable Development In Public Universities In Bayelsa State.

Respondents	\bar{X}	SD	N	DF	Z-cal	Z-	Decision
Federal University	2.65	0.87	46	146	0.60	1.96	Not Significant
State Universities	2.59	0.86	120				

In analyzing the data presented in Table 5, we see the calculated mean scores (\bar{X}) for federal universities at 2.65 and for state universities at 2.59. The standard deviations (SD) indicate a slight variability in responses, with federal universities having an SD of 0.87 and state universities an SD of 0.86. The sample sizes (N) are 46 for federal universities and 120 for state universities, resulting in a total of 146 respondents. The degrees of freedom (DF) are consistent with this total. The calculated Z-value (Z-cal) is 0.60, which is compared against the critical Z-value of 1.96 at a significance level of 0.05. Since the Z-cal value (0.60) is less than the critical value (1.96), the decision is to not reject the null hypothesis. This outcome suggests that there is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of university administrators' promotion of research opportunities in federal and state universities, indicating that both types

of institutions may be perceived similarly in their efforts to enhance lecturers' performance towards sustainable development. This finding could imply that despite differences in governance and funding, both federal and state universities in Bayelsa State are equally committed or lack commitment to fostering research opportunities that support sustainable development.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from Table 2 suggest that lecturers from both federal (mean = 2.87, SD = 0.89) and state universities (mean = 2.69, SD = 0.91) generally perceive the organization of training and workshops positively. However, the Z-calculated value (0.60) being less than the critical value (1.96) indicates that there is no statistically significant difference in perceptions regarding the organization of training and workshops in these institutions. This implies that both federal and state universities are similarly effective in promoting these professional development activities, supporting the conclusion that their administrative efforts towards enhancing lecturers' performance for sustainable development are comparable.

While Adegbesan (2015) emphasizes the importance of professional development in educational management and its positive impact on performance, the lack of a significant difference in perceptions between federal and state universities aligns with these findings. Similarly, Adeyemi and Uko-Aviomoh (2016) highlight the role of well-organized training programs in fostering professional growth, which appears to be consistently valued across both types of institutions. Ajayi and Ekundayo (2010) discuss how development initiatives influence job satisfaction and performance, reinforcing the idea that training and workshops in both federal and state universities contribute similarly to these outcomes. The moderate variability in responses (SD values) indicates that while lecturers generally agree on the positive influence of these activities, individual experiences may vary.

Regarding resource allocation (Table 3), lecturers from federal (mean = 2.65, SD = 0.87) and state universities (mean = 2.59, SD = 0.86) also share similar perceptions, with no significant difference between the two groups. The Z-calculated value below the critical value suggests that both institutions have similar resource allocation strategies aimed at enhancing lecturers' performance towards sustainable development. Despite Adeyemo's (2017) identification of barriers to effective teaching and research, including inadequate resource allocation, both federal and state universities appear to face comparable challenges in providing adequate

research grants and resources. This reflects similar perceptions across the institutions, as noted by Aina (2017), who stresses the critical role of resources in improving academic output. Moreover, the alignment of perceptions in federal and state universities supports Trencher et al. (2014), who discuss the co-creation of sustainability practices in higher education.

In conclusion, the findings suggested that both federal and state universities in Bayelsa State demonstrate similar commitments—or lack thereof—to organizing developmental activities and promoting research opportunities aimed at sustainable development, despite differences in governance and funding structures.

Conclusion

The study concluded that both federal and state universities in Bayelsa State demonstrate comparable levels of commitment or lack thereof towards fostering sustainable development through the promotion of research opportunities and the organization of professional development activities for lecturers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and conclusion made, the following recommendations were put forward by the researcher that:

1. Universities strengthen their efforts by introducing more tailored and innovative training programs. These programs should focus on sustainable development practices and address specific challenges faced by lecturers to further improve their performance.
2. Universities should actively seek to enhance access to research grants and resources. University administrators should implement strategies to address gaps in research funding, ensuring that lecturers are adequately supported in contributing to sustainable development through impactful research.

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