



Management by Objectives: Pathway to Achieve Effective Management of Tertiary Institutions in South West, Nigeria

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Abstract

Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study comprised, management members from tertiary institutions in South West, Nigeria. This included; Ekiti, Ondo, Osun, Ogun, Oyo and Lagos states. The sample size of the subject was One hundred and eighty (180) subjects or respondents selected through, a purposive sampling technique. Ten (10) respondents were selected from a College, Polytechnic and University from each of the six states in South West, Nigeria. Two research questions were raised to guide the conduct of the study. Data for the study were generated through, self- struttred and developed research instrumenst by the researchers, titled, "Questionnaire on Management by Objectives: Pathway to Achieve Effective Management of Tertiary Institutions in South West, Nigeria. "QMOPAEMTISWN"). It was fashioned or modeled on four likert rating scale; Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD), rated on 4, 3, 2 and 1 points, respectively. The research instruments were validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation at Adekunle Ajasin Universtiy, (AAU), Akungba-Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria. The reliability of the research instrumenst was done using, test- retest method at two weeks interval, and 0.71 coefficient reliability was obtained. Data generated for the study was analyzed using, descriptive statistics (Simple percentage, frequency count and mean). Based on the results of the study, conclusions were made that MBO could enhance staff's motivation, communication and collaboration in South, Nigeria. Therefore, recommendations based on the conclusions were made that, MBO should be embrace by Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria, so as to achieve set-out goals. Also, MBO should be used as a mechanism by management of tertiary institutions in Nigeria by involving their subordinates in policy making and in decision process, and so on.

Keywords: Management by objectives, Pathway, Effective, Organization, Performance.

Introduction

The ability of any organization to achieve its goals largely hinges on effective management. It plays a crucial role in helping organizations to achieve their set target goals by enhancing operational efficiency, fostering employees' participation and improving overall performance. Effective management creates a supportive and inclusive environment where, employees feel valued, respected, secured and satisfied with working environment and the strategic operation of management in accomplishing business goals. It is a strategic and coordinated performance (Nwosu, 2022).

Management is a generic concept in term of explanation and definitions. Herrity (2025) ^[6], defines management as administrative tasks aimed at goal and resource management. He maintains that this is set out in a coordinated and effective way to achieve desired outcomes. Management is a distinct process consisting of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling in order to accomplish set organizational objectives.

The components of management are: planning, organizing, staffing, directing, controlling and logistics. Lack of effective management is one of the myriad factors that are militating against organizational performance, especially in educational organizations, inclusively. Oyekan (2004) ^[11], stresses that poor management practice, especially in the educational sector significantly impede its development. This is further compounded by corruption, lack of transparency, political instability, lack of accountability, ineffective policy formulation, among others.

In the contemporary Nigerian society, the tertiary institutions are facing with multitude challenges, such as; declining in enrolment rate and spate, democratic instability, financial pressures, complex and uncertain political and policy changes, deteriorated infrastructure and facilities, among others (Sulako, 2015). However, among the challenges, management issues and problem have long be resulted into internal crisis and conflict at some tertiary institutions in Nigeria in which there are open protest, confrontation, conflict and contrast of interest between personnel and management.

Management problem in tertiary institutions in Nigeria remains a source of worry and challenge to stakeholders at tertiary institutions in the country. According to Mba (2012) ^[9],

All over the world, tertiary institutions are recognized as the centers of excellence, where knowledge is not only acquired but also disseminated to those in search of it. Benjamin (2001) ^[12], posits that tertiary institutions, especially universities, are ivory towers where instruction is given and received. The role of tertiary institutions including; Universities, especially in Nigeria, configure and develop students to contribute to national development through, high-level relevant manpower training, develop intellectual capacity of individuals and society, promote and encourage scholarship and community service, develop and inculcate proper values for the survival of the individuals and society (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004; Section 45) ^[4]. It is therefore disheartening and discouraging that most times, poor management is often the case. Therefore, the search for solutions and panaceas on management challenges at tertiary institutions, necessitated several academic seminars, fora, conferences and educational summits on how to reposition and reconfiguration of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

The researchers observed from the existing literature and studies that, much studies have not been focused on Management by Objectives as pathway to achieve effective management of tertiary institutions in South West Nigeria. It was against this background that the present research was carried out by the researchers.

Statement of the Study

To achieve the set-out goals of tertiary institutions, requires effective and pro-active management strategy. However, in Nigeria to achieve the set-out goals of tertiary institutions are at times mirage due, to management problems. This unsavory trend and issue have necessitated several management strategic mechanisms and approaches to “nid it in a bud”.

The researchers noted that, much have not been done on Management by Objectives (MBO) as a strategic approach and catalyst to reposition tertiary institutions towards goals achievement thus, serves as source of motivation for carrying out the study by the researchers.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study was on Management by Objectives (MBO): Pathway to achieve effective management of tertiary institutions in South West, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to:

1. Determine influence of Management by Objectives (MBO) on employees' motivation; and
2. Investigate the impact of Management by Objectives (MBO) on communication and collaboration on management of tertiary institutions in South West, Nigeria.

Research Questions

Two research questions were raised to guide the conduct of the study.

1. Can MBOs enhance staff's motivation in tertiary institutions in South West Nigeria?
2. Can MBOs foster effective communication and collaboration among staff and management of tertiary institutions in South West Nigeria?

Conceptual Framework

Management by Objectives (MBOs)

Management by Objectives (MBO) was first introduced by Peter Drucker in his book *The Practice of Management*. It is a strategic management approach that focuses on how results could be got. It emphasizes setting clear, measurable objectives to be achieved by each employee and then aligning their inputs and accountabilities accordingly. MBOs gained significant attention worldwide in the 1960s and 1970s and was adopted by many companies and organizations globally as management practice. It is also known as Management by Planning (MBP).

Thomas (1998) ^[13], defined MBO as "a management approach whereby a manager and his subordinates sit down and jointly set specific objectives to be accomplished within a set time frame, and for which the subordinate is then held responsible." All organizations whether, formal or informal have goals. In order words, all organizations are existing for purpose(s) and to achieve that purposes every stakeholder in the organization must come together to streamline activities on how to achieve the goals. MBO is a mechanism to enlist the collaboration and participation of every member of the organization towards achieving mission and vision statements. MBO advantages are:

1. to promotes collaborative process whereby managers and subordinates jointly identify specific measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) objectives.
2. MBO promotes the effective participation of employees in the goal-setting and evaluation process to ensure a sense of ownership and commitment.
3. MBO provides employees with clear goals and opportunities for feedback, thus enhancing motivation, and job satisfaction.
4. MBO aligns individual goals with overall organizational objectives, creating a cohesive and focused approach to achieve the strategic goals (Thomas, 1998) ^[13].
5. MBO promotes better management.
6. MBO enhances individual's commitment and communication between manager and their subordinate.

The following are also, some of disadvantages of MBO:

1. Goal-setting problem in that the process may be difficult.
2. Time-consuming.
3. Inflexibility in the sense that, once goals are set out, the superior may not be willing to modify them due to personal resistance and protests from the subordinates (Career Guide, 2025) ^[3].

Theoretical Framework

Participative Management Theory (PMT)

Rensis Likert (born on August 5, 1903, Cheyenne, Wyoming, U.S.—died September 3, 1981, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.) an American Social Scientists, developed Participative Management Theory (PMT).

The theory emphasizes employment involvement at workplace in decision-making and where employees are actively involved in policy formulation. It emphasizes democracy, authority, team work, cooperation, and responsibility, especially as it relates to managerial communication. It increases employees' commitment and enhances overall job performance (Hiltary, 2018). The key aspects of PMT are: employees' involvement in decision-making, empowerment and communication.

The following are potential challenge of PMT; Time commitment, conflict, risk of over-reliance, among other (Hilary, 2018) ^[7]. The choice, relevance and appropriateness of PMT to the study hinges on the fact that, both MBO and PMT are participatory management philosophy and approach in which employees at all levels or every unit of the organization are to be engaged in planning and decision-making process to optimize organizational effectiveness.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was used in the study. The population of the study Comprised, members of management from tertiary institutions in South West, Nigeria (Ondo, Ogun, Osun, Ekiti and Lagos) states. The sample size of this study was One hundred and eighty (180) respondents selected through, a purposive sampling techniques. Ten (10) respondents were selected from a College, Polytechnic and University from each of the six states in South West, Nigeria thus, makes the total subject to be One hundred and eighty (180).

Two research questions were raised for the study. Data for the study was generated for the study through, self-structured and developed research instruments titled, "Questionnaire on Management by Objectives: Pathway to Achieve Effective Management of Tertiary Institutions in South West, Nigeria "QMOPAEMTISWN". It was fashioned on four likert rating scale; Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD) rated on 4,3,2,1 points, respectively. The research instruments were validated by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation at Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba Akoko, Ondo State, Nigeria. While, its reliability was determined using, test-retest method at two-week intervals. 0.71 coefficient reliability was obtained. Data got were analyzed using, descriptive statistics (simple percentages, frequency counts and mean).

Presentation of findings and discussion of Results

Presentation of findings

Research Questions One: Can MBOs enhance staff motivation in tertiary institutions in South West, Nigeria?

Table 1: Showing simple percentage, frequency counts, and mean (\bar{x}) on can MBOs enhance staff's motivation in tertiary institutions South West, Nigeria.

N= 180,		C= Cut off Point						
S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	N	Mean \bar{X}	Decisions
1	MBO make me to feel satisfied with the management	141 78.33	17 0.94	13 7.22	9 5	180	3.61	Accepted
2	MBO do not make me feel to be part of the management	9 5	8 4.44	16 8.88	147 83.66	180	1.32	Rejected
3	MBO makes me to be contributing management, decisions and policies	157 87.22	9 5	6 3.33	8 4.44	180	3.75	Accepted
4	Without MBO as strategic approach, I can still be contributing to management decision and policies	3 1.66	7 3.88	4 2.22	160 92.22	180	3.57	Rejected
5	MBO encourage me to contribute to management performance	141 78.333	17 0.94	6 3.33	16 8.88	180	3.57	Accepted
6	My contribution to management performance is not a function of MBO	11 6.11	1 0.55	29 16.11	139 77.22	180	1.35	Rejected
7	MBOs encourages me to support management activities	167 92.77	9 5	3 1.66	1 0.55	180	3.9	Accepted
8	My support for management has nothing to do with strategic approach	9 5	4 2.22	23 12.77	144 80	180	1.32	Rejected
	Total Weight	638 44.30	72 5	100 6.94	630 43.75		2.50	Accepted

Keys:

N= Total number of respondents

SA= Strongly Agreed,

A= Agreed

D= Disagreed

SD= Strongly Disagreed

Table 1 above, presents the findings on research question one. On item (1), responses got showed the following; 141 (78.33), 17 (0.94), 13 (7.22) and 9(5) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly agreed. On item (2), responses

obtained were, 9(5), 8(4.44), 16 (8.88) and 147 (81.66) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. On item (3), responses obtained were; 157 (87.22), 9 (5), 6 (3.33) and 8 (4.44) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and

strongly disagreed respectively. On item (4), 3 (1.66), 7 (3.88), 4 (2.22) and 166 (92.22) responses were got for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively.

On item (5), 141 (78.33), (0.94), 6 (3.33) and 16 (8.88) responses were obtained too strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. On item (6) 11 (6.11), 1 (0.55), 29 (16.11) and 139 (77.22) responses were obtained for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed, also on item (7), the following responses were got, as well; 167 (92.77), 9 (5), 3 (1.66) and 1 (0.55) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed.

Finally, responses got for item (8) were; 9 (5), 4 (2.22), 23 (12.77) and 144 (80) were strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. The total weight of the findings reveals that the average rating scale of four ($\bar{X} = 2.5$) was not greater than the mean of average rating scale of four thus, indicates that MBOs could enhance staffs motivation in tertiary institution in South West, Nigeria.

Research Question Two: Can MBOs foster effective communication and collaboration among staff and managers of tertiary institutions in South West, Nigeria.

Table 2: Showing simple percentage frequency counts, and mean on can MBO foster effective communication and collaboration among staff and managers of tertiary institutions in South West, Nigeria.

N= 180,		C= Cut off Point						Decisions
S/N	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	N (%)	Mean \bar{X}	
9	MBO make communication among staff and management to be cordial	156 86.66	9 5	7 3.88	8 1.44	180	3.73	Accepted
10	MBO does not have impact on cordial communication among staff and management feasible	3 1.66	2 1.11	9 5	166 92.22	180	1.11	Rejected
11	MBOs make both staff and management to be accountable for policy making	149 82.77	15 8.33	10 5.55	6 3.33	180	3.70	Accepted
12	MBO will not make both personnel and management to be accountable for policy making	9 5	8 1.44	19 10.55	144 80	180	1.34	Rejected
13	MBO makes both staff and management members to be participating in policy formulation	171 95	6 3.33	1 0.55	2 1.11	180	3.92	Accepted
14	MBO can not facilitates participate between staff and management in policy formulation	6 3.33	8 1.44	11 6.11	155 86.11	180	1.26	Rejected
15	Cooperation can be enhanced between staff and management	149 82.77	21 11.66	9 5	1 0.55	180	3.76	Accepted
16	Without MBO cooperation can still be enhanced between staff and management	7 3.88	9 5	13 7.22	151 83.88	180	1.28	Rejected
	Total weight	650 45.13	78 5.41	79 5.48	633 43.95		2.51	Accepted

Keys:

N= Total Number of respondents,

C= Cut off Points

SA = Disagreed

SD= Strongly Disagreed

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 above, show the findings on research question two. For item (4), responses got were; 156 (86.66), 9 (5), 7 (3.88) and 8 (1.44) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively. On item (10), the following responses were got; 3 (1.66), 2(1.11), 9(5) and 166 (92.22) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. On items (11), 149 (82.77), 15 (8.33), 10 (5.55) and 6 (3.33) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. on item (12), responses obtained were; 9(5), 8 (1.44), 19 (10.55) and 144(80) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. Also, on item (13), 171 (95), 6 (3.33), 1(0.55) and 2 (1.11) responses were obtained for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. On item (14), the following responses were obtained; 6 (3.33), 8 (1.44), 11(6.11) and 155 (86.11) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. On item (15), responses obtained were; 149(82.77), 21 (11.66), 9 (5) and 1 (0.55) for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

Finally, 7(3.88), 9 (5), 13 (7.22) and 151 (83.88) were got as responses for strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed. the total weight of the findings showed that the average rating scale of four ($\bar{X} = 2.5$) was not greater than

the mean (\bar{X}) of average rating scale of four ($\bar{X} = 2.5$). It portends that MBDs as strategic approach could foster affective communication and collaboration among staff and management of tertiary institutions in South West, Nigeria.

Discussion of Results

The result on research question which revealed that MBOs could enhance staff motivation. This aligns with the opinion of Aminu (2019) that, Management by Objectives could positively impact employees' motivation by instilling a sense of ownership, identity, and engagement. Further, when employees partake in setting goals and understand how their work interrelates with organizational goals and objectives, they tend to be more motivated to work towards achieving those goals. It is generally believed that when employees are carried along in the process to achieve goal setting and attainment and enhances their productivity and performance in organization. George, Aljaser, Salem and Alsaad 2021)^[5], view also buttressed the result that, MBO has positive contribution to motivation of employee in that, it creates their loyalty, satisfaction at work place and commitment to job performance.

The result on research question two which revealed that,

MBOs could also foster effective communication and collaboration among staff and management in tertiary institutions in South West Nigeria is also in consonance with the view of Idoko Okolie Jonathan and Nwosu (2021)^[8]. that, MBO brings democracy at workplace such that, it enhances management and human resources by coming together to take decisions on how to set and achieve set goals. Further, that MBO enables both the staff and management to support institutional goals of the organization.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, conclusions were that, Management by Objectives (MBO) is a management model and technique that could enhance staff motivation, and also, facilitate effective communication and collaboration between management of tertiary institutions in South West, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations were made;

1. MBO should be introduced into the administration of tertiary institutions to set targets and goals to be accomplished.
2. Administrators and management of tertiary institutions in Nigeria should be trained and implement MBO using, personnel, consultants, and management analysts.
3. Government and other providers of tertiary education should make it mandatory for tertiary institutions' administrators to be formulating policies and making decisions in conjunction with the institution management and subordinates.
4. Conferences and workshops should be organized for the managers of tertiary institutions on Management by Objectives strategies to institutional management. This should be done at a regular interval.
5. Tertiary institutions management should provide logistic support for the feasibility of Management by Objectives, and so on.

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