

## Assessment of Talent Management Strategies on Administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria

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### Abstract

*This study assessed “Talent Management Strategies on Administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria”. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study was 7,597 respondents. This comprised of 7,118 Teaching Staff and 479 Management Staff from the Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria. The sample of the study was 365 respondents. Multi-stage sampling technique was used for the study. A self-designed questionnaire was used for data collection. Three (3) experts vet the instrument and the reliability index yielded 0.89 using Cronbach’s Alpha Method. Mean score was used to answer the research questions while independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses formulated at the 0.05 significance level. Findings of the study revealed that Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria sponsored staff to attend conferences, workshops and in-service training in the areas needed for staff professional development which promote the administration of Human Resource in the Universities. The study recommended that the management of Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria in collaboration with Tertiary Education Trust Funds (TETFUNDS) should improve on the sponsorship of staff for conferences and workshops to facilitate the acquisition of current knowledge needed for effective discharge of their duties.*

**Keywords:** Talent, Management, Development, Engagement, Human Resources

### Introduction

Universities all over the world are collection of the most specialized and accomplished minds due to their distinctive character. They act as knowledge repositories, supporting the development of the nation's labour force and, in turn, gratifying the aspirations of the populace for a just and socially inclusive. The University environment is entrenched in and sustained by long-established principles, values, structures and practices which convey how things are done, as the individual progresses through their career journey before, during and after the doctoral programme. Nowadays, new pressures for universities have arisen as a result of a series of ongoing governmental policy changes and these have impacted on university life and academic work. In tandem with the above, Martin, Lord and Warren-Smith (2020) observed that these changes, together with heightened competition and an increase in new technologies, may mean that staff, processes and structures struggle to evolve quickly enough. This underscores the

importance of talent management in the administration of human resources in educational institution, especially Universities.

Talent management refers to a systematic process of recruiting; developing, engaging, appraising, motivating, retaining and planning for succession of people with the right skills at the right time and place in order to meet the present and future organizational objectives. According to Jothi and Savarimuthu (2022), talent management refers to a purposeful, conscious process used to find, train, and keep employees who have the potential and skills to satisfy the organization's current and future demands. Dabic, Maley, Moeller and Vlaci (2021) defined talent management as those strategic actions which organizations formulate and perform to attract, develop, and retain critical human resources. Collings, Mellahi and Cascio (2019) viewed talent management as all the organizational activities undertaken with the objective of attracting, selecting, developing, and retaining the best employees in the most strategic roles on a global scale.

There are different strategies of managing talents in an educational institution. One of such strategies is through talent development. Talent development focused on the planning, selection, and implementation of development programmes and strategies for the entire pool of staff in order to guarantee that the organization maintains not only the current but also the future supply of talent necessary to meet its strategic objectives. According to Chethana and Noronha (2023), talent development refers to the organisational procedure for preparing people for career growth in a way that is consistent with the institution's objective. In the opinion of Londhe (2016), talent development represents efforts to improve employees' ability to handle a variety of assignments and to cultivate capabilities beyond those required by the current job. This implies that talent development benefits both the organization and the individual employee. Ahmad, Ali, Siddiq, Akbar, Bibi and Rahman (2024) for example shows that talent management has a positive and significant impact on employee performance. Fernandes, Veiga, Lobo and Raposo (2023) found that high potential talents are able to obtain better results and hence produce a better standard of international performance.

One of the cornerstones to institutions' success in producing outstanding academic quality and services for the entire academic community is employee involvement or engagement in the activities of the organization. Talent engagement is the process by which workers are emotionally, physically and intellectually motivated to achieve their personal and organisational objectives within the organisation. According to Londhe (2016), talent engagement is one of the strategies through which the employees can be placed at some important job in an organization for a period of time. This will help employees gain a cross-cultural exposure and an opportunity to exploit his latent potential better. Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion (2020) noted that for universities and colleges to retain productivity and effectiveness, engagement must rise. Several scholars agree that motivated workers have the ability to alter organizations in transformative ways. In tandem with this observation, Farooq, Othman, Nordin, and Ibrahim (2016) opined that Universities around the globe present various images of educational philosophies, the

system of higher education, and instructor employment, hence faculty members must be actively involved in education.

The importance of employee engagement in educational institutions vibrates much beyond the confines of the employee. In this regard, Chethana and Noronha (2023) contended that organizations should ideally make such actions an integral component of their leadership and management positions. A strong educational institution with a highly devoted and committed workforce has good effects on society as a whole. Corroborating on the above assertion, Morris (2017) opined that educational institutions are more reliant than other organisations on the dedication and participation of their teaching faculty. Abdullahi, Raman and Solarin (2022) found that Employee Engagement mediates the association between Talent management and Employee Performance whereas Talent Management practices (succession planning practice, promotion practice, and performance appraisal practice) have a substantial impact on Employee Performance.

In the recent years, the researchers have been observing noticeable loopholes in the ways talents are been managed in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria. It is worrisome to the researchers, the rate at which academic staff (talents) leaves the Universities for other sectors that seems more lucrative. Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria in the past tried to manage shortage of academic staff in the institutions through visiting, adjunct, sabbatical and contract lecturers. It is rather unfortunate that with the introduction of Integrated Personnel and Payroll Information System (IPPIS) in these Universities, such arrangement has become difficult as the number of academic talents continues to shrink. The implication of this is that at the institutional level, the workload allocated to the available academic staff has simply increased; which means more responsibilities for the individual staff. This working environment in many Universities in Nigeria, has dampened the morale of many academics and consequently led to low productivity, poor quality of teaching, and poor quality of education (Awolaja, 2023; Ogunode & Okwelogu, 2022). This is negatively impacting the excellence in teaching, research and community services for which the Universities are established for. It might also suggest poor management of talents in these institutions. Hence, the need to look into the ways talents are been managed in universities become imperative. It was against this backdrop that this study assessed talent management strategies applied on administration of human resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following objectives were raised to guide the study:

1. determine the Talent Development Strategy applied on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria; and
2. examine the Talent Engagement Strategy applied on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria;

## Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

1. In what ways does Talent Development Strategy apply on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria?
2. How does Talent Engagement Strategy apply on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria?

## Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in the opinions of Teaching and Management Staff on the Talent Development Strategy applied on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference in the opinions of respondents on the Talent Engagement Strategy applied on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria.

## Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. This design, according to Charles and Aligba (2017), is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident or trends that are developing. The population of the study was 7,597 respondents. This comprises of 7,118 Teaching Staff (Lecturers) and 479 Management Staff (HODS, Deans and Principal Officers) from the 7 conventional Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria. 365 respondents were used as sample size for the study based on the recommendation of Researcher Advisors (2006) Table for selection of sample size. Multi-stage sampling technique was used for the study.

A self-designed questionnaire of twenty (20) items tagged “Talent Management Strategies and Administration of Human Resources Questionnaire (TAMASHRQ)” was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was structured on a five (5) points Likert scale options of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) with the numerical values of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Three (3) experts from the Department of Educational Foundations and Curriculum, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria vet the instrument and their observations were incorporated in the final draft of the instrument. The instrument reliability index yielded 0.89 using Cronbach’s Alpha Method.

Descriptive statistics of mean was used to answer the research questions. By this, when the mean score of an item was higher than 3.00 set for the study, the item was regarded as

agreed by majority of the respondents. On the other hand, when the mean score of an item was lower than 3.00, the item was considered disagreed by majority of the respondents. Independent t-test was used to test the two (2) formulated null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. By this, when the probability value was lower than 0.05 level of significance set for the study, the hypothesis was rejected, but when the probability value was equal or higher than the level of significance, the hypothesis was retained.

## Results

**Table 1:** Opinions of Respondents on Talents Development Strategy Applied on Administration of Human Resources in the Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria

S/N	Item Statements	Categories of Respondents	SA		A		U		D		SD		M
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1	The University sponsors staff to attend conferences for their professional development.	Mgt. Staff	2	3.6	32	58.2	3	5.5	15	27.3	3	5.5	3.27
		Acad. Staff	4	1.4	180	64.1	25	8.9	56	19.9	16	5.7	3.46
2	The University organizes workshops for staff in the areas needed for their personal development.	Mgt. Staff	3	5.5	38	69.1	10	18.2	4	7.3	0	0	3.73
		Acad. Staff	19	6.8	190	67.6	43	15.3	19	6.8	10	3.6	3.67
3	The University develops staff through mentoring programmes.	Mgt. Staff	1	1.8	44	80.0	3	5.5	4	7.3	3	5.5	3.65
		Acad. Staff	1	0.4	223	79.4	21	7.5	18	6.4	10	3.6	3.61
4	The University provides staff with career development opportunities (e.g. certifications and scholarships).	Mgt. Staff	10	18.2	39	70.9	4	7.3	1	1.8	1	1.8	4.00
		Acad. Staff	27	9.6	210	74.7	9	3.2	25	8.9	10	3.6	3.78
5	The University organizes seminars for staff to improve on their job performance.	Mgt. Staff	4	7.3	47	85.5	0	0	3	5.5	1	1.8	3.91
		Acad. Staff	2	0.7	218	77.6	18	6.4	32	11.4	11	3.9	3.60
6	The University sponsors staff for in-service training for their professional development.	Mgt. Staff	2	3.6	49	89.1	1	1.8	0	0	3	5.5	3.85
		Acad. Staff	25	8.9	224	79.7	4	1.4	11	3.9	17	6.0	3.81
7	The University organizes symposium for staff in the areas needed for their personal development.	Mgt. Staff	2	3.6	8	14.5	3	5.5	36	65.5	6	10.9	2.35
		Acad. Staff	10	3.6	59	21.0	7	2.5	186	66.2	19	6.8	2.48
8	The University develops its own online training materials for staff to gain required knowledge.	Mgt. Staff	8	14.5	26	47.3	3	5.5	10	18.2	8	14.5	3.29
		Acad. Staff	18	6.4	146	52.6	22	7.8	65	23.1	30	10.7	3.20
9	The University provides opportunities for staff to grow in their profession.	Mgt. Staff	4	7.3	36	65.5	5	9.1	7	12.7	3	5.5	3.56
		Acad. Staff	16	5.7	153	54.4	11	3.9	81	28.8	20	7.1	3.23
10	The University has policies that promote career	Mgt. Staff	5	9.1	43	78.2	3	5.5	4	7.3	2	0.7	3.89
		Acad. Staff	22	7.8	178	63.3	31	11.0	48	17.1	2	0.7	3.60

advancement for staff.

**Grand Mean**

**3.50**

Table 1 shows the opinions of respondents on the Talent Development Strategy applied on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West Nigeria. It revealed that all the items except item 7 were all agreed upon as ways talent development strategy applied on administration of Human Resources. This was because they had response mean score higher than the instrument scale mean of 3.00. With the grand mean of 3.50 which is higher than the instrument mean of 3.00, this shows that majority of the respondents agreed that Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria sponsored staff to attend conferences, workshops and in-service training in the areas needed for staff professional development which promote the administration of Human Resource in the Universities.

**Research Question Two:** How does Talent Engagement Strategy apply on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria?

**Table 2:** Opinions of Respondents on Talents Engagement Strategy Applied on Administration of Human Resources in the Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria

S/N	Item Statements	Categories of Respondents	SA		A		U		D		SD		M
			F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1	The University engaged its staff by providing them with sufficient freedom to perform their jobs.	Mgt. Staff	4	7.3	37	67.3	7	12.7	7	12.7	0	0	3.69
		Acad. Staff	18	6.4	203	72.2	18	6.4	35	12.5	7	2.5	3.68
2	The University engaged its staff by providing them with enough authority to complete their work.	Mgt. Staff	1	1.8	15	27.3	2	3.6	37	67.3	0	0	2.64
		Acad. Staff	2	0.7	117	41.6	6	2.1	152	54.1	4	1.4	2.86
3	The University provides flexibility for work hours to engage its qualified employees.	Mgt. Staff	11	20.0	31	56.4	1	1.8	12	21.8	0	0	3.75
		Acad. Staff	58	20.6	162	57.7	8	2.8	47	16.7	6	2.1	3.78
4	The University provides flexibility for tasks to increase staff's engagement.	Mgt. Staff	17	30.9	28	50.9	0	0	10	18.2	0	0	3.95
		Acad. Staff	67	23.8	163	58.0	14	5.0	36	12.8	1	0.4	3.92
5	The University facilitates internal job rotation to engage talented employees' experiences in different faculties, departments and divisions.	Mgt. Staff	12	21.8	36	65.5	3	5.5	4	7.3	0	0	4.02
		Acad. Staff	51	18.1	171	60.9	28	10.0	24	8.5	7	2.5	3.84
6	The University offered opportunities to staff to bring up their initiative to perform tasks.	Mgt. Staff	11	20.0	36	65.5	5	9.1	3	5.5	0	0	4.00
		Acad. Staff	32	11.4	187	66.5	23	8.2	33	11.7	6	2.1	3.73
7	The University ensures that staff performance at work is tracked against set objectives.	Mgt. Staff	9	16.4	36	65.5	6	10.9	4	7.3	0	0	3.91
		Acad. Staff	68	24.2	142	50.5	26	9.3	43	15.3	2	0.7	3.82

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8	The University provides adequate materials to engage its qualified employees.	Mgt. Staff	0	0	20	36.4	0	0	33	60.0	2	3.6	2.69
		Acad. Staff	2	0.7	112	39.9	6	2.1	158	56.2	3	1.1	2.83
9	The University engaged its staff by delegating duties to them on a regular basis.	Mgt. Staff	3	5.5	43	78.2	5	9.1	4	7.3	0	0	3.82
		Acad. Staff	36	12.8	204	72.6	23	8.2	16	5.7	2	0.7	3.91
10	The University provides healthy competitive ground to engage its staff.	Mgt. Staff	1	1.8	48	87.3	1	1.8	0	0	5	9.1	3.73
		Acad. Staff	7	2.5	240	85.4	11	3.9	8	2.8	15	5.3	3.77
<b>Grand Mean</b>												<b>3.62</b>	

Table 2 shows the opinions of respondents on the Talent Engagement Strategy applied on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West Nigeria. It revealed that all the items except item 2 and 8 were all agreed upon as ways talent engagement strategy applied on administration of Human Resources. This was because they had response mean score higher than the instrument scale mean of 3.00. With the grand mean of 3.62 which is higher than the instrument mean of 3.00, this shows that majority of the respondents agreed that Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria facilitates internal job rotation, delegate duties to staff and provide flexibility for tasks to engage their qualified staff which enhanced the administration of Human Resource in the Universities.

### Hypotheses

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference in the opinions of Teaching and Management Staff on the Talent Development Strategy applied on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria.

**Table 3:** Summary of Independent t-test Analysis on the Talents Development Applied on Administration of Human Resources in the Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria

Status	N	Mean	SD	DF	t.cal	t-crit.	P	Decision
Management Staff	55	3.72	.400					
				334	1.60	1.98	0.21	Retained
Teaching Staff	281	3.43	.331					

### P<0.05 Alpha Level

Table 3 shows independent t-test analysis for the study. It revealed that the calculated t-value of 0.60 is lower than t-critical value of 1.98 while the calculated P-value of 0.21 is higher than 0.05 Alpha Level. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of Teaching and Management Staff on the Talent Development Strategy applied on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria is hereby retained.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the opinions of Teaching and Management Staff on the Talent Engagement Strategy applied on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria.

Table 4: Summary of Independent t–test Analysis on the Talents Engagement Applied on Administration of Human Resources in the Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria

Status	N	Mean	SD	DF	t.cal	t-crit.	P	Decision
Management Staff	55	3.62	.348	334	0.81	1.98	0.37	Retained
Teaching Staff	281	3.63	.397					

**P<0.05 Alpha Level**

Table 4 shows independent t-test analysis for the study. It revealed that the calculated t-value of 0.81 is lower than t-critical value of 1.98 while the calculated P-value of 0.37 is higher than 0.05 Alpha Level. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the opinions of Teaching and Management Staff on the Talent Engagement Strategy applied on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria is hereby retained.

**Discussions**

The findings of the research question one (1) revealed that Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria sponsored staff to attend conferences, workshops and in-service training in the areas needed for staff professional development, which promote the administration of Human Resource in the Universities. This agrees with the result of hypothesis One (1) which was retained, meaning that there is no significant difference in the opinions of Teaching and Management Staff on the Talent Development Strategy applied on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria. The variable tested that p-value is 0.21 which is higher than 0.05 level of significant and the grand mean score of 3.50 is higher than the instrument mean of 3.00. In line with this finding, Harun, Mahmood and Othman (2020) found that talent identification, talent development and talent culture were positively related to teacher leadership development. Ather, Abdul and Raj (2020) conducted qualitative research to explore practices that are utilized for managing talent development in the higher education environment in six Australian universities and found that talent development had a positive effect on the performance of educational employee in higher education institution. In addition to the above, Nyaribo (2016) and Al Ariss, Cascio and Paauwe (2014) emphasized that training need identifications are essential for talent development and also advise that tertiary institutions of learning should encourage their experienced staff to develop their best traits.

The findings of the research question Two (2) revealed that Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria facilitates internal job rotation, delegate duties to staff and provide



flexibility for tasks to engage their qualified staff which enhanced the administration of Human Resource in the Universities. This agrees with the result of hypothesis Two (2) which was retained, meaning that there is no significant difference in the opinions of Teaching and Management Staff on the Talent Engagement Strategy applied on administration of Human Resources in Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria. The variable tested that p-value is 0.37 which is higher than 0.05 level of significant and the grand mean score of 3.62 is higher than the instrument mean of 3.00. In line with this finding, Abdullahi, Raman and Solarin (2022) found that employee engagement mediates the association between talent management and employee performance whereas talent management practices have a substantial impact on Employee Performance. Also, Fernandes et al (2023) revealed that work engagement congruence and staffing management practices both contribute to organisational success and the development of competitive advantage for educational institutions. In addition to the above, Tuty et al, (2021) found that organizational culture factors, transformational leadership, and job sharing have a positive impact on employee talent management, and talent management itself has an impact on job satisfaction, job performance, and commitment sustainability.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria sponsored staff to attend conferences, workshops and in-service training in the areas needed for staff professional development which promote the administration of Human Resource in the Universities. The study also concluded that Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria facilitates internal job rotation, delegate duties to staff and provide flexibility of tasks to engage their qualified staff which enhanced the administration of Human Resource in the Universities.

### **Recommendations**

In line with the research findings and conclusions, the study recommended that:

1. The management of Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria in collaboration with Tertiary Education Trust Funds (TETFUNDS) should improve on the sponsorship of staff for conferences and workshops to facilitate the acquisition of current knowledge needed for effective discharge of their duties.
2. The management of Federal Universities in North-West, Nigeria should improve and facilitates internal job rotation and delegate duties to engage their qualified staff.

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