



International Journal of Institutional Leadership, Policy and Management
Volume 4, Issue 3, pp. 430-445. 2022

ISSN: 2735-9220

www.ijilpm.com.ng



INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES FOR THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION IN SOUTH-SOUTH GEO-POLITICAL ZONE, NIGERIA

Akpoyovwaire Samuel MUKORO

Department of Educational Management
Faculty of Education
University of Port-Harcourt, Nigeria

John Okpako ENAOHWO

Department of Educational Management
Faculty of Education
University of Port-Harcourt, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

This study investigated institutional practices for the internationalization of university education in south-south geo-political zone, Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses were answered and. Descriptive survey design was employed for the study. Population of the study was 414 management staff in all the universities in South-South geo-political zone, Nigeria while the sample size for the study was 288 management staff. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire. Data analysis was done using mean and standard deviation to answer research questions, while independent z-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. Results of the study showed that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of federal and state universities management staff on the priorities for internationalization of university education. Furthermore, the results revealed a significant difference between the mean scores of federal and state university management staff on the external relation services for internationalization of university education in South-South geo-political zone, Nigeria. The study recommended that universities management should develop strategic plans that will permit strong alliances, partnership and collaborations between Nigeria universities and those in foreign countries.

Keywords: Institutional, Practices, Internationalization, University Education, South-South, Geo-Political Zone, Nigeria.

Reference to this Article should be made as follows:

Mukoro, A. S., & Enaohwo, J. O. (2022). Institutional practices for the internationalization of university education in south-south geo-political zone, Nigeria. *International Journal of Institutional Leadership, Policy and Management*, 4(3), 430-445.

Copyright © IJILPM 2022.

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, the purpose of higher education is to produce middle and high-level man-power for national development. This is in addition to providing intellectual training in the basic sciences and the liberal arts. It is also a means for developing national consciousness especially in a society with a great diversity of cultures. It is expected that higher education should provide the necessary knowledge and skills for rapid development in all areas relevant to national needs, especially in a competitive world dominated by science and technology including information communication technology. Therefore, the emphasis should be higher education that has transformed into knowledge economies, giving recipients the virtue of self-reliance for life-long sustenance. Since higher education is the bedrock for the construction of a knowledge economy, knowledge should be the most significant factor in the arithmetic of economic development in the 21st century. Knowledge has the capacity to augment productivity, and also increasingly constitutes the foundation of a country's competitive advantage.

University education as the peak of institutions of higher learning has a major role to play towards the attainment of knowledge economies that encompasses an appropriate economic and institutional regime, a strong human capital base, a dynamic information infrastructure and an efficient national innovative system. Besides, national governments are looking up to universities to provide the much needed highly skilled human resource to meet national needs and in contributing to an efficient innovative system. Furthermore, for Nigeria and Nigerians according to Jimol (2013) to be able to function in the 21st century world of global knowledge and economy, her universities must be responsive to change and innovations going on in the approaches to the provision and delivery of university education. He stressed that new universities are increasingly required to provide education that fosters global knowledge, skills and languages in order to perform professionally and socially in an international and multicultural environment. As such universities are much concerned about their reputation. One sure way of achieving this may be through internationalization of university education.

It is in this light that the National Universities Commission (NUC) created Offices of Internationalization and Development in Nigerian universities, the Directorate of International Cooperation and Liaison Services (DICLS) with the core responsibility of promoting and encouraging internationalization in Nigerian University System (NUS) and Strategic Advisory Committee (STADVCOM) with the mandate for internationalization of university education by promoting ICT-driven universities, fostering skills development and entrepreneurship, expanding access as well as addressing equity and gender issues as the present world was globally interconnected (National Universities Commission, 2018).

The NUC, thereafter went on to invite Directors of Office of Internationalization and Development in Nigerian Universities to a retreat on internationalization of university education in Nigeria to sensitize them to take necessary steps to ensure that universities deliberately work towards internationalization by forging and sustaining international partnerships and linkages in universities towards global recognition, global competitiveness and strategizing plans on sustaining international best practices in Nigerian university system in the tripartite mandates of teaching, research and community service. The NUC further maintained that as a means of transformation which enabled people to see the world from perspective beyond their backgrounds, internationalization of university education was long overdue in Nigeria. In order to internationalize Nigerian universities to attract foreign students and scholars, the Commission

has created windows for possible cooperation and partnerships with High Commissions, Embassies and relevant international organizations (NUC, 2020).

Internationalization of university education involves the incorporation of global, international, intercultural dimensions into goals, objectives, content and delivery of university education (Knight, 2015). It entails adding global dimension to universities existing teaching, research and service components. It refers to variety of policies and programmes that universities implement to attain international dimension of university education. In the case of the Nigeria university system, this may mean providing international programmes department, cross border education, effective synergy between national and international universities through collaboration and linkages that would lead to excellent teaching and research, and providing support for faculty to enrich the curriculum and harness untapped potentials. It may also include putting university resources into the establishment of programmes to ensure that most undergraduate students have a study abroad experience or that faculty engages in research with colleagues from outside Nigeria. It may equally include enrolment of international students, curriculum review, exchange programmes for students and academic staff, encouragement of international conference attendance and oversea training, upgrade of teaching, research and other facilities, internationalization oriented promotion criteria, regular orientation and workshop on current trend in teaching and research, quality assurance mechanism and information and telecommunication technology (ICT) driven university.

The importance of university education internationalization has been recognized by various experts, researchers and commissions. For instance, Vavrus and Pekol (2015) opined that integrating international dimension into university education is intended to help students to be more competitive in the global economy, faculty to develop a broader perspective on their disciplines, and the universities themselves to have an international presence, and financially self-sufficient. For example, in Canada, enrolment of international students contributed \$6.5billion to her economy (Horden, 2012); and Yesufu (2018) that internationalization helps to seek financial incentives because of the reduction in the source of funding university education from the government. Internationalization makes it possible for universities to improve in the quality of their academic and research programmes and internationalizes their curriculum, thereby increasing their patronage and improving their world class university status in the academic and industrial environment, nationally and internationally (Ho, 2017). It exposes students to international cultures, training and development as well as gives them access to educational curriculum that meet international standards to quality and content (Soria & Troisi, 2014).

One may think the upsurge in number of Universities in Nigeria would be to the advantage but it seems the reverse is the case (Jaiyeobe and Atanda in Atanda, 2013). This is probably why Mohammed and Gbenu (2007) lamented about the lack of recognition of Nigeria degrees by overseas Universities and job providers. This appears to mean a disconnection between Nigerian Universities and rest of the world (Atanda, 2013).

In response to the gory picture of the disconnection between Nigeria universities and the rest of the world, many universities in Nigeria incorporated internationalization in their institutional policies to be followed by practices. Jimol (2013) observed that many universities now focus on the development and implementation of appropriate policies, structures, principles and programmes that will enable the university education sector to add an international dimension to its teaching, research and service functions. Thus, if universities are to succeed in implementing their internationalization strategies, policies have to be implemented in practices.

This is because internationalization policies and practices have to be linked. In effect, if the certificate from Nigerian universities will enjoy international acceptability, if research output will withstand international criteria and academic staff compete with counterparts from the rest of the world, Nigerian universities must have internationalization policies and observe international practices and standard (Atanda, 2013). Moreover, institutional practices for the internationalization of universities may be the mechanism that makes internationalization more frequently achievable in university campuses (at home) and abroad.

However, in as much as universities in south-south geo-political zone may believe in internationalization of education. It seems this appears only to be more in principle as a gap exists in their linkage of their institutional policies with practices on internationalization. Holzner and Greenwood in Cornelius (2012) argued that the fact that internationalization is on the mission statement of institutions, most universities (universities in south-south geo-political zone inclusive) still do not have well-defined and operationalized strategies (practices) to comprehensively approach internationalization in their campuses.

Tagoe (2012) observed that internationalization, though of much interest to Nigerian universities (universities in south-south geo-political zone inclusive) has yet to see concrete actions. The indication according to him, is that, except for a few initiatives such as vice-chancellors study visits, scholarships for students from deprived African countries, involvement of some donor agencies in the provision of some infrastructure and some bilateral agreements for faculty exchange and joint research, most universities, as in case of universities in south-south geo-political zone may not have well-articulated institutional practices on internationalization. It is, therefore, necessary to conduct a study such as this in order to obtain empirical evidence to determine the institutional practices for internationalization of university education in South-South Geo-political Zone, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Internationalization of university education is a major theme in the 21st century world of global knowledge and economy. It is an innovation in Nigerian university system which is already being implemented for the purpose of producing quality human capital with the right mindsets to function in contemporary global environment. Since internationalization implementation depends largely on university management level for its success, the trend in most countries and universities is to put in place institutional practices. Such institutional practices are necessary because they may help to create structures and programmes that will enable the universities to add an international dimension to their teaching, research and service functions.

The practices may also act as a means for Nigerian universities to enjoy international acceptability, for academic staff to compete with their counterparts from the rest of the world in attainment of knowledge economic and global recognition. The trend however is that although universities in south-south geo-political zone have internationalization in their mission statement but they seem not to have well-defined operational practices to comprehensively approach internationalization. An indication that a gap exists in the linkage of policies with practices meaning that internationalization may be more in principles in the universities in south-south geo-political zone. In light of this, the question may arise as to whether universities in south-south geo-political zone possess the requisite institutional practices that can drive and enhance internationalization of university education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the institutional practices for internationalization of university education in South-South geo-political zone, Nigeria. Specifically the study:

- Find out the priorities for internationalization of university education in South-South Geo-political zone.
- Ascertain the external relation services for internationalization of university education in South-South Geo-political zone.

Research Questions

The following research questions were stated to guide the study:

- What are the priorities for internationalization of university education in South-South Geo-political zone?
- What are the external relation services for internationalization of university education in South-South Geo-political zone?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study at 0.05 significance level:

- There is no significant difference between the mean scores of federal and state universities management staff on the priorities for internationalization of university education in South-South Geo-political zone.
- There is no significant difference between the mean scores of federal and state universities management staff on the external relation services for internationalization of university education in South-South Geo-political zone.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Internationalization of University Education

Internationalization is a term that is being used progressively to discuss the international dimension of higher education. According to Sehoole and Knight (2013) higher education internationalization means a series of international activities such as academic mobility for students and teachers; international linkages, partnership and projects; new international academic programme; and research initiatives. Giving credence to this, Altbach et al. (2009) averred that internationalization is the variety of policies and programmes that universities and governments implement to respond to globalization. What is also clear is that, internationalization is a process that is multi-dimensional or multifaceted and may involve students, faculty, the institution or all of these and the activities that take place between them. Tagoe (2012) listed such activities to include: study abroad by students, faculty collaboration in research and collaboration, attraction of foreign faculty partners, establishment of satellite

campuses or franchise private providers, curriculum containing international issues, re-evaluation of instructional delivery by an institution and harmonization of credentials.

Adeoye et al. (2018) equally listed some of such activities to include creation of international programmes departments, exchange programmes, cross-border distance education, and e-learning. They stressed that in recent years, the international dimension of higher education has become more prominent on the agenda of many governments, tertiary institutions, students, organizations and accreditation agencies. They further explained that higher education has become increasingly international in the past decade as more and more students choose to study abroad, enroll in foreign educational programmes and institutions in their home country, or simply use the internet to take online courses at colleges or universities in other countries. Continuing, they stated that delivery foreign educational programmes and institutions so that students can study at a foreign college without leaving home has been largely driven by educational institutions themselves. This shows that that internationalization process is driven by an assessment of individual and universities needs and priorities (Knight, 2014). She noted that recent national and worldwide surveys of university internationalization priorities and rationales shows that establishing an international profile or global standing is becoming more important than reaching international standards of excellence. Hence, Onyene (2013) remarked that:

Internationalization is a process of expanding managerial principles, programmes and resource capacity of local institutions in order to accommodate more laudable multinational thinking values and valuation, organizational designs and structural models as universities build essential capacities. The primary concern of internationalization is to sharpen internal focus of management with a view to stimulating existing structural elements by employing the strategic management perspectives necessary for the establishment of linkages beyond the border of this human-oriented enterprise in question (the universities) (p. 89).

Furthermore, internationalization means cooperating with universities in other countries to reform and modernize curricular and pedagogy (Sehoole & Knight, 2013). According to them, it means delivering education to other countries using a variety of face-face and distance techniques and new types of arrangements such as branch campuses or franchises. They emphasized that international development projects or, alternatively, the increasing emphasis on commercial cross-border education is termed internationalization.

Priorities for Internationalization of University Education

Internationalization of university education can bring out a range of benefits from different perspectives (institutional and strategic) and at different levels (faculty, students, research collaborations and academic programmes (Khan, 2016). Tuyet (2014) averred that internationalization of university education is considered as an important resource in the development of university education towards, first of all, a system in line with international standards; secondly, one open and responsible to its global environment.

Giving credence to Khan (2016) view, Henard et al., (2012) maintained that today, internationalization functions as a two way street. It can help students achieve their goals to obtain a quality education and pursue research. It gives students an opportunity for “real world,

real time” experiential learning in areas that cannot simply be taught. Institutions, on the other hand, may gain a worldwide reputation, as well as a foothold in the international higher education community and rise to meet the challenges associated with globalization. Also, Szyszlo (2016) posited that internationalization efforts have been increasingly advanced as means for universities to gain competitive advantage, enhance quality and visibility or facilitate a response to globalization.

Guided by the premise that universities act as gateways to the global knowledge society, Van-der-Wende as cited in Szyszlo (2016) asserted that internationalization policy at the higher education level (university education inclusive) aims to promote an internal transformation that strives for global competition and cooperation, which increasingly affect the higher education sector requiring strategic partnerships and research linkages. In essence, there are many reasons to develop internationalization in university education such as academic and professional requirements, education reform and scientific research development. Modern universities know that internationalization can help to achieve a significant economic interest and gain better international reputation (Sun, 2018).

Sun (2018) noted that for developing countries, the benefits of internationalization include improving academic quality, broadening the horizon of students and staff, promoting the capability of international competition of universities. He further stressed that for developed countries, the main benefits are revenue generation and brain gain. A report from (International Association of Universities (IAU) (2012) indicated that the western developed countries gain the main financial benefits from the development of all kinds of international education and academic programmes.

External Relations Services for Internationalization of University Education

The external relations services for internationalization of university education entails the involvement of students in local cultural and ethnic organizations through internships, placements and applied research; and the involvement of representatives from local cultural and ethnic groups in teaching/learning activities, research initiatives and extracurricular events and projects. According to Afful and Owusu-Ansah (2017) this equally refers to active involvement of international students, returned study-abroad students, and cultural diversity of classroom teaching/learning processes. It can also include virtual student mobility for joint courses and research projects and the use of international scholars and reference materials.

Wang (2017) maintained that external relations and services institutional practices on internationalization of university education provide a better education experience, the University has a wide range of support services from all walks of the university for every student, such as the pre-arrival information package and the tutoring system. Constant lively person-to-person tutorials, workshops, even courses provide not only academic guidance but also personal and psychological support. In addition, lecturers also do much to ‘bridge the gap’, ensuring that the student feels being connected and accepted.

Knight and de Wit (2008) listed the following activities included in external relation and services institutional practices on internationalization of university education: training of staff and students in the lead institutions; training of staff and students by faculty of the lead institution at the receiving institution; curriculum advising; research training; sending of books and equipment and instruction in use of these facilities; management advising and support for the incidental costs of maintaining the bilateral link.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was anchored on the strategic intent theory. The strategic intent theory was propounded by Hamel and Prahalad in (1989). This theory posits that organization should develop the ability to deal with uncertain future by defining a procedure for accomplishing goals (Bracker in Mburu & Thuo, 2015). Strategic intent theory emphasizes continuity in an organization adopting internal and external pressure. It stands for a proactive mode of strategizing, a symbol of being futuristic. Strategic intent theory defines the end leaving room for strategic planning process to focus on the means (Hamel & Prahalad, 1989).

Hamel and Prahalad (1989) further posit that strategic intent theory goes beyond the mere interest of developing a strategic plan; it entails working on the organizational mission, vision and goal. According to them, it envisions a desired leadership position and setting the criterion the organization will use to chart its progress. In this regard, Smith (1994) and Romar (2004) in Mburu and Thuo (2015) declared that the desired to win and be stable over time motivates organizations to engage in strategic intent, making the organizations to go beyond the imaginable or thinking the unthinkable to create commitment to the organization's future, setting competitive priorities for the organization, and helping in shaping the organization's core competencies to compete in that desired future.

The strategic intent theory advocates an active management process that includes focusing the organization's attention on the essence of winning; motivating people by communicating the value of the target; leaving room for individual and team contributions; sustaining enthusiasm by providing new operational definitions as circumstances change; and using intent consistently to guide resource allocation (Hamel & Prahalad, 1989). They noted that strategic intent theory stresses setting a target that deserves effort and commitment. In effect, strategic intent theory encompasses a statement of goals (policies) articulated by the top management of an organization and effort and commitment (practices) to operationalize or achieve the goals (Hamel & Prahalad, 1989).

Furthermore, Smith in Cornelius (2012) classified the strategic intent theory into three stages. The first stage is the co-invention stage, in which the management or organization vision is crafted into strategic intent and become a shared commitment among organizational leadership. The second stage is engagement, in which the entire organization become engaged in, and committed to the process with a strategic intent. The third stage is practice in which rigour and discipline are injected into the process by aligning actions with the new values (Cornelius, 2012).

Essentially, Hamel and Prahalad strategic intent theory appears to be a reasonable and sound explanation of the link between institutional policies and practices on internationalization of university education. This is because the strategic intent theory supports institutional policies and practices in the process of implementation of internationalization as depicted by the three stages of the theory. For instance, the first stage which is co-invention becomes policies where universities management plays a key role in setting the mission and vision statement for internationalization, supporting its accomplishment and sustaining its process through tactical resources allocation (Smith in Cornelius, 2012). The second stage (engagement) and the third stage (practice) of the strategic intent theory reflect intuitional practices that entail the establishment of core competencies activities and structure that align with the vision (policies) of internationalization of higher education in universities.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This was suitable for the study because the researcher described the data that were collected and analyzed them based on the existence of institutional practices for internationalization of university education in south-south geo-political zone, Nigeria.

The population of this study comprised all management staff in universities in south-south geo-political zone, Nigeria. The population of management staff of universities in south – south geo-political zone, Nigeria is four hundred and fourteen (414).

The sample size for this study is 288, made up of 145 management staff from federal universities and 143 from state universities. To ensure adequate representation, multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted in selecting the sample for the study. In the first stage, random sampling technique using ballot system was employed to select five (5) federal universities and five (5) state universities from the public universities in south – south geo – political zone, Nigeria. This brought the sampled universities to ten (10) out of the sixteen (16) public universities (seven federal universities and nine state universities) in south – south geo – political zone. In the second stage, the purposive random sampling approach was used to select the management staff in the ten (10) sampled universities at the time of this study. In the third stage, the researcher used 100% of management staff in each of the federal and state universities in south – south geo – political zone, Nigeria. The use of 100% of management staff is above Roscoe (1977) recommendation of using a sample size of 10% and is above the minimum sample size of 384 for a population of over 1,000,000 suggested by Owie (2013).

The instrument for data collection was a researcher developed questionnaire. The questionnaire was titled Institutional Practices for Internationalization of University Education Questionnaire (IPIUEQ). It had two parts, one and two. Part one was on the bio-data of the respondents, bothering on their status – whether state or federal universities management staff, gender, name of university and state. Part two was designed to obtain information on priorities for internationalization of university education and institutional practices on internationalization of university education. The response categories of the instrument was based on a Likert four (4) point summated rating scale of agreement weighted as Strongly Agree (SA) (4 points), Agree (A) (3 points), Disagree (D) (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (SD) (1 point). The instrument was face and content validated by two experts in Educational Management from the University of Port-Harcourt. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Spearman Brown prophecy formula which yielded a coefficient 0.85.

The researcher employed the services of six (6) research assistants in administering and collecting the copies of the questionnaire. All the 288 copies of questionnaire were collected and found usable for data analysis. The data collected for the research questions were analyzed with descriptive statistics involving the use of mean and standard deviation. The mean for the scale was 2.50. The decision was that any item that scored a mean of 2.50 and above was regarded as agreed while any item that scored below 2.50 was regarded as disagreed. The z-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Research Question One: What are the priorities for internationalization of university education in South-South Geo-political zone?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on the Priorities for Internationalization of University Education

S/N	Items	Federal Universities Management Staff (N= 145)			State Universities Management Staff (N=143)		
		\bar{X}	SD	Decision	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Improve the overall quality of education to our institution	3.20	0.55	Agreed	3.37	0.48	Agreed
2.	To prepare students for a global world	3.72	0.44	Agreed	3.81	0.38	Agreed
3.	To attract more international students	3.58	0.57	Agreed	3.65	0.50	Agreed
4.	Improve international reputation and improve positions in rankings	3.72	0.59	Agreed	3.73	0.64	Agreed
5.	To improve the quality of research and development	3.17	0.47	Agreed	3.29	0.51	Agreed
6.	To be more compatible with regard to other HEIs	3.23	0.44	Agreed	3.13	0.60	Agreed
7.	Demand from the labour market to provide students with skills for a global job market	3.32	0.48	Agreed	3.23	0.52	Agreed
8.	Financial benefits for our institutions	3.66	0.47	Agreed	3.64	0.52	Agreed
9.	Generally, attracting students from abroad at all levels	2.99	0.82	Agreed	3.08	0.70	Agreed
10.	Internationalization of learning and teaching	3.02	0.78	Agreed	3.36	0.58	Agreed
11.	Provide our students with more opportunities to have a learning experiences abroad	2.97	0.79	Agreed	3.18	0.75	Agreed
12.	Develop strategic research partnerships with other institutions	3.30	0.65	Agreed	3.52	0.50	Agreed
13.	Attracts graduate students from abroad	3.33	0.62	Agreed	3.47	0.50	Agreed
14.	Create an international environment for our students /internationalization at home	3.28	0.59	Agreed	3.68	0.49	Agreed
15.	Develop strategic partnerships with other institutions regarding teaching and learning	3.30	0.58	Agreed	3.07	0.29	Agreed
16.	Improve our position in national and international rankings	3.32	0.51	Agreed	3.67	0.52	Agreed
17.	Attract researchers and staff from abroad	3.27	0.58	Agreed	3.05	0.28	Agreed
18.	Help to build the capacity of partners in other regions	3.28	0.63	Agreed	3.15	0.36	Agreed
19.	Provide our staff with opportunities to go abroad	3.47	0.59	Agreed	3.18	0.65	Agreed
Grand Mean		3.32	0.58	Agreed	3.38	0.51	Agreed

The data in table 1 showed the mean scores and standard deviation of federal and state universities management staff on the priorities for internationalization of university education in South-South geo-political zone, Nigeria. Given a 2.50 mid-point in the 4-point rating scale, data analysis indicated that all the items (item 1–19) had mean ratings above the mid-point, indicating

that they are priorities for internationalization of university education. Indeed, all of the identified priorities for internationalization of university education received mean ratings of ≥ 3.0 . The highest mean rating of 3.72–3.81 (item 2) was recorded in the case of “to prepare students for a global world”. On the other hand, to provide our students with more opportunities to have a learning experiences abroad (item11 with mean rating of 2.97–3.18), to generally, attract students from abroad at all levels (item 9 with mean rating of 2.99–3.08) and internationalization of learning and teaching (item 10 with mean rating of 3.02–3.36) received the lowest mean rating. As reflected in the grand mean (3.32) and standard deviation (0.58) for federal and grand mean (3.38) and standard deviation of (0.51) for state university indicated that respondents agree the need to priorities for internationalization of university education in South-South Geo-political zone is high.

Research Question Two: What are the external relation services for internationalization of university education in South-South Geo-political zone?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation on the External Relation Services for internationalization of University Education

S/N	Items	Federal Universities Management Staff (N= 145)			State Universities Management Staff (N=143)		
		\bar{X}	SD	Decision	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Offshore teaching sites and distance education	3.13	0.85	Agreed	3.03	0.89	Agreed
2	Community service intercultural project work	2.40	1.17	Disagreed	2.27	1.22	Disagreed
3	Link between development project and training activities with teaching and research	1.98	1.11	Disagreed	1.76	0.97	Disagreed
4	Participation in international networks	1.62	0.89	Disagreed	1.61	0.88	Disagreed
5	Alumni development programmes abroad	1.75	0.89	Disagreed	1.60	0.97	Disagreed
6.	Development of regional offices and permanent presence of the university abroad	1.31	0.46	Disagreed	1.30	0.47	Disagreed
7.	University partnering with foreign institutions to offer joint educational programmes and degrees	1.57	0.89	Disagreed	1.67	0.91	Disagreed
8.	University operating campuses abroad	3.22	0.57	Agreed	3.04	0.41	Agreed
9.	University supplying educational programmes across border through e-learning/distance learning	2.04	1.00	Disagreed	2.09	0.99	Disagreed
10.	Development of alumni	1.20	0.40	Disagreed	1.21	0.43	Disagreed

11.	networks Strategic alliances/partnerships with overseas institutions	1.88	0.89	Disagreed	1.89	0.88	Disagreed
12.	Distance and e-learning programmes	2.26	1.02	Disagreed	2.25	1.03	Disagreed
13.	Establishment of branch campus abroad	2.65	0.93	Disagreed	2.44	0.87	Disagreed
14.	Curriculum advising	1.46	0.50	Disagreed	1.40	0.50	Disagreed
15.	Management advising	2.00	0.54	Disagreed	2.07	0.47	Disagreed
16.	Research training	2.11	0.93	Disagreed	2.19	0.91	Disagreed
17.	Sending of books and equipment to universities abroad with instruction on the use of such equipment	3.34	0.60	Agreed	3.36	0.82	Agreed
Grand Mean		2.11	0.80	Disagreed	2.06	0.80	Disagreed

Table 2 showed that items 1, 8 and 17 had mean ratings above the mid-point mean of 2.50. This indicates that the respondents agreed that those practices are external relation services for internationalization of university education in South-South geo-political zone, Nigeria. However, the respondents disagreed that items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 were not external relation services for internationalization of university education. As reflected in the grand mean (2.11) and standard deviation (0.80) for federal and grand mean (2.06) and standard deviation of (0.80) for state university indicated that respondents disagreed that external relation services for internationalization of university education in south-south geo-political zone low.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of federal and state universities management staff on the priorities for internationalization of university education in South-South Geo-political zone.

Table 3: z-test analysis of difference between mean scores of federal and state universities management staff on the priorities for internationalization of university education

Variables	No.	\bar{x}	SD	DF	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Sig.	Decision
Federal Universities Management Staff	145	63.13	11.15	286	-15.122	1.96	0.05	Rejected
State Universities Management Staff	143	64.15	9.77					

Data in table 3 showed the analysis of z-test difference between the mean scores of federal and state universities management staff on the priorities for internationalization of university education. The results of the z-test revealed that the calculated z-value of -15.122 is greater than the critical value of 1.96 of a degree of freedom 286 of 0.05 significant level. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference between the mean scores of federal and state universities management staff on the priorities for internationalization of university education in South-South geo-political zone.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between the mean scores of federal and state universities management staff on the external relation services for internationalization of university education in South-South Geo-political zone.

Table 4: z-test analysis of difference between mean scores of federal and state universities management staff on the external relation services for internationalization of university education

Variables	No.	\bar{x}	SD	DF	z-cal.	z-crit.	Level of Sig.	Decision
Federal Universities Management Staff	145	35.92	13.64	286	7.673	1.96	0.05	Rejected
State Universities Management Staff	143	35.18	13.62					

Data in table 4 showed the analysis of z-test difference between the mean scores of federal and state universities management staff on the external relation services for internationalization of university education. The results of the z-test revealed that the calculated z-value of 7.673 is greater than the critical value of 1.96 of a degree of freedom 286 of 0.05 significant level. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference between the mean scores of federal and state universities management staff on the external relation services for internationalization of university education in South-South geo-political zone.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Priorities for Internationalization of University Education

The finding of the study showed that financial benefits to universities, preparation of students for global world, attracting international students, improving international reputation and positions in rankings, building the capacity of patterns in other regions, attract researchers and staff from abroad, developing strategic partnership with other institutions regarding teaching and learning among others are priorities for internationalization of university education. This finding is in line with that of Cinches et al. (2017) that higher education varied in their range of internationalization practices, but intentions to internationalization were commonly academic and economic. The test of hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of federal and state universities management staff on the priorities for internationalization of university education in South-South geo-political zone.

External Relation Services for Internationalization of University Education

The finding of the study showed that offshore teaching sites and distance education and community service intercultural project work were the external relations services for internationalization of university education. This finding supported the work of Agih and Major (2013) that students and faculty can as a result of internationalization of higher education, access the resources in other universities through the aid of e-library, internet and distance education. They noted that these opportunities are becoming more relevant in the face of internationalization of higher education in universities. The test of hypothesis four revealed that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of federal and state universities

management staff on the external relation services for internationalization of university education in South-South geo-political zone.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the finding of this study, it may be concluded that internationalization of university education is a planned activity and not just something that happens to a university system but what it strives to achieve by adopting best institutional practices that are drivers of internationalization of university education in south–south geo–political zone of Nigeria. In this respect, it is recommended that:

- Universities should put in place modalities to ensure there are institutional practices that can foster considerable exchange of knowledge, ideas, staff and students at the international level.
- Universities management should develop strategic plans that will permit strong alliances, partnership and collaborations between Nigeria universities and those in foreign countries.
- Universities should strategize in order to foster institutional practices to meet the standard requirements for internationalization of higher education in universities.

REFERENCES

- Adeoye, B. F., Anyikwa, B. E., & Avant, D. W. (2018). Teachers and students' perceptions of internationalization of higher education in Nigeria. *European Scientific Journal*, 8(19), 110–128.
- Afful, D., & Owusu-Ansah, C. (2017). Building capacity through cross-border higher education: Prospects and challenges for public universities in Ghana. In Boateng, I.A., Egwuasi, P. I., Laguador, J. M., Apea, O. B. & Oleforo, N. A. (Eds.), *School environment in Nigeria, Ghana and Philippines*. Author House
- Agih, A. A., & Major, N. B. (2013). Perception on gains and pains of internationalization of higher education in Niger Delta region. In C. Uche & S. Ahunanya (Eds), *Internationalization of higher education in Nigeria*. (pp. 140–158) Totan Publishers
- Altbach, P., Reisberg, L., & Rumbley, L. (2009). *Trends in global higher education, tracking an academic revolution*. Center for International Higher Education, Boston College.
- Atanda, A. I. (2013). Institutional policies and practices on internationalization of higher education: A case study of university of Ibadan, Ibadan. In C. Uche & S. Ahunanya (Eds), *Internationalization of higher education in Nigeria* (pp. 180–201). Totan Publishers.
- Bols, A. (2013). The benefit of true internationalization. *University World News Education Forum on Internationalization*. Issue 278. Retrieved on 27th November, 2018 from www.universityworldnew.com-article
- Cornelius, A. P. (2012). Internationalization of higher education: A strategic institutional response to globalization. *Electronic Theses and Dissertation*, 396. <http://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/ctd/396>.
- Hamel, G., & Prahalad, C. K. (1989). Strategic intent. *Harvard Business Review*, May-June, 1989, 63 – 76

- Henard, F., Diamond, L., & Roseveare, D. (2012). Approaches to internationalization and their implications for strategic management and institutional practices. A guide for higher education institutions. Retrieved on January, 2017 from www.oecd.org/edu/imhe
- Ho, H. W. L. (2017). International students' perceptions of services and supports provided: A case study of a Mid-Sized university in the USA. *International Journal of Technology and Educational Marketing*, 7(1), 1 – 4. <http://doi.org/10.4018/ijtem.2017010101>.
- Horden, B. (2012). University world news, 2nd June, 2012, No. 224
- International Association of Universities (IAU). (2012). Affirming academic values in internationalization of higher education: A call for action. <http://globalhighered.wordpress.com/2012/04/19/affirming-academic-values-in-internationalization>.
- Jimol, B. O. (2013). Prospects of internationalization of higher education in Nigeria: Focus on policies and practices in Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria. In C. Uche & S. Ahunanya (Eds), *Internationalization of higher education in Nigeria* (pp. 202–232). Totan Publishers.
- Khan, M. A. (2016). The role of Internationalization in the higher education industry: An exploratory study. *International Journal of Economic and Strategic Management of Business Process*, 1-13.
- Knight, J. (1994). *Internationalization elements and checkpoints*. Canadian Bureau for International Education.
- Knight, J. (2008). The internationalization of higher education complexities and realities. In D. Teferra & J. Knight (Eds.), *Higher Education in Africa: The international dimension*. Association of Africa Universities/Center for International Higher Education.
- Knight, J. (2014). What is an international university? In OECD (Ed) *The state of higher education 2014*. OECD.
- Knight, J. (2015) Updated definition of internationalization. *International Higher Education*, 33 <https://doi.org/10.6017/ihe.2003.33.7391>.
- Mburu, S. N., & Thuo, J. K. (2015). Understanding the concept of strategic intent. *International Refereed Journal of Engineering and Science*, 4(6), 57–60.
- Mohammed, M. O. B., & Gbenu, J. P. (2007). Public universities on the brink of collapse in Nigeria: Private sector participation as a way out. In J. B. Babalola, G. O. Akpa, A. O. Ayeni & S. O. Adedeji (Eds.), *Access, equity and quality in higher education*. NAEP Publication
- National Universities Commission. (2020). We are making NUS more innovative. *Monday Bulletin: A Publication of the Office of the Executive Secretary*, 15(2), 1–24. Retrieved from www.nuc.edu.org.
- Onyene, V. (2013). Issues in Internationalization of higher education in Nigeria: Repositioning towards global reconvene. In C. Uche & S. Ahunanya (Eds.) *Internationalization of higher education in Nigeria*. Totan Publishers.
- Owie, I. (2013). *Fundamentals of statistics in education and the social sciences (4th ed.)*. Mindex Publishing.
- Schoole, C., & Knight, J. (2013). Introduction. In C. Schoole & J. Knight (Eds), *Internationalization of African higher education: Towards achieving the MDGs*. Sense Publisher.
- Soria, K. M., & Troisi, J. (2014). Internationalization at home alternatives to study abroad: Implications for students' development of global, international and intercultural

- competencies. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 18(3), 261–280. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1028315313496572>.
- Strafford, S., & Taylor, J. (2016). Transnational education as an internationalization strategy: Meeting the institutional management challenges.
- Szyszlo, P. (2016). *Internationalization strategies for the global knowledge society*. Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Bureau for International Education/CBIE Ph.D. Research Series.
- Tagoe, C. N. B. (2012). The future and relevance of Nigerian universities and other tertiary institutions: Towards higher education transformation. A Paper Submitted to the Committee of Vice-Chancellors of Nigerian Universities' Consultative Dialogue, October 18-19, Abuja, Nigeria
- Tuyet, T. T. (2014). Internationalization of higher education in Vietnam: Opportunities and challenges. *VNU Journal of Science Foreign Studies*, 30(3), 61-69
- Vavrus, F., & Pekol, A. (2015). Critical internationalization: Moving from theory to practice. *FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education*, 2(2), 5-21 <http://di.doi.org/10.18275/fire201502021036>.
- Wang, Y. (2017). Strategic for higher education internationalization in UK based on the process approach: A case study. *International Conferences on Advanced Education and Management Science*, 39–44
- Yesufu, L. O. (2018). Motives and measures of higher education internationalization: A case study of a Canadian university. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 7(2), 155 – 168. <http://ijhe.sciedupress.com>.
- Ziskin, M., Hossler., & Kim, S. (2010). The study of institutional practices related to student persistence. *Journal of College Student Retention*, 11(1), 101–121.