

ISSN: 2320-8848 (Online)

ISSN: 2321-0362 (Print)



International Journal for Management Science And Technology (IJMST)

**Volume 6; Issue 1
Manuscript- 1**

**“THE EFFECT OF STAFF INVOLVEMENT IN SETTING
INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES ON CURRICULUM DELIVERY AT
MOI INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY”**



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1. Abstract

The study determined the effect of staff involvement in setting institutional objectives on curriculum delivery at MIT. The study findings would be useful to principals of technical institutions, managers and supervisors from both public and private organizations. The ministry of education would also use the findings to strengthen the case of enactment of MBO. The study employed both quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study concluded that the entire staff was not involved in objective setting. The study recommended that both lecturers and BOM staff should be involved in setting objectives, action planning should be given priority and finally frequent meetings to review progress should be held.

Key Words: **Curriculum , Curriculum delivery, Management by objectives, Staff**

2. Introduction

Management by objectives(MBO) is practised all over the world with different definitions and applications. To manage by setting targets and then appraising how far such targets have in fact been met is a simple method which has long been practised. The term management by objectives is not always clear as it has evolved through different concepts(Koontz & Weihrich 1988).

Certain individuals have long placed emphasis on MBO and have contributed greatly to its development as a systematic process. It was first introduced by Peter F. Drucker in 1954 who emphasised that objectives must be set in all areas where performance affects the health of the organisation. He laid down a philosophy that emphasises self-control and self-direction(Saleemi, 2010). General Electric Company was around the same time using some elements of MBO in its reorganisation efforts to decentralise managerial decision making. The approach was taken up by Douglas McGregor in 1957 who advocated its use as a preferred means of goal setting appraisal of managerial performance and self-assessment. Deverell(1980) also criticised traditional appraisal programs that focused on personality trait criteria for evaluating subordinates. He argued that subordinates should assume the responsibility of setting short-term objectives for themselves and review them with their superiors. After which performance is evaluated against the earlier set objectives by subordinates themselves(Koontz & Weihrich, 1988). He thus emphasised performance appraisal.

According to Cole(2004), the leading advocate of MBO in Britain was Humble in 1971. According to him MBO is a means of integrating organisational goals such as profit and growth, with the needs of individual managers to contribute to the organisation and to their own self development. George Odiorne, the most vocal spokesperson for MBO today, considers it to be a system of managerial leadership (Koontz & Weihrich,1988). Not surprising, in view of the business pay-offs claimed for it, MBO was first employed in business enterprises with principal intention of improving profitability and growth.

The system of MBO has been adopted in a wide range of organisational settings, in the public as well as the private sector including technical institutions. In MIT, MBO application is evident in many areas of curriculum delivery. In performance contracting, goals that are in line with the Institute's strategic plan are mutually agreed upon, and action plans are developed from the goals. Performance is then evaluated against the preset objectives. In teaching ,which is the most critical area of the curriculum in the institution, lecturers come up with objectives which are harmonized departmentally. Staff annual appraisal are based on their achievement of the preset objectives

2.1 Statement of the Problem

One of the most common causes of organizational failure is lack of employee involvement in planning organizational goals which are frequently drawn by the management. The staff are not given opportunity to accept greater responsibility and to make a higher level of personal contribution. It is a fact that any organization, irrespective of whether in a manufacturing or service sector has the principal intention of profitability and growth. This intention is realised best when an organization employs participative approach to the activities involved in planning, organization, direction and control, and to the execution of work. An objective that is not accepted or owned by employees in the organization does not result in changed behaviour or action toward attaining it. In an effort to show a good return on investment, MBO cannot be ignored since a system of MBO helps to achieve a sense of common purpose and common direction amongst the management of an organization in the fulfilment of business results. It results in better managing, often forces managers to clarify the structure of their organization, encourages people to commit themselves to their goals and helps develop effective controls. Learning institutions that use the MBO system are expected to record good curriculum delivery. It is for this reason that the study investigated the influence of MBO on

curriculum delivery at MIT.

2.2 Objectives of the Study

The study determined the effect of staff involvement in setting institutional objectives on curriculum delivery at MIT.

3. Literature Review

MBO is one approach to management that is widely practiced around the world. Yet despite its wide application, it is not always clear what it means. Some think of it as a motivational technique; still others consider it as a planning and control device. According to Bennett (1995), MBO is a top-down control technique whereby corporate objectives are segmented into departmental targets and then into goals for sections and, ultimately, for individual employees. It has also been defined as a comprehensive managerial system that integrates many key managerial activities in a systematic manner, and is consciously directed toward the effective and efficient achievement of organisational and individual efforts (Koontz & Weihrich, 1988). MBO is also known by different names. It has been referred to as work planning and review, management by results, goals and control, management by motivation, among other definitions (Saleemi, 2010; Lussier, 2008). MBO aims to convince individuals that what counts is their performance, which is why it should be result-oriented. The appeal of MBO is that it focuses on employees working to accomplish goals they have had a hand in determining. The approach enables lower levels of management to understand, accept and work towards the attainment of these objectives (Huse, 1979).

In fact, MBO has been defined as a four step process in which: (1) managers and employees jointly set objectives for the employees, (2) managers develop action plans, (3) managers and employees periodically review the employee's performance, (4) the manager makes a performance appraisal and rewards the employee according to results (Kincki & Williams, 2008).

3.1 Setting objectives

This starts from setting of organisational goals. The top manager determines what he or she perceives to be the purpose or mission and the more important goals of the enterprise for a given period ahead. The goals and objectives that are set should be realistic and achievable. When setting objectives, the manager also establishes how that objective is going to be

measured (Goel,2008).

The employees must have a clear idea about their roles and responsibilities towards achieving the organisational objectives. Objectives should not be forced on employees since force can scarcely give rise to a sense of commitment. After the setting of organisational objectives, individual managers proceed to work with subordinates in setting their objectives. The MBO concept advocates the participation of both the manager and his subordinates in setting the objectives. The manager asks what goals the subordinates believe they can accomplish, in what time period, and with what resources (Koontz, 1988; Goel 2008). Both the manager and the subordinate have a mutual discussion about the objectives and how feasible they are for the company or department. Mutually agreed objectives enable people to coordinate their efforts voluntarily while working within their respective areas of discretion. When the significance of each task and its relationship with other tasks is defined in terms of clearcut objectives, then every individual can fit his actions into a coordinated effort (Saleemi, 2010).

The manager's judgement and final approval must be based upon what is reasonably attainable, what is fully supportive of upper-level objectives, what is consistent with goals of other managers in other functions, and what is consistent with the longer-run objectives and interests of the department and the company. Finally, an agreement is arrived at when the objectives are laid down in specific and clear terms with enough scope to qualify them in order to facilitate their easy measurement (Koontz, 1988; Goel, 2008). Saleemi (2010) gives a clear picture of objective setting in MBO. He says objectives are cascaded down through the organisation; that is, objectives are structured in a unified hierarchy, becoming more specific at lower levels of the organisation. Top managers set general organisational objectives, which are translated into divisional objectives, which are translated into departmental objectives. The hierarchy ends in individual objectives set by each employee. Thus, an integrated hierarchy of objectives is created throughout the organisation. Precise performance objectives and measures indicating goal accomplishment are laid down. Objectives serve as the standards or benchmarks with the help of which actual performance can be evaluated. Performance can continually be judged in terms of how well the organisation is moving towards the realisation of objectives. Workers are held accountable for their performance against these standards (Kinicki & Williams 2008).

The objectives must be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and testable (SMART). Objectives should be specific and well understood objectives of the individual unit need to be well understood and tied in to the objectives of the larger organization (Fuse 1979). They should communicate very clearly the intended outcome of the undertaking because they fail to guide and direct efforts if they are stated in vague and general terms. Research has found that performance is enhanced when individuals are encouraged to attain specific, difficult, yet achievable goals as opposed to vague (Dess et al 2008).

Objectives should specify expected results. They should focus on results rather than on work they must clearly identify the results expected if they are to commit individuals to action. According to Huse (1979), objectives must be measurable and quantitative in nature. To serve as standards for control, objectives must be measurable or verifiable. They should be measurable in order to identify expected results or determine whether they have been obtained. Wherever possible, objectives should be stated in quantitative terms and, where extensive written instructions are required, should be written in simple English. Many objectives can be stated in terms of quantity, quality, cost and time (Saleemi, 2010).

An attainable objective is one that is feasible, that is, it can be answered because data for it can be collected. Objectives must be realistic, not idealistic. They should not be set so high a level that they discourage the organization members to make an attempt for their realization. Objectives should be manageable within the constraints of the available resources such as finance, equipment, manpower and even time. Time bound objectives means they should be accomplished within the available time (Huse, 1979).

3.2 Effect of Staff in Implementation of MBO

Commitment is critical for the successful implementation of MBO program. Senior management must be fully committed and have the right attitude to the MBO process. Difficulties are created through subordinates not being given the resources or authority necessary for completion of tasks allocated to them. Performance that meet the objectives should be rewarded with compliments, raises, bonuses, promotions or other suitable benefits. Failure can be addressed by redefining the objectives for the next 6 or 12 months period or even by taking stronger measures such as demotion (Kinicki, 2008).

Successful implementation of an MBO program must take into account the some considerations. First, the role of effective communication:- Management must communicate to subordinates clearly and effectively what is expected of them. Secondly, commitment from the workforce:- This impels people to set more difficult goals to raise the level of their aspirations which may have a positive effect on their performance. Management can use the MBO process successfully with subordinates if there is commitment to the process and true involvement of employees rather than trying to make them believe that management's objectives are theirs.

According to Ackers et al (2006), employee participation/involvement is a process in which decisions in an organisation are shared among individuals who are otherwise hierarchically unequal. Different people have different hierarchy of needs and thus need to be managed differently if they are to perform well and achieve their potential. He further asserts that participatory management involve subordinates and their managers in sharing information, problem solving and decision making. In agreement with Ackers' view, Konrad (2006) states that employee involvement is critically important to competitiveness in the contemporary business environment. With increasing acknowledgement of people as an organisation's best asset (Guy, 2003; Rodgers and Ferketish, 2005) there is a renewed and continuous desire to find ways to increase employee contribution to the organisation while better understanding how effective human resource systems operate (Doody, 2007).

According to Riggle et al. (2009), perceived organisational support has a positive effect on organisational commitment, job satisfaction and employee performance. A manager should view members of his or her team much as a conductor regards the players in the orchestra, as individuals whose particular skills contribute to the success of the enterprise. While people are still subordinates, the superior is increasingly dependent on the subordinates for getting results in their area of responsibility, where they have the requisite knowledge. In turn, these subordinates depend on their superior for direction and "above all, to define what the 'score' is for the entire organization, that is, what are standards and values, performance and results." Thus, the balance between management and employee empowerment has to be struck.

Failure to view MBO as a comprehensive system affects its implementation. Most key managerial activities can and should be intergrated with the MBO process. Though the

degree of intergration differs for individual activities with the highest degree in intergration being in controlling, planning and directing MBO must be considered a way of managing and not an addition to the managerial job (Koontz, 1988).

Failure to teach the MBO philosophy is another factor affecting its implementation. Managers must explain to subordinates what it is, how it works, why it is being done, what part will it play in appraising performance and above all how participants can benefit. Failure to give guidelines to goal setters is a major weakness of the program. (Koontz, 2010)

Goal/objective setting is critical in MBO program. For MBO to be effective, individual managers must understand the specific objectives of their job and how those objectives fit in with the overall company objectives. The managers of the various units or sub-units or sectors of an organisation should know not only the objectives of their unit but should also actively participate in setting these objectives and make responsibility for them.

Goals should be verifiable with the right degree of flexibility. Focus on short term objectives can be done at the expense of the longer-range health of the organisation. This orientation unfortunately may result in undesirable managerial behaviour as management may hesitate to change objectives, even if a changed environment would require such adjustments. (Koontz, 1988).

Excessive concern with economic results puts pressure on individuals that may encourage questionable behaviour. Management must agree to reasonable objectives, clearly state behavioural expectations and give high priority to ethical behaviour. (Koontz, 1988)

3.3 Curriculum in Learning Institutions

Curriculum has been defined in many different ways by educationists. Previously, the prevailing tendency in many learning institutions was to conceive curriculum as a programme of learning facts and skills alone in the classroom, as a collection of courses of study in differenct subjects. Contemporary authorities in education view curriculum as more than mere course of study that is evaluated at the end of the term or year to determine the learners' progress. Curriculum is intepreted to mean all the experiences the children have under the direct jurisdiction of the school (Ondiek, 1986).

According to Bobbit, curriculum refers to those series of things which children and youth must do and experience by way of developing ability to do the things well that make up the affairs of adult life (Asiachi, 1992). A school curriculum is a vehicle by which school enables the learner become educated, to change their behaviour in the desired directions (Sadker & Sadker, 2000).

There are various forms of curriculum in schools. One, the explicit curriculum, includes the courses offered, syllabus describing courses, tests given, materials used, and teachers' statements of what they want students to learn.

The implicit or hidden curriculum emerges incidentally from the interaction between the students and the physical, social and interpersonal environments of the school; these are subtle messages that students receive from teachers' and other students' behaviours. They are implicit learnings that are not always intended. The third curriculum has been called the extra curriculum or co-curriculum and includes student activities such as sports, clubs, governance, and the student newspaper. Contemporary authorities in education point out that the extra curriculum are all rich learning situations. The advocates for this type of curriculum reckon that the extra curricular activities enhance student self-esteem and encourage civic participation; improves race relations; and improves participating students grade (Sadker and Sadker, 2000).

Curriculum in learning institutions is of paramount important because it is a programme of activities designed so that pupils will attain, as far as possible, certain educational ends or objectives. Curriculum has two functions: One function is to preserve and transmit to students the culture and traditions of the past. The other is to anticipate the knowledge, skills and abilities that today's students will need in order to function effectively in tomorrow's society.

Curriculum can be a great success or a dismal failure depending on the teachers. The teachers are the kingpins in any educational innovation. They are the persons who alone can make the curriculum design achieve what it was designed to achieve. The quality of teachers in curriculum implementation process is of great importance. According to Asiachi (1992), a curriculum is only as good as the quality of its teachers. Teachers implement the ideas and aspirations of the designers, and if they are dedicated, hardworking and imaginative they can

enliven what would otherwise be dull and lifeless.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1 (below) illustrates the influence of MBO on curriculum delivery.

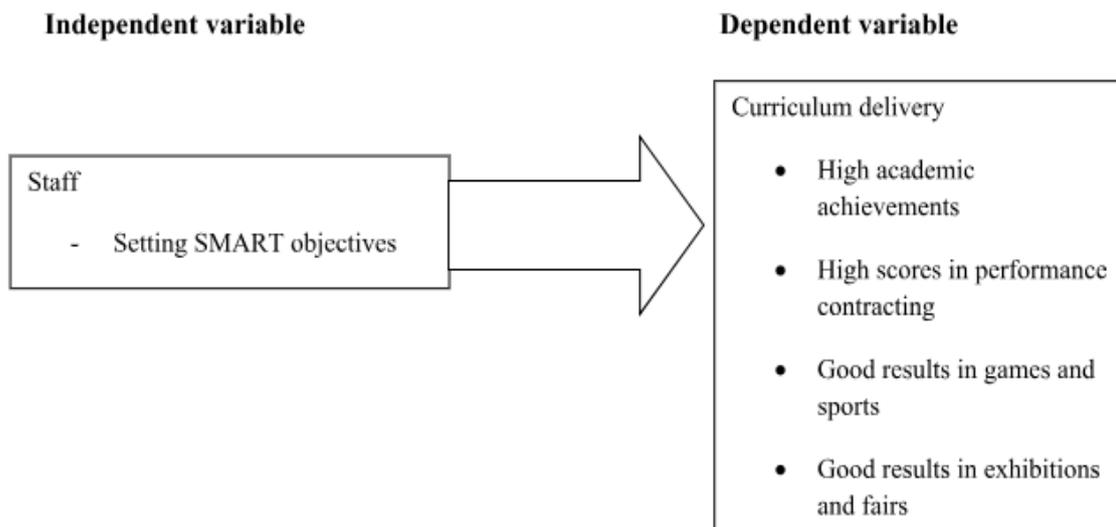


Fig 2.1 Relationship between Staff Involvement in Setting Objectives and curriculum delivery

A MBO program has a direct relationship to curriculum delivery. Since the purpose of MBO is to motivate staff, a properly installed MBO program improves curriculum delivery. When objectives are specific, measurable, realistic and time bound; action plans are specific and unambiguous; managers and employees periodically review the employees performance; and the manager makes objective performance appraisal and rewards the employee according to results efficiency and productivity can greatly improve. This in turn will lead to effective and better curriculum delivery because the well implemented program gives staff an opportunity to accept greater responsibility and to make higher level of personal contribution. Good curriculum delivery is reflected in institution's high academic achievement, good results in games and sports, and exhibitions, and high scores in performance contracting.

On the other hand, a poorly installed MBO program can have unintended and highly negative results. It can lead to lack of motivation to the employees and damage to their self esteem. This obviously will impact negatively on the curriculum as quality and productivity will go down

3. Methodology

The study was a descriptive survey with a total population of study was 1057; 931 students, 86 lecturers and 40 BOM staff. Stratified, proportionate and random sampling were used to get a sample of 317 (279 students, 26 lectures and 12 BOM staff). Data was collected using questionnaires. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze data.

4. Results And Findings

From Figure 4.1 above 69.23% lecturers responded in the affirmative, 23.07% said they are rarely given opportunity while 7.69% said they are not given opportunity to participate. Also from Figure 4.2 above majority (58.33%) of BOM staff respondents reported that they are not given opportunity to participate in setting departmental objectives, 25% said they are rarely given opportunity while only 16.66% said they are given opportunity to participate.

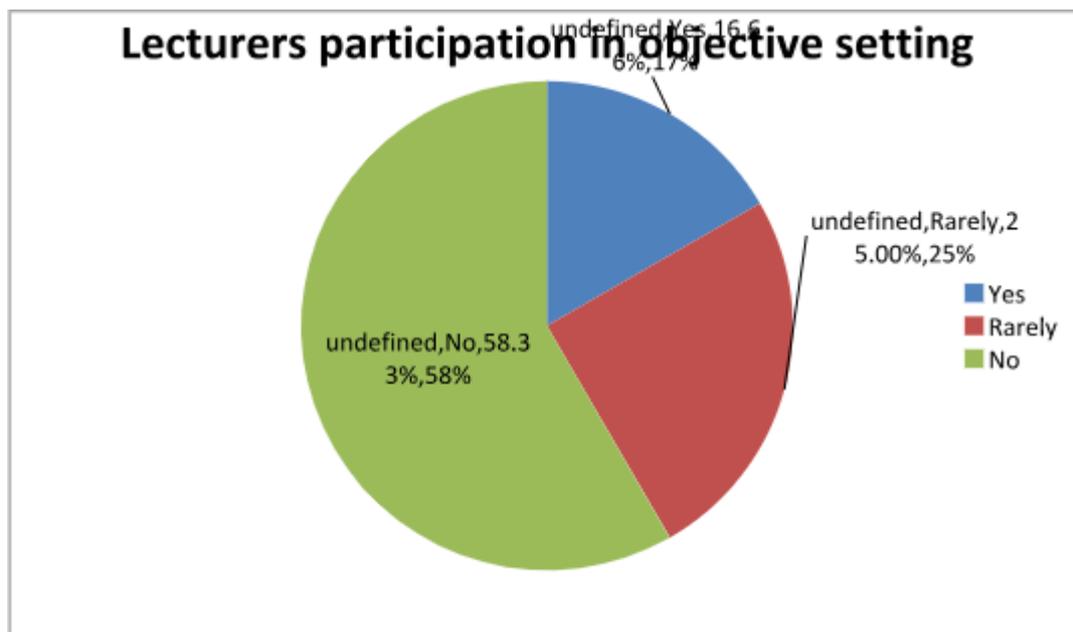


Figure 4.1 Lecturers participation in objective setting

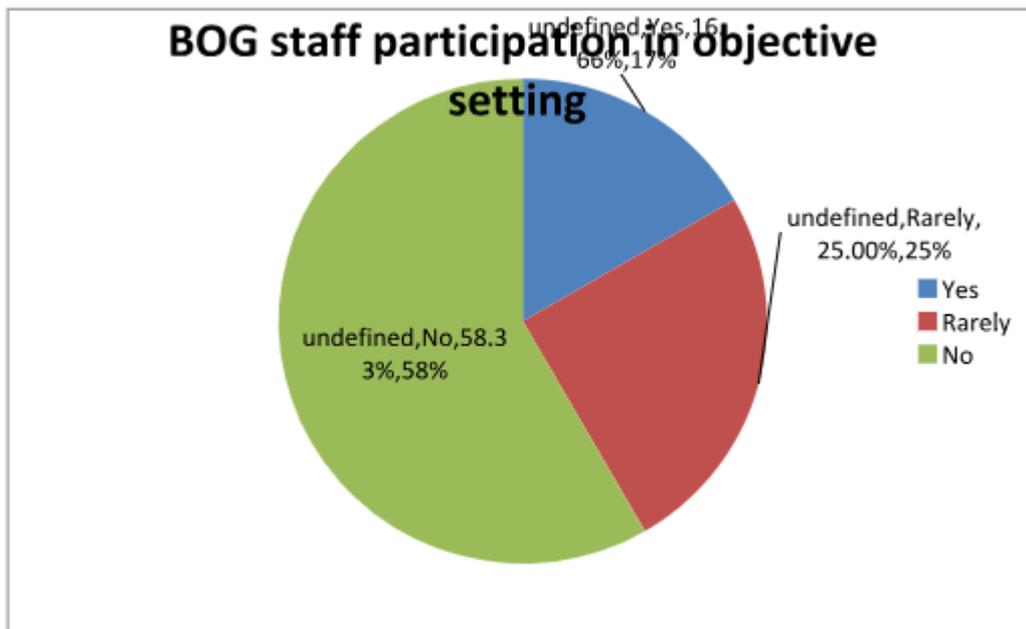


Figure 4.2 BOM staff participation in objective setting

There was an obvious disparity between the responses given by the two groups of respondents. MBO concept advocates for the participation of both manager and his subordinates in setting objectives. Yet the results show that in MIT only a section of staff, that is, lecturers are involved in setting objectives. This most likely yields to lack of unity and cooperation in meeting the organization’s goals. Majority of lecturers responded that they participate in setting objectives and it improves their curriculum delivery. Lecturers are the main service providers.

Student respondents were asked to give their ratings of the above services as offered in MIT. Majority (64.52%) said academic services are good, 24.73% said they are fair and 30 said they are very good. Concerning games and sports, majority (60.93%) felt the services are fair, with 28.67% saying they are good and 6.81% saying they are poor. Educational trips were also viewed as fair by majority (74.91%), good by 21.51%, poor by 6.81% and very good by 3.58%. They supported their responses by saying that since the institution has only one bus and the student population is high some of them never get the opportunity of going for educational trips. Also when asked about entertainment 36.92% said the services were fair, 32.25% said they were good and 30.82% said they were poor. They complained of lack of disco. Table 4.1 below shows their responses.

Service	Ratings			
	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
Academic	0	69 (24.73%)	180 (64.52%)	30 (10.75%)
Games and sports	19 (6.81%)	170 (60.93%)	80 (28.67%)	0
Educational trips	19 (6.81%)	209 (74.91%)	60 (21.51%)	10 (3.58)
Entertainment	86 (30.82%)	103 (36.92%)	90 (32.25%)	0

Table 4.1 Students' ratings of services offered in MIT

with Further, student respondents were asked whether they thought management was working together staff to ensure effective curriculum delivery. Majority (70.25%) said yes, 18.99% said no and 10.75% were not sure. Since students are not involved in curriculum delivery their responses are based on the services they receive.

Asked whether they always discuss the objectives with their superiors before implementing them, only 23.07% lecturers said yes and the agreement arrived at is put down in writing and signed, 50% also said yes but the agreement is not signed, and 23.07% said yes but the agreement is not written down, and 3.84% lecturer said no objectives are set in his/her department. The BOM staff questioned gave the following responses: 25% said yes but the agreement is written down and not signed, 66.66% also said yes but the agreement is not written down, and only 8.33% said objectives are not set in his/her department. The responses are in Table 4.2 below.

Staff	Responses				
	Yes, written down & signed	Yes, written down but not signed	Yes but not written down	No discussion of objectives	No objectives are set in the dept
Lecturers	6 (23.07%)	13 (50%)	6 (23.07%)	0	1 (3.84%)
BOM	0	3 (25%)	8 (66.66%)	0	1 (8.33%)

Table 4.2 Staff responses on whether they discuss objectives with their superiors

An important observation was that majority (96.15%) of lecturer respondents agreed that they discuss the objectives with their superiors whether they are written down or not. A lesser

percentage of BOM staff (66.66%) was of the same opinion. Some BOM staff (33.33%) said no objectives were set in their department while only 3.84% lecturer respondent said the same. It appeared that lecturers discussed objectives with their HODS to a larger extent compared to BOM staff. The MBO concept requires that both the manager and the subordinate should have a mutual discussion of the objectives before they are implemented.

Table 4.3 Sources of information from superiors to staff

It was worth noting that the leading source of information for lecturers is general staff meeting. The lecturers do not get management information from students.

A significant number (25%) of the BOM staff said they get management information from grapevine. Only a small percentage (8.33%) in this category said they get information from general staff meeting. The explanation given for this was that general staff meeting for this category were rare since majority work in sensitive areas like kitchen and security. Face to face communication was practiced to a less extent. This was further corroborated by their responses when asked how often they meet with their superiors to review progress of curriculum implementation as per the set objectives. Majority (61.54%) of the lecturer respondents said termly, 23.07% said monthly, while 15.38% said they meet when results for external examinations are out. The responses are shown in Figure 4.3 below.

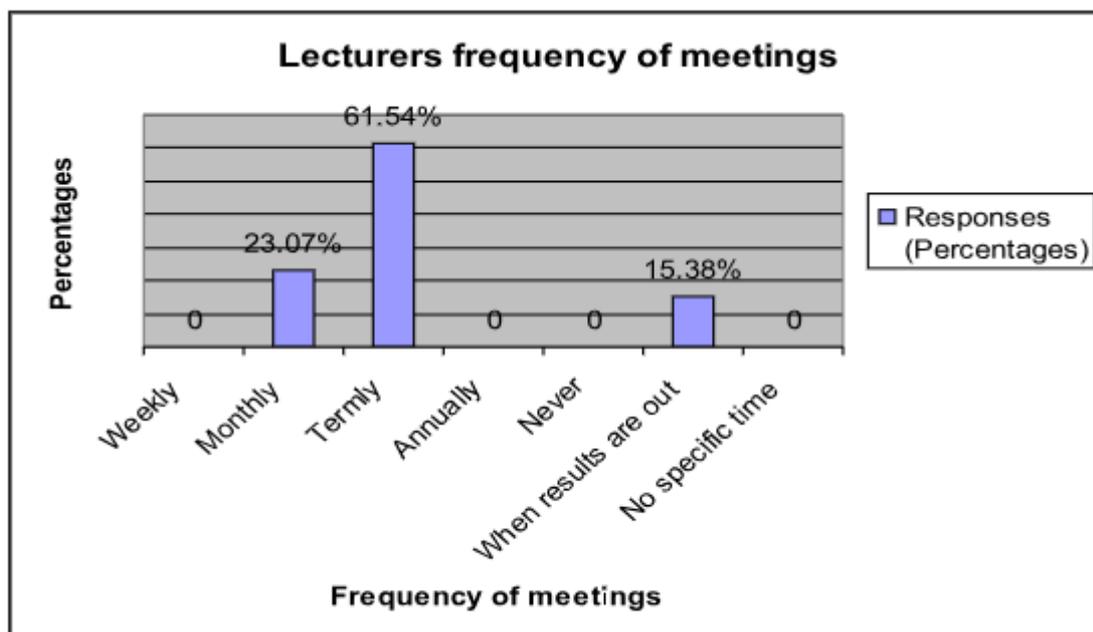


Figure 4.3 Lecturers frequency of meeting with superiors to review curriculum implementation

The 61.54% lecturers said they meet at the end of each term to review performance during the general staff meeting. Those who meet monthly are members of performance contracting committee who meet oftenly to review and revise targets set.

Only 41.66% BOM staff respondents said they meet monthly to review progress of curriculum implementation. The rest (58.33%) said they do not have periodic meetings. Their review meetings were ad hoc and rare. Their responses are shown in Figure 4.4 below.

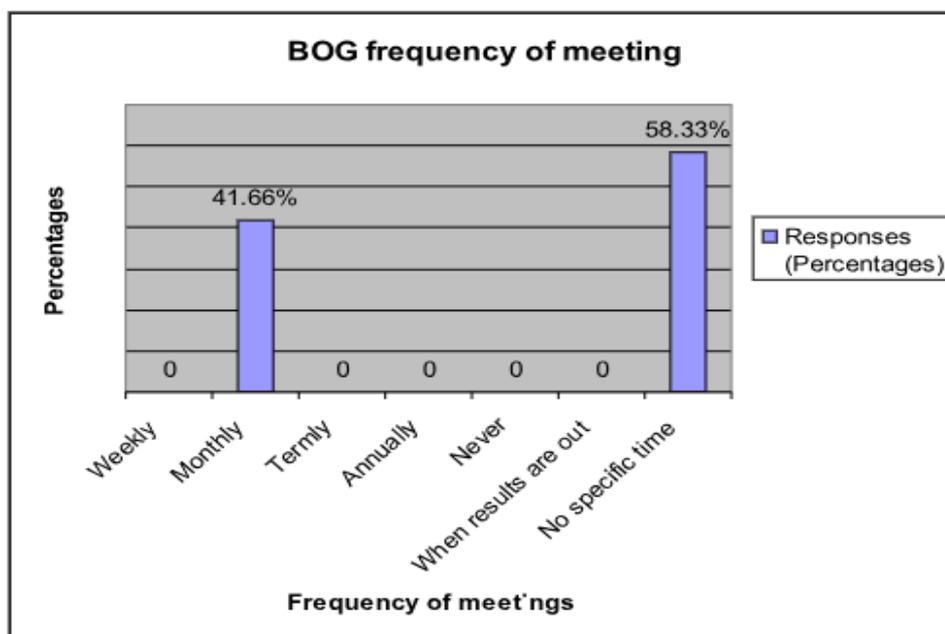


Figure 4.4 BOM staff frequency of meeting with superiors to review curriculum implementation

5. Discussion of Findings, Conclusion And Recommendations

5.1 Summary of Major Findings

The objective of the study was to determine the effect of staff involvement in setting institutional objectives on curriculum delivery. From the findings, majority of the lecturers (76.92%) were aware of what the managements wants to achieve. 69.23% said they were involved in setting departmental objectives and 96.15% agreed that they always discuss the objectives with their superiors whether they are written down or not. However, 66.66% of

BOM staff respondents argued that they were never aware of what the management wants to achieve, 58.33% said they don't participate in setting departmental objectives, 91.66% agreed to discussing objectives with their superiors whether they are written down or not.

Knowing the overall organizational goal is critical as these in turn affects the individual objectives. MBO is a participative system and lack of effective employee involvement in setting departmental objectives could have negative impact on curriculum delivery since all individuals are required to understand the goals of the organization for which they are working. This enables them relate their contribution towards achieving the overall objective of the organization. The section of staff that was involved minimally in objective setting felt demotivated. This affects their performance. It was also apparent that mutual discussion of objectives does not take place in all departments particularly among the BOM staff. Ideally, objectives should be mutually discussed and agreement arrived at are laid down in specific and clear terms with enough scope to quantify them in order to facilitate their implementation and easy measurement. In MIT this was not the practice as the situation was different from one department to another. There was lack of coordinated effort from staff while working in their respective areas of discretion.

5.2 Conclusions

There was a need for involving the entire staff in setting and discussing objectives to enable every individual fit his actions into a coordinated effort.

5.3 Recommendations

The management should involve both lecturers and BOM staff in discussing and setting objectives. This will encourage coordinated efforts in curriculum delivery.

5.4 Suggestions For Further Research

A study be conducted to find out factors affecting implementation of MBO in technical institutions ,universities, private and other public institutions. Studies should also be carried out on other aspects of MBO in learning institutions such as as action planning in curriculum delivery, how performance review affect curriculum delivery and how performance appraisal and reward system influence.

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