

## Training Needs Assessment of Academic Staff of Polytechnics in Ghana: Bolgatanga Polytechnic Perspective

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**Abstract:** Training needs assessment is important for an organisation's Human Resource Development (HRD), needs identification and articulation, as well as the designing and implementation of a training programme. It is the starting point of the HRD and training process. The purpose of this study is to determine the training needs of academic staff of Bolgatanga Polytechnic. The target population for the study comprised management and academic staff of Bolgatanga Polytechnic. The study considered 11 management respondents and all the 98 academic staff of the Polytechnic. The study revealed that there is the need for people to move up to lectureship positions and training in the use of technology for teaching and research as well as practical teaching skills as the main training needs of academic staff. The study concludes that, training that will enable staff to move up to lectureship positions as well as training in technology enhance better development of academic staff of Bolgatanga Polytechnic. Finally, the study recommends that training needs assessment should be a holistic process that encompasses varied methods. Again, staff's ideas, views and suggestions should carefully be taken into account when developing training need programmes.

**Keywords** - Academic Staff, Development, Human Resource, Training, Needs Assessment.

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### I. Introduction

The training profession emerged as a result of the outbreak of the World War II, where there was the need for the industrial sector to equip its factories to support the War effort. At the time of World War I, this initiative led to the institution of new training programmes within larger organisations and unions. The federal government established the Training within Industry (TWI) service to synchronize training programmes across defence-related industries and the TWI also trained company instructors to teach their programmes at each plant. By the end of the war, TWI had trained over 23, 000 instructors, awarding over 2 million certificates to supervisors from 16, 000 plants, unions, and services [1].

[2] points out that training has a complementary role to play in accelerating learning; hence, training should be seen as a strategy for situations that justify a more directed, expert-led approach as well as a comprehensive and all-pervasive people development solution. It is important to know that training has both current and future implications for the success of organizations: training enables employees to do their present jobs effectively and efficiently and also, it helps prepare and equip employees with necessary knowledge and skills needed to do their future work which may include additional responsibilities to their present schedule or taking up promotions in the future.

Training refers to a designed attempt by a firm to enhance employees' knowledge of competencies that are related to their jobs. Empowering employees with competencies such as knowledge, skills and positive behaviour is important for the successful performance in their specific jobs [3]. Training is thus intended to modify the attitude, knowledge and skill behaviour of employees through their learning experiences to enable employees achieve effective performances in their various job roles and activities since training activities have positive effect on the performances and goal attainment of individual employees, teams and institutions in general. Furthermore, [4] described training in its basic form as an activity that changes people's behaviour positively and also increases productivity. According to him, training usually gives people the needed motivation and information that inspires them to give up their best with regards to the performance of their jobs.

Sometimes, inefficiencies in organizations in terms of job performance are perceived by many as salary and motivational associated challenges but not as lack of competencies and other skills by staff to perform their work very well [5]. Even in few cases where training is seen as a tool to resolve problems of inefficiency and underperformance in organizations, managers do not still see the need to assess the training needs of employees in the associated areas of work.

In some organizations, training needs assessment is either seen as an expensive and time wasting activity or it is considered not important to invest resources in conducting one. Management of organizations, including Bolgatanga Polytechnic rather prefer using resources to commence training programmes straight forward without conducting a training needs assessment to know exactly where staff fall short in terms of skills and abilities in order to provide the required training. The challenges associated with training without needs

assessment are that: the training provided may not be appropriate to resolve the existing and future performance problems and may not also fill the gaps that exist.

It is believed that huge sums of money is wasted on account that basic issues such as analysis of training needs in relation to the short and long-term business plans had not been looked into. Thus, an integral part of analyzing training needs is the recognition of what will 'fit' the company's culture, as well as the company's strategy and objectives, hence, the first step in designing a training and development programme is to conduct a needs assessment. Training needs assessment is a process by which an organization's Human Resource Development (HRD) needs are identified and expressed. It is the starting point of the HRD and training process.

Training needs assessment identifies the discrepancies (gaps) between current skills of employees and the skills needed to perform their jobs successfully in the present and the future [1]. Training needs assessment can be described as the assessment of the training requirements of a target group in terms of the number of trainees, their educational and professional background, their present level of competence and the desired behaviour or skill level acquired at the completion of the training [6]. Also, training needs assessment can be described as a systematic investigation of an audience(s) to identify aspects of individual knowledge, skill, interest, attitude and/or abilities relevant to a particular issue, organisational goal, or objective [7]. Thus before designing a training plan, organisations must identify if any training needs exist, because training needs assessment is used to determine whether training is the right solution to a workplace problem. The assessment determines the need for training, identifies what training is needed, and examines the type and scope of materials needed to undertake a training programme.

According to [8], the purpose of training needs assessment involves: determining the performance gap, developing the evaluation outcomes for training, determining if training is the most appropriate intervention and assessing the financial needs for training. Furthermore, [9] identified four other reasons for conducting training needs assessments as follows: to inform trainees of available training and determine trainees need or interest in taking training, to gather and prioritize trainee ideas for additional training areas, to determine the capacity of company and staff to train others and to assess how trainee will like to take training. Also [10] indicates that, the purpose of a training needs assessment is to answer some familiar questions: why, who, how, what, and when training should be carried out.

Bolgatanga polytechnic appears not to have undertaken any training needs assessment so as to identify training needs of academic staff which may exist outside the existing planned training approach programme, or may also exist as a result of the introduction of new academic programmes, technologies and teaching methods. For instance, the introduction of Ecological Agricultural practical training, experiential entrepreneurial training and power point presentation skills may call for training for most or all academic staff irrespective of their levels of qualification. It is against this background that a study into assessing the training needs of academic staff of Polytechnics in Ghana is imperative. The main objective of the study is to determine the training needs of academic staff of Bolgatanga Polytechnic. Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. Identifying the training needs of academic staff for current and future job assignments.
- ii. Examine the challenges encountered in assessing the training needs of academic staff.
- iii. Identify the benefits of training needs assessment before training of academic staff.
- iv. Examine training needs assessment methods.

## **II. Literature Review**

### **2.1 The effect of training needs assessment**

Many employees in organizations and academic institutions such as Bolgatanga Polytechnic have left their jobs in search of other employment and better opportunities in other promising organizations and academic institutions. This has placed a great task on these organizations and institutions to work hard in order to retain and gain the commitment of their employees. A study conducted by [11] indicates that training has an effect on employee commitment. Their study also revealed that, if training needs assessment is not effectively done, it will lead to a lack of commitment by employees to their jobs, hence, the most important factor to ensuring employees commitment to their jobs is effective training needs assessment. Another effect of training needs assessment according to [12] is that when the training needs of employees are identified, it leads to appropriate training design and implementation which will lead to an increase in personnel range, transfer of skills, increased job satisfaction, increased value of employees in the labour market and improved prospect for internal promotions. A study also conducted by [13] revealed that training is only successful when performance gaps are well filled. According to them, it is only training needs assessment that can help an organization determine performance gaps of its personnel and therefore design appropriate training based on the gaps identified.

## **2.2 Challenges of training needs assessment**

There are a number of challenges organizations and institutions face with regard to training needs assessment of their employees. Some firms are not providing the training that their employees need. Instead, they poach employees from other firms who have already been trained and developed by their former employers. The high rise of labour mobility is said to be a great disincentive to the broad provision of training and thus a barrier to employees training and development [14] and [15]. Furthermore, [16]; [17] and [18] indicates that lack of planning for employee training and development can affect the recruitment, selection, training needs assessment as well as training and development of employees. According to these authors, some organizations lack Human Resource experts internally to plan and undertake human resource activities such as training needs assessment and training and development.

This view also confirms the findings of [15], whose study of the manufacturing sector in South East Asia revealed that the manufacturing sector needs knowledgeable and competent HRD personnel such as professional internal trainers with the expertise to train and develop employees within organisations. This implies that employers may have to focus on the recruitment of expert HRD professionals to take on the role of developing human expertise in their organisations and managing the various specialized HRD functions such as training and development, training needs assessment, performance management, career development and the management of organisational development and change.

## **2.3 Training needs assessment methods**

Designing and implementing the right training needs assessment methods is essential as it will go a long way to help obtain the right results with regards to the training needs of employees. Some of the training needs assessment methods include; interviews, observation, facilitating groups and survey through questionnaire, tests, records and report studies as well as job analysis and performance review ([6]; [19]; [20]; [21]). Furthermore, a study conducted by [22] revealed that the examination of organizational documents such as staff development policy and staff appraisal reports is a very effective method for assessing the training needs of staff in that, it is fast, inexpensive and provides relevant quantifiable data which will help in analysing the training needs of staff. This method is also good in building management involvement towards the assessment of staff training needs.

## **III. Methodology**

For this study, the descriptive design was employed. The study looked at assessing the training needs of academic staff of Bolgatanga Polytechnic for the period of 2012 to 2015. To obtain an accurate and reliable data from the study, both primary and secondary data were collected.

The population of the study comprised management and academic staff of Bolgatanga Polytechnic. The management include the Vice Rector, Registrar, Finance Officer, Librarian, Human Resource Officer, Deans and Heads of Departments. The academic staff includes Senior Lecturers, Lecturers, Instructors and Technicians.

The study used random sampling technique to select 11 management respondents for the investigation. All the 98 academic staff was included in the study.

The main data collection instrument was a questionnaire. The items in the questionnaire were mainly centred on identifying the training needs of academic staff of Bolgatanga Polytechnic.

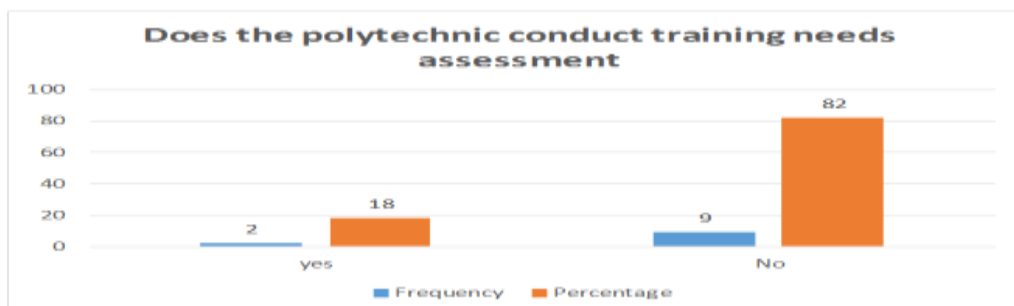
The data was organized according to various themes in relation to the research objectives. Prior to coding and tabulating the questionnaires for analysis, all the items were checked. This helped to ascertain if instructions had been followed uniformly and whether all items had been responded to. The responses to the questionnaire were then coded by assigning numbers to the various categories of responses for the purposes of analysis. The data gathered were analyzed using SPSS version 22.0. Percentages and tables were employed to present the outcome.

## **IV. Results and Discussion**

This part of the study dealt with the presentation of results and discussion of the data collected. Descriptive statistics was used in presenting the results. Frequencies and percentages were employed. Discussions were based on training needs of academic staff for current and future job assignments, challenges encountered in assessing the training needs of academic staff, benefits of training needs assessment before training of academic staff and methods employed in conducting training needs assessments.

### **4.1 Training needs assessment of academic staff**

Fig. 1 and Table 1 highlight the distribution of respondents' views as whether Bolgatanga Polytechnic conducts training needs assessment.



Source: Field Survey data, (2016)

Figure 1: training needs assessment of academic staff (management respondents)

Table 1: Frequency of Training Needs Assessment (Management Respondents)

How often is training needs assessment conducted	Frequency	Percent
Once every year	2	18
Non-applicable	9	82
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey data, (2016)

The results from Fig. 1 and Table 1 indicate that, majority of the respondents (9) are of the view that the Polytechnic does not conduct training needs assessment of it academic staff. From the Researcher point of view, even if the Polytechnic conducts training needs assessment as indicated by minority of the respondents (2), then; training needs assessment is not considered an important activity in relation to training and development of staff or human resource development in general. This attitude of the polytechnic is contrary to [23] when he stresses that, training needs assessment is specifically meant to find out which training needs are the priorities in order to help organizations employ their resources effectively so as to prevent unnecessary training activities.

Table 2: Training Needs of Academic Staff (Academic Staff Respondents)

Responses	Agreed		Undecided		Disagreed		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Teaching related needs	55	56.1	23	23.5	20	20.4	98	100
Research and publication related needs	60	61.2	20	20.4	18	18.4	98	100
Seminar presentation related needs	70	71.4	15	15.3	13	13.3	98	100
Technological related needs	75	76.5	13	13.3	10	10.2	98	100
The need for people to move to lectureship positions	80	81.6	10	10.2	8	8.2	98	100

Source: Field Survey data, (2016)

Table 2 shows that while 55 (56.1%) of the respondents agreed to teaching related needs such as equipping lecturers with experiential and hands-on teaching skills and techniques as training needs of academic staff, 20(20.4%) of the respondents disagreed to teaching related needs as training needs of academic staff. Also, while 60 (61.2%) of the respondents agreed that research and publication related needs such as the acquisition of knowledge and skills in software and data analysis are the training needs of academic staff, 18 (18.4%) respondents held contrasting view to research and publication related needs as training needs of academic staff. 70 (71.4%) respondents agreed that another training needs was seminar presentation needs such as power point and projector usage knowledge and skills while 13(13.3%) of the respondents disagreed to seminar presentation need as a training need of academic staff. It is further indicated in Table 2 that while 75 (76.5%) respondents agreed to technological related needs such as the knowledge and skills in power point and projector usage for power point presentation during lectures as well as lecturing through a virtual class platform as training needs of academic staff, 10 (10.2%) respondents disagreed. Finally, 80 (81.6%) respondents agreed to the need for people to move to lectureship positions as a training need of academic staff. This was contrary to the views of 8 (8.2%) respondents who disagreed to the view.

4.2 Challenges encountered in conducting training needs assessment of academic staff.

Table 3: Challenges in Conducting Training Needs Assessment of Academic Staff

Statement	Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Technological changes often make it difficult to introduce new training strategies	58	59.2	18	18.4	22	22.4	98	100.0

Lack of understanding of an adaptation of different cultures and values has been impeding training needs assessment	54	55.1	14	14.3	30	30.6	98	100.0
Lack of planning for human resource training and development can affect training and development of staff	68	69.4	10	10.2	20	20.4	98	100.0
The high rate of labour mobility is a challenge to training and development	75	76.5	8	8.2	15	15.3	98	100.0
Lack of manpower and expertise to conduct training needs assessment	85	86.7	5	5.1	5	5.1	98	100.0

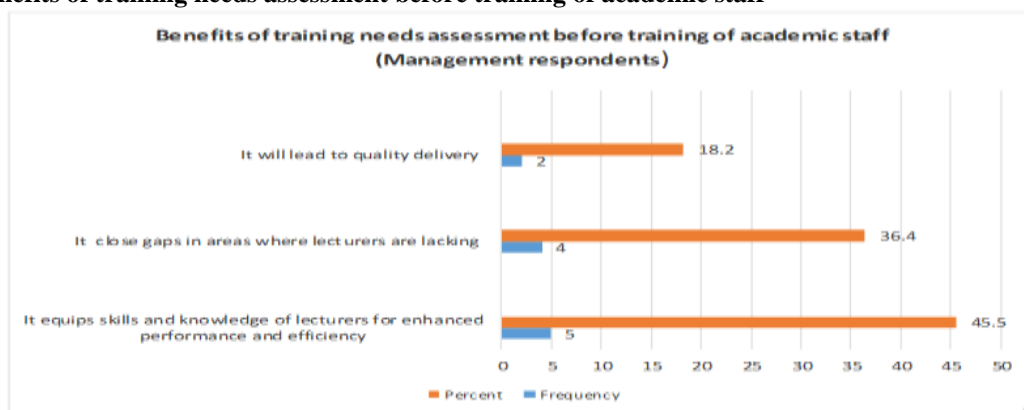
Source: Field Survey data, (2016)

Table 3 shows the challenges faced in conducting training needs assessment of academic staff. The results show that, 58 (59.2%) respondents held that one major challenge encountered during training needs assessment is that technological changes often make it difficult to introduce new training strategies. This is on account that, people often are presumed to have acquired technological skills in their previous employment which in actual fact may not be related to their current teaching job yet there could be existing technological needs in these academic staff that need to be filled in order to enable them perform their current jobs as lecturers effectively. This was different from the views of 22 (22.4%) respondents. The outcome also shows that, 54 (55.1%) respondents indicated lack of understanding of an adaptation of different cultures and values as a factor impeding training needs assessment of academic staff. This is as a result that, academic staff who are used to the traditional methods and processes of delivering their roles sometimes resist change and all that accompany the change, 30 (30.6%) had a different opinion from the majority.

The results also revealed that, 68 (69.4%) respondents were of the view that lack of planning for human resource training and development can affect training needs assessment of academic staff. 20 (20.4%) on the other hand did not support the idea. According to [17], and [18], lack of planning for employee training and development can affect the recruitment, selection, training and development of employees. Moreover, 75 (76.5%) respondents agreed to the fact that high rate of labour mobility is a challenge to training needs assessment. However, 15 (15.3%) had different views and thoughts with regards to the challenge at hand. This confirms the views of [14] and [15] when they stated that, the high rate of labour mobility is argued to be a major disincentive to the broad provision of training and thus a barrier to employees' career development and enhancement. These problems have been blamed for employees leaving the company in search of new career prospects, and also for the notion of 'poaching' of employees.

Finally, the results show that while 85 (86.7%) respondents stated lack of manpower and expertise to conduct training needs assessment as a challenge to training needs assessment of academic staff, 5 (5.1%) disagreed. [16] shares this view when they asserted that lack of manpower and the expertise to perform the various HRD responsibilities has also been identified as another challenge to employee training and development. This view also confirms the findings of [15], whose study of the manufacturing sector in South East Asia revealed that the manufacturing sector needs knowledgeable and competent HRD personnel such as professional internal trainers with the expertise to train and develop employees within organisations. This implies that, employers may have to focus on the recruitment of expert HRD professionals to take on the role of developing human expertise in their organisations and managing the various specialized HRD functions such as training and development, training needs assessment, performance management, career development and the management of organisational development and change.

#### 4.3 Benefits of training needs assessment before training of academic staff



Source: Field Survey data, (2016)

Figure 2: benefits of training needs assessment before training of academic staff (management respondents)

Fig. 2 is a distribution of the benefits of training needs assessment before training as suggested by management of the Polytechnic. Out of a total of 11 respondents that were contacted, 5 respondents representing 45.5% said that training needs assessment equips skills and knowledge of lecturers for enhanced performance and efficiency. Furthermore, 4 respondents representing 36.4% mentioned that training needs assessment helps to close gaps in areas where lecturers are lacking. Finally, 2 respondents representing 18.2% indicated that training needs assessment will lead to quality delivery. It is an important fact to note that management of the Polytechnic are aware of the numerous contributions that training needs assessment can bring to the Polytechnic in terms of human resource development. [13] are of a similar view by saying that training needs assessments can help an organisation determine performance gaps of its personnel and evaluate outcomes for training.

**Table 4:** Benefits of Training Needs Assessment before Training of Academic Staff (Academic Staff Respondents)

Responses	Agreed		Undecided		Disagreed		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Training needs assessment before training provides the individual with skills in the various fields and discipline	65	66.3	28	28.6	15	15.3	98	100
Training needs assessment before training makes it possible for a person to develop his or her potentials to become an asset to an organisation	70	71.4	18	18.4	10	10.2	98	100
Training needs assessment before training improves the effectiveness of a staff in performing the job that he or she is presently doing or is expected to do in the future	90	91.8	4	4.1	4	4.1	98	100
Training needs assessment before training equips staff to manipulate new technologies introduced into the workplace	66	67.3	12	12.2	20	20.4	98	100
Training needs assessment before training helps in upgrading staff's skills in present jobs and improves their performance in future jobs	80	81.6	8	8.2	10	10.2	98	100
Training needs assessment before training facilitates the transfer of learning to other jobs because the trainee has an immediate opportunity to practice the work tasks on the jobs	88	89.8	5	5.1	5	5.1	98	100

**Source:** Field Survey data, (2016)

With regard to the benefits of training needs assessment before training of academic staff, the academic staff respondents gave the following responses: 65 (66.3%) supported the view that training needs assessment before training provides the individual with skills in the various fields and discipline, 15 (15.3%) disagreed. This is in line with the assertion of [24] when he stated that the major purpose of training needs assessment before training is to provide requisite skills and remove performance deficiency, whether current or anticipated that may cause employees to perform less than the desired level. This according to him enables employees to become more productive. Furthermore, while 70 (71.4%) of the respondents were of the view that training needs assessment before training makes it possible for a person to develop his or her potentials to become an asset to an organisation, 10 (10.2%) disagreed. [25] shares the same idea with majority of the respondents. According to her, productivity increases while training takes place, hence, there is the need to identify training needs of employees in order to design appropriate training programmes for implementation.

In a similar view, 90 (91.8%) respondents agreed that training needs assessment before training improves the effectiveness of a staff in performing the job that he or she is presently doing or is expected to do in the future. In contrast to the above, 4 (4.1%) respondents thought otherwise. [26] in their view maintain that effective staff training based on training needs identified is an important investment in the human resource of organizations with immediate and long-range returns. Also, 66 (67.1%) respondents were also in agreement to the fact that training needs assessment before training equips staff to manipulate new technologies introduced into the workplace. 20 (20.4%) respondents had contrasting opinions to that. To support this idea, [27] stress that, in relation to their current positions; employees may gain greater knowledge in dealing with dynamics in technology if their technological training needs are carefully articulated.

Also, upgrading staff skills in present job is one of the effects of training needs assessment before training which majority of the respondents 80 (81.6%) were in agreement while 10 (10.2%) constituting the minority of the respondents did not agree with that. In a related view, [28] maintains that training reduces accidents. This is on account that training needs assessment before training and development, results in less work-related accidents. This is because appropriate training in job skills and safety techniques will be designed for implementation which will enhance employees' abilities and skills to handle work-related equipments carefully. Finally, 88 (89.8%) respondents were also in agreement to the fact that training needs assessment

before training facilitates the transfer of learning to other jobs while 5 (5.1%) of the respondents had a different reason altogether. The views of the majority is in agreement with [12] when he indicated that training needs assessment before training leads to increase in personnel range, transfer of skills, increased job satisfaction, increased value of employees in the labour market and improved prospect for internal promotions.

**4.4 Training needs assessment methods**

**Table 5:** Training Needs Assessment Methods Used (Management Respondents)

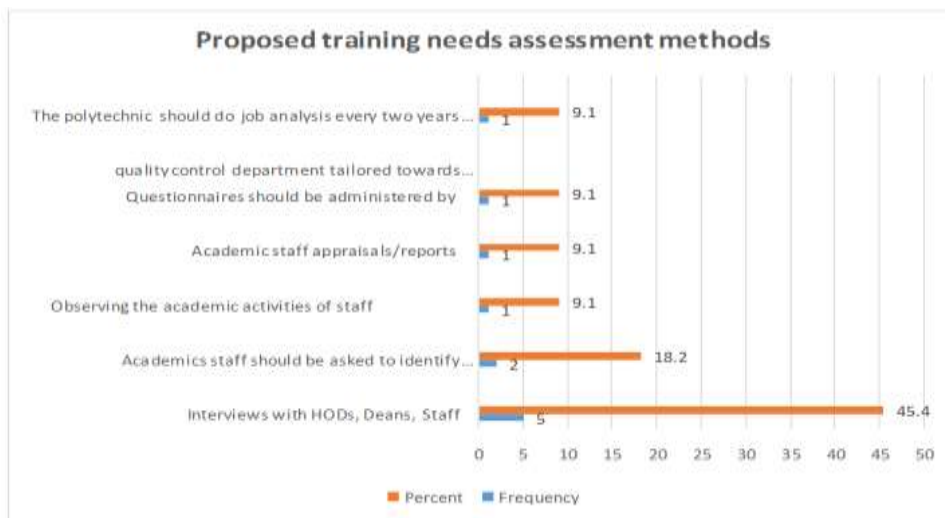
Training needs assessment methods used	Frequency	Percent
1,3	1	9
1,3,4	1	9
Non-applicable	9	82
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Field Survey data, (2016)

**Note:**

Training needs assessment methods used:

- 1= Interviews with respective departments and the staff
- 2= Survey through questionnaire administration with individual academic staff
- 3= Observation of respective staff job related activities during teaching and research activities
- 4= Feedback from quality control department



**Source:** Field Survey data, (2016)

**Figure 3:** proposed training needs assessment methods (management respondents)

Table 5 and Fig. 3 are a distribution of the training needs assessment methods used by the polytechnic and the proposed training needs assessment methods as indicated by the management respondents. The results from Table 5 show that, 2 respondents who are the minority indicate that, the Polytechnic uses training needs assessment methods such as interviews with respective departments and the staff, observation of respective staff job related activities during teaching and research activities as well as feedback from quality control department. On the contrary, 9 respondents being the majority indicated that, the Polytechnic does not use any training needs assessment methods. This presupposes that the polytechnic does not conduct training needs assessment of academic staff as found in Fig. 1 and Table 5.

On the other hand, when respondents were asked to propose training needs assessment methods, 5 respondents representing 45% proposed interviews with Heads of Departments (HODs), Deans and staff, 2 respondents representing 18% proposed that, academic staff should be asked to identify weaknesses they possess, 4 other respondents individually indicated; observing the academic activities of staff, academic staff appraisals/reports, questionnaires administered by quality control department tailored towards identifying the training needs of academic staff and the polytechnic doing job analysis every two years especially when new programmes are introduced as proposed training needs assessment methods. [6] contributed to this discussion in earlier studies by indicating the following as training needs assessment methods; interviews, observation, facilitating groups and survey through questionnaire. [21] also identified the following methods similar to those proposed by the management respondents; interviews, questionnaires, tests, group problem analysis, records and report studies as well as job analysis and performance review.

**Table 6:** Proposed Training Needs Assessment Methods (Academic Staff Respondents)

Responses	Agreed		Undecided		Disagreed		Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Interviews with staff	82	83.7	10	10.2	6	6.1	98	100
Survey (Questionnaires)	80	81.6	10	10.2	8	8.2	98	100
Direct observation	78	79.6	10	10.2	10	10.2	98	100
Performance appraisal of staff	70	71.4	18	18.4	10	10.2	98	100
Examining staff development policy	70	71.4	15	15.3	13	13.3	98	100

Source: Field Survey data, (2016)

Results from Table 6 show that 82 (83.7%) respondents agreed that one method of conducting training needs assessment is interviews with staff while 6 (6.1%) respondents disagreed. This supports the study conducted by [19] who indicated that an interview is appropriate for training needs analysis as it is normally open-ended and used to collect information that is both plentiful and delicate in the distinctions made by respondents. The interview method also gives a direct contact between the person conducting the training needs analysis and the staff. Also, while 80 (81.6%) respondents agreed that survey is one of the methods used in the conduct of training needs assessment, 8(8.2%) respondents disagreed to survey as a method. This supports the view of [20] who said that written surveys in the case of questionnaires is a useful tool that is use to gather information for needs assessment when the goals include the collection of responses from a large number of individuals. Also, it facilitates the collection of responses from a large number of specific questions that will enable the person conducting a training needs assessment to be able to get a large number of possible responses towards the identification of human resource gaps that may call for training.

Furthermore, 78 (79.6%) respondents agreed to direct observation as a method of conducting training needs assessment. This was contrary to the views of 10 (10.2%) respondents who disagreed to direct observation. In support of the view of the majority, [29] said that direct observation as a training needs assessment method involves investigating what is happening by watching the job being done in order to determine what training gaps exist that need training. Also, 70 (71.4%) respondents agreed that management should engage staff performance appraisal as a method for conducting training needs assessment, while 10(10.2%) respondents disagreed. In a similar situation, [30] has it that another method of training needs assessment is the reviewing of existing documents such as staff performance appraisal reports. This includes researching and taking note of what is happening in order to identify if there is any skills gap which may need training.

Finally, another 70 (71.4%) respondents indicated that training needs assessment can be conducted through examining the staff development policy of the organization. This was contrary to the views of 13 (13.3%) who disagreed. This is related to a similar study conducted by [22] which revealed that the examination of organizational documents such as staff development policy is a very effective method for assessing the training needs of staff in that, it is fast, inexpensive and provides relevant quantifiable data which will help in analysing the training needs of staff. This method is also good in building management involvement towards the assessment of staff training needs.

## V. Conclusion

From the findings, the conclusions drawn are that, technological related needs as well as research and publications and experiential training needs were identified as the training needs of academic staff of Bolgatanga Polytechnic. Again, the major challenge of training needs assessment identified was the lack of manpower and expertise to conduct training needs assessment. Moreover, the benefits of training needs assessment before training are: it improves the effectiveness of staff in performing the jobs that they are presently doing or expected to do in the future, it also helps in the transfer of learning to other jobs and also helps in upgrading staff skills in present jobs and improves their performance in future jobs. Finally, it can be concluded that the methods of conducting training needs assessment include surveys, interviews, direct observation, performance appraisals and examination of existing staff development policies.

## VI. Recommendations

Training needs assessment should be seen as an important exercise that should be carried out before designing any training programme since it will lead to the implementation of appropriate training that will equip staff with the requisite knowledge and skills for the performance of their present and future job assignments.

Training in the areas of: technologies and skills for experiential teaching and assessing students, skills in data analysis and software usage and techniques for research and publications should be provided for academic staff since these were some of the training needs identified.



In addition, training needs assessment should always include an evaluation of the existing training programmes of the polytechnic. Finally, staff's ideas, views and suggestions should carefully be taken into account when developing and implementing training needs assessment programmes.

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