

Staff Training and Development as an Effective Tool in Organisational Efficiency

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ABSTRACT

The major assets in the organisation are the employees; they have a role to play towards an organisational success. The success of an organisation largely depends on the proficiency, commitment and effectiveness of the employees and the management. Staff training and development is imperative for achieving the needed improved performance of both the government and the non-governmental organisations. Principally, the management of an organisation should spearhead staff training and development. Because of this, management needs to care about their learning to increase the employee performance. This study examined staff training as an effective tool for improving organisational performance. It employed empirical review approach and found out that organisational performance, especially in the area of increased productivity is mostly achieved through staff training and development although other variables like employees motivation also play significant role.

Keywords: Organisation, development, organisational efficiency, training, employee

INTRODUCTION

Employees are the most important and the most difficult of all the resources in the organisation. It is not enough to employ and utilise them, but it is equally important to ensure that they do their job efficiently. This can only be possible through training and development [1]. Globally, managers believe that training and development contributes to the improvement of employees' performance and productivity in organisation. That is to say, training and development helps to ensure that organisational members have the knowledge and skills they need to perform their jobs effectively [2]. However, there are some organisations that consider training and development as a waste of money [3].

Also, organisations are facing increased competition due to globalisation, changes in technology, political and economic environments [4] and therefore prompting these organisations to train their employees as one of the ways to prepare them to adjust to the increases above and thus enhance their performance [5]. As is evident that employees are a crucial resource, it is important to optimize the contribution of employees to the company aims and goals as a means of sustaining effective performance [6]. This

therefore calls for managers to ensure an adequate supply of staff that is technically and socially competent and capable of career development into specialist departments or management positions [7].

Statement of the Problem

The main objective of every organisation is to improve its performance but it can never be possible without the efficient performance of employees [8]. Improved performance of employees could be achieved through the training and development of staff to acquire greater skills and knowledge required for improved service delivery. Unfortunately, many organisations ignore or do not take staff training and development as vital for improving the efficiency of an organisation [9]. Also, the majority of governmental, private organisation and international organisations are not recognising the importance of training and development to increase employees' productivity [10] and enhance organisational efficiency.

In Nigeria, in spite of the various government interventions and efforts, the Nigerian public sector's score-card still indicates poor performance and inefficiency. This sector is argued to have

underperformed in the delivery of its services to the people. [12] state that Nigerians have for too long been feeling short-changed by the quality of public service. Our public offices have too long been showcases for combined evils of inefficiency and corruption, whilst being impediments for effective implementation of government policies [13]. [14]. [15] asserts that the public service which was seen as the custodian of rules and regulations and the engine of the development had lost its prestige and confidence. The aftermath of this is the

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

Training and Development

Staff training and development is a function of human resource management that undertakes organisational activity targeted at improving the performance of individuals and groups in organisational setting [16]. It is also called human resource development. Training is defined as the process specifically designed to impart new skills, knowledge, abilities and activities [17]. According to [18] training refers to bridging the gap between the current performance and the standard desired performance. [19] defined training as any learning activity which is directed towards the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills for the purposes of an occupation or task while development is seen as any learning activity which is directed toward future needs rather than present needs, and which is concerned more with career growth than immediate performance.

[20] defined training as the process of developing skills, habits, knowledge and aptitudes in employees for the purpose of increasing the effectiveness of employees in their present positions as well as preparing employees for future positions. It is a systematic process to enhance employee's skill, knowledge and competency, necessary to perform effectively on job. According to the [21], training enhances employees' initiative and quality of work, thereby assisting them to be more committed to achieving the organisational goals and objectives and in turn enhancing employee's effectiveness within the organisation. [22]

invention of series of reforms which, have led to privatisation, downsizing and right-sizing of the public service and even minimising the role of the public sector in the national life.

Objectives

The study aims at identifying the impacts of training and development on the efficiency of organisational employees. It explores literature to find out how staff training and development help to improve the competence of employees and increase productivity in an organisation.

defined Training and Development as planned learning experiences which teach employees how to perform current and future jobs more effectively. That is, training is not merely concerned with the worker's present activity, but prepares the worker for imminent work necessities. On the other hand, development can be seen as a process of increasing the quality, value, or skill of an employee. It specifically refers to activities leading to the acquisition of new knowledge or skills for purposes of growing [23]. [24] defined development as "the growth or realisation of a person's ability and potential through the provision of learning and educational experiences," while training is "the planned and systematic modification of behaviour through learning events, programmes and instruction which enable individuals to achieve the levels of knowledge, skill and competence needed to carry out their work effectively". Some researchers see training as the impartation of knowledge, enlightenment or wisdom [25]. This impact on the performance, effectiveness of the workforce and the productivity of the organisation. [26] affirms that training is a procedure or strategy through which the abilities, talent and knowledge of a worker is upgraded and expanded. As such, a fruitful training programme must add to the development and improvement of workers at all levels [27].

However, [28] state that some scholars use the two concepts as synonyms, while some view the two terms as being different. [28] belong to the group of

those who see the terms as being different. To them training primarily focuses on teaching organisational members how to perform their current jobs, and that development on the other hand, focuses on building the knowledge and skills of organisational members to prepare them to take on new responsibilities and challenges.

Specifically in the Nigerian public sector, the importance of training was emphasised in the *Report of the Public Service Review Commission* in 1974 under the chairmanship of Chief Jerome Udoji. A result-oriented public service will need to recruit and train specialised personnel. However, over four decades of this report, the public service in Nigeria at various sectors is yet to accord training the priority it deserves [29].

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on Human Capital Theory. The fundamental principle underpinning Human Capital Theory is the belief that peoples' learning capacities are of comparable value to other resources involved in the production of goods and services [30]. Human capital can be referred to as the knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes embodied in a person that will help him/her to improve his/her effectiveness and performance. The skills or competencies embodied in human capital generally pay off in the form of enhanced productivity, which, when valued by the labour market, results in positive outcomes, e.g., promotion. In the same manner, companies train their employees to acquire skills that enhance their productivity [31].

Human Capital Theory seeks to explain the gains of education and training as a form of investment in human resources [32], and the main proposition is that people are considered a form of capital for development [33]; [34]. From this perspective, staff training and development are seen as deliberate

investment that prepare labour force and increase productivity of individuals and organisations [35]. The main contention of human capital theory is the supposed association between training and skills and knowledge acquisition, an increase in productivity and the ability to compete favourably in the labour market which eventually results in higher earnings for employees [36], and increased efficiency for the organisation. Therefore, training policy which depends on human capital theory and is resource-based will have a significant influence on organisational performance [37].

Although the modern theory of human capital has been developed over the past half century, the concept of human capital has been traced at least as far back as the 17th century. [38] traced the development of Human Capital Theory from 1953 when William Farr proposed that the present value of a person's net future earnings, which he defined as earnings less living expenses, represented wealth in the same way as did physical property and should be similarly taxed. Theodore Wittstein, in 1867, proposed that Farr's present value of net future earnings should be used to determine compensation for claims involving loss of life [39]. Many others were early contributors to the literature on human capital economics by suggesting in various ways that human beings are an investment which generates a return. Among them were [40], [41], [42], [43] [44].

Human capital Theory is directly related to this study. This is because the basis for developing human resource is to improve the knowledge and skills of the employees in order to enhance organisation's efficiency. Therefore, this theory provides sufficient explanations for exploring staff training and development as a way of improving organisation's efficiency

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Training and Development in Public Sector in Nigeria

In a developing country like Nigeria, training and development of manpower

resources is highly needed in virtually all business organisations for its effectiveness [45]. Ideally, training and development are more effective when the

training methods match the learning styles of the participants and the types of jobs needed by the organization [46].

Training and development in public sector of Nigeria and all over the world became necessary to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of public service and institutions [47]. Changing employees' work attitude/behaviour is a necessity for organisational success. Specifically, the Nigerian Public service has been described as lazy and nonchalant [48]; tardy; unwilling to put in a day's job for a day's pay; driven by a mindset that takes high work performance as unattainable and an unnecessary bother, among other traits, all of which are reducible to lack of work commitment [49] [50].

The federal government of Nigeria currently desires to become one of the 20 largest economies in the world by the year 2020. There is no better and ready instrument available to government to achieve this vision than an effective public service. It comes to reason then that the public service has a big role to play in its execution and attainment. This is so because the success of any government initiative is directly dependent on the ability and willingness of the public sector to execute. But it has been established that the public service is sick and barely performs its ordinary function of service delivery. The implication of this on the present public sector is that drastic measures must be taken to revitalise the human capital serving in this sector, re-engineer and reposition it for service delivery so as to be able to contain with the challenges that go with Vision 20: 2020 [51].

As organisations try to survive in the turbulent dynamic market, strong emphasis must be laid on human capital in order to be competitive and financially solvent. In addition, organisations differentiating on the basis of human capital due to its intangible characteristics such knowledge, skills and motivation of workforce increasingly sees it as invaluable in order to remain sustainable in the market [52]. Thus organisations should have employees that

have capability of adjusting to swift dynamic business environment.

In an environment where there is high uncertainty that tends to present organisations with high risk, the success of organisations will depend on its knowledgeable, skilled as well as experienced workforce. This will provide organisations with a reliable competitive advantage over those that do not have such [53]. Therefore in order to maintain sustainability, organisations must see continuous employee training and development as invaluable [54].

Staff Training and Development versus Organisational Effectiveness

Training and development means different things to different organisations. In some organisations, training and development is considered as an unnecessary and underused function. Some organisations see it as a waste of money and time [55]. Many organizations fail to understand that manpower training and development can contribute in improving the overall organisational performance or profitability [56].

The importance of training and development (T&D) cannot be over-emphasized in organizations. This is because the expectation of every employer is the evolution of a competent, capable highly motivated ethical and above all, able work force whose hall marks would be the attainment of organisational goals [57]. But where there is a gap between actual performances and established performance standard, productivity and goals of the organisation suffer. However, this can be resolved through an investment in training and developing skills and talents of employees. This is sure to transform marginally competent employees into innovative and motivated top performers. Training and development are interwoven; they go hand in hand together [58].

Training not only develops the capabilities of the employee but sharpen their thinking ability and creativity in order to take better decision in time and in more productive manner. Moreover it

also enables employees to deal with the customer in an effective manner and respond to their complaints in timely manner [59]. Also, [60] state that training develops self-efficacy and results in superior performance on job by replacing the traditional weak practices by efficient and effective work related practices. Thus, effective training programmes must be put in place to allow management sustain a pool of workers that could adequately substitute employees who may exit the organisation or are redeployed to different departments [61]. Staff training enables employees to adjust to advanced or modern-day technology, and ensures that suitable manpower are made available for expansion into different and new areas [62]. [63] further posits that training is possibly regarded as one of the best strategies for manpower improvement. According to author, the aim of staff training is to encourage workers to accumulate greater skills in order to perform at the most acceptable level on the present job and to broaden their knowledge towards future opportunities in the organisation.

In facilitating career changes, training and development also caters for the personal and professional developments of the employees [64]. [65] argued that training is the crux of better organisational management, as it makes employees more efficient and effective. Moreover, training supports to shape employees' job related behavior and facilitate them to participate for the success of the organisation and ultimately firm gets higher return due to superior performance of its employees.

Staff training and development meets organisational expansion due to environmental changes and technological innovations. Opportunities for framing are used as responses to organisational expansion and change [67]. Thus, in a complex organization, such as educational institutions which comprise basically of human being the level of staff training and development will go a long way in determining the staff effectiveness and improve productivity [7]. The author submits that training and development

are mandatory for the upliftment of employees in their areas of specialisation. Organisations investing in effective training and development for human resource tend to achieve both short and long term benefits. Employees tends to become absolute, and therefore making the need to adapt to the continuous learning and updating of the skill and knowledge invaluable, due to the organisational, technological and social dynamics [9]. According to [11], "Training and development is very important in today's scenario because the business world is becoming more competitive and posing new challenges in front of the organisations. To survive and stay ahead, organisations need to continuously work out on various strategies to remain in the market and keep on delivering the best services to the customers to retain their share and move on [14]. And this is not possible if the employee of the organisation does not update themselves and improve upon their skills to keep pace with their competitors. This can best be achieved by organising training and development programmes which improve the employees' skills and enhance their performance, motivation and give a sense of job satisfaction to them [17].

In an organisation, poor or no training shall mean its slow death due to obsolete people. Training and development activities improve performance in present job, improve quality, and increase productivity, also, decrease absenteeism and employee turnover, reduce accident rate, and help people to have vision for future business environment [3]. Through training the employee competencies are developed and these enable them to implement the job related work efficiently, and achieve firm objectives in a competitive manner [23].

Methods of Staff Training and Development within an Organisation

Training and development programmes offered by an organisation might include a variety of educational techniques and programmes that can be attended on a compulsory or voluntary basis by staff [25]. It could take other various methods - traditional or modern - to train staff.

However, a method of staff training and development has shifted from the traditional method to modern method. Under the traditional approach, “most of the organisations before never used to believe in training. They were holding the traditional view that managers are born and not made. There were also some views that training is a very costly affair and not worth. Organisations used to believe more in executive pinching. But now the scenario seems to be changing” [28]. In the modern approach to training and development, most organisations have realised the importance of corporate training. According to [31], training is now regarded as more of retention tool than a cost, hence, most corporate organisations have has changed their training system to create a smarter workforce and yield the best results.

Generally, training methods can be classified into two categories: On-the-job training and off-the-job training [35]; [36]; [37]; [38]. On-the-job training also known as direct instruction, takes various forms including coaching, technology and apprenticeship, job rotation, internship, observation, mentoring, job rotation, learning contract, orientation, job instruction and acquaintanceship among others [5]; [6]. This type of training is not only cost effective, but it provides opportunities for employees to acquire multiskills through rotation as well as quick learning, though its effectiveness is limited especially in terms of exposure to external resources and facilities [21].

Off-the-job training on the other hand is offered outside the usual workplace. Employees have the opportunities of interacting and exchanging ideas with colleagues from other organisations as well as being exposed to external facilities and resources [28]. It takes the forms of lectures, conferences, case studies, visual training and simulated programme instructions, day release, short term and long term courses among others.

Empirical Review

[34] investigated the *Impact of Training and Development on organisational performance*. Survey research method was employed to for the study. The study

sampled 100 employees of different organisations of Islamabad, capital of Pakistan. The data was collected through a questionnaire consists of 15 questions. All questions are close ended questions with the use of a five point Likert scale [43]. The study found that training and development improves organisational performance [47]. Findings from the study show that on the job training helps employees to get the knowledge of their job in a better way [23]. People learn from their practical experience much better as compared to bookish knowledge. On the job training reduces cost and saves time [51]; [52]; [53]. Based on the findings of the study, [40] recommended that there every organization should provide Training and Development for its employees.

In a study by [61] on *Impact of Training and Development on Organization Performance with Mediating Role of Intention to Quit as Human Resource Quality Cost*, the researcher used survey research method to examine how training and development impact on Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SMEs) in Pakistan. The survey results show that the focus of SMEs in Pakistan is shifting towards providing trainings to the employees [63]. But still the “saith” culture is more prominent and informal discussion with the respondents had shown that the owners still do not appreciate highly skilled employees in the organizations [64].

[45] carried out a study on *The impact of training and development on employee performance and effectiveness: a case study of District Five Administration Office, Bole Sub-City, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia* to assess the impact of training and development on employee’s performance and effectiveness in the organisation. The researchers used survey research method to conduct the study. “A questionnaire was administered to the various groups of employees of the organisations. A total of 100 questionnaires were administered in the form of one to one interviewer by trained data collector” [38]. The study found that majority of the employees (89.3%) of the

organisation attended training in the last three years. The authors state that the finding is in line with the recommendations of [11] that the role of an organisation's manager should include providing others the vision and ability to perform for the successful achievement of their goal. The finding of the research confirms that the training and development activities in which employees had participated brings new potentials of employees in performing task and resulted in employee effectiveness. The finding was in line with the principles of [33] suggestion on purpose of facilitating training as it was to create a learning media directed towards the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills for the purpose of an occupation or task.

[22] carried out a study on *Analysis of training and development management practices: a case study of Zenith Bank Nigeria PLC* using survey research method. The research instrument used for the collection of data was questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to collect enable the collection of data from the employees of the organization, trainees, trainers and heads of training and development department. Findings from the study indicate training has significant impact on workers performance. Training led to improvement on the effectiveness of the employees and this resulted in increased productivity. Based on this finding [26] recommended that organisations should not relent in placing adequate emphasis on staff training and development in order to give them a sustained edge within the competitive industry; human capital being the most important production factor in any organisation should be given serious attention as far as training and development are concerned by the managements; employees training and development programmes must be carefully designed and well implemented to ensure its success and so on.

In a study on *Effectiveness of training and development on employees' performance and organizational competitiveness in the Nigerian banking industry*. [35] found that

coaching is a strategic method of training that leads to improvement in workers effectiveness. In addition, it was also found that the computer based training is the most effective off-the-job training techniques to train employees to gain competitive advantage [23]. The researchers investigated the subject the phenomenon using survey research method. [27] concluded that training and development are indispensable strategic tools for effective individual and organisation performance, thus, organisation are spending money on it with confidence that it will earn them a competitive advantage in the world of business. "It is also imperative for effective performance of employees, enhancement of employees' ability to adapt to the changing and challenging business environment and technology for better performance, increase employees' knowledge to develop creative and problem solving skills" [41].

[36] carried out a study on *Training and Development and Job Satisfaction in Education Sector* to find the relationship between training and development and job satisfaction in education sector. [13] employed a mix of descriptive and exploratory research design. Sample of 125 teaching staff/ faculty has been randomly selected from various Universities operating in NOIDA1. Survey method was used for collecting the data from the respondents. Using questionnaire instrument (survey approach), the scholars explored organisational support for training and employee development, Employee feelings about training and development. [62] study reveal a strong correlation between training and development and job satisfaction. Results show that the faculties who undergo training and development programmes feel that they are able to enhance their functional areas and expertise.

The work of [19] conceptually examines the importance of training and development in public service in the light of the growing complexity of the work environment, the rapid change in organisations and advancement in

technology, among other things. The authors noted that Training and development helps to ensure that organisational members possess the knowledge and skills they need to perform their jobs effectively, take on new responsibilities, and adapt to changing conditions [24]. The authors observe that despite the recognition of the importance of training by management experts and government as expressed in white papers on various reforms in Nigeria, the experience of manpower training and development in the Nigeria public service has been more of ruse and waste. [53] stressed the need to introduce new orientations on training that will address training contents; training evaluation; attitudes to training and training utilisation in other to enhance maximum economic and social growth in the country.

Staff training and development is vital for improving the skills and efficiency of employees. Organisations are known to have improved its performance through staff training and development. It is vital that the government of Nigeria should make funds available for the training and development of staff. This can be achieved through negotiation. This source

Similar study has been done by [44] on the *Perception and relevance of training, and manpower development on job performance among civil servants in Ebonyi State*. The study adopts descriptive methodology where a pre-coded questionnaire was administered on 300 civil servants stratified into three categories: GL 04-06; GL 07-12 and GL 13+ to ensure equitable representation of civil servants in the study area and to elicit their opinion on the theme of study. The study reveals that the primary aim of training and manpower development was rather to meet statutory requirements, as against improvement on the job and has policy implications for training and manpower development relevant to organisational need or goal to be provided to employees [40]. The authors conclude that training and manpower development enhance job performance.

CONCLUSION

of funds needs complemented by funds provided by development organisations and agencies such as the Petroleum Trust Fund. Staff should be encouraged to go for training and development to enhance their skills and knowledge that should translate into efficient performance at the workplace.

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