Assessment of Human Capital Development in Personnel Management Practice in Nigeria

Samuel C. Ugoh Department of Political Science, University of Lagos, Akoka Lagos Nigeria Email: samugoh@yahoo.com

Abstract

The study focuses on the analysis of the significance of human capital development in the personnel management practices in Nigeria. It identifies changes in technology, increasing personnel demands, social complexity as factors necessitating human capital development in Nigeria. It further observed that human capital development could instigate skill development career development, and economic growth and over all development in Nigeria, if adequate plans and strategies are adapted to critically pursue the human development agenda. The study used the descriptive and deductive method of data analysis. Using the behavioural theory as a framework of analysis, the study discovered the factors that hinder the human capital development in the personnel management practices. The work concludes that paucity of funds, corruption, inequality in the economic sector the Nigeria factor among others is the negatively which hinders the Human Capital Development in the country. The study recommends the entrenchment of elements of world best practice to do away with these challenges in human capital development in Nigeria in order to liberalize the process of skills acquisition.

Keywords: Social complexity, Development, Growth, Skill, Career

Introduction

The need for human capital in personnel management thought and practice cannot be over- emphasized. This is because, low and inadequate attention has been given to issues of human capital development in Nigeria. Human Development Report of 2018 revealed that Nigeria occupies I57th position out of 189 countries survey and is in the low Human Capital Development Index with Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, Rwanda etc. It is therefore imperative to key into Human Capital Agenda in a bid to realize national goals and desires. (HDR, 2018).

In today's modern competitive environment, organizations are facing emerging challenges in the form of acquisition and optimization of human resource. In a bid to surmount these challenges, there has generally been the need for a comprehensive human resource management practice to translate organization's Human Resources into a sustainable performance. Hence, the study evaluates the importance of human capital development in personnel management practice in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The study examines the human capital development in the process of personnel management with the aim of advancing the practice in Nigeria. The work also investigates reasons for not advancing the application of the scientific approach to the study of human behaviour. The study further evaluated the significance of human capital development in personnel management practice in developing countries like Nigeria.

Methodology

The study utilized qualitative research design and descriptive research method was adopted to elicit data on manifest changes and positive development in the process of personnel management due to implantation of human capital development strategy. Secondary materials were sourced from books, journals, and other published materials for the purpose of analysis.

Data analysis involves textual and exploration of data needed for the research purpose. The study discusses the imperatives of human capital 'development in personnel management practice in Nigeria. From the thick literature reviews, theoretical exploration, logical insights from other published works in the field of personnel management and author' view point, the researcher draw together relevant information for further discussion on the issue under research.

Conceptual Clarification

In order to put the discussion of assessing the human capital development in the right perspective, it is necessary to clarify certain concepts germane to the topic. This is because, clarification of variables and problem helps to affirm or negate the findings of other enquiries about the same or related topic and provides the platform for knowledge interaction and familiarization of the research with existing stock of knowledge on the topic of enquiry. We begin with the concept of human capital development.

Human Capital Development

According to Erutayo *et al* (2010) the term human capital dates back to Jacob Mincer's pioneering article titled "Investment in human capital and personnel income distribution" published in the Journal of Political Economy in 1958. Human capital is the stock of expertise accumulated by a worker and it is valued for its income- earning potential in the future. It is the result of stock of vast investment and its purpose is to generate future income. It can be acquired formally through schooling and informally through job training and its accumulation of knowledge and skills embodied in a person typically considered in terms of the economic benefit that is derived from it (Erutayo *et al*, 2009).

United Nations (2020) conceptualized human capital as the productive wealth embodied in labour, skill and knowledge and the aggregate of investment in activities such as education, health, on the-job- training, that can enhance individual's productivity in the labour market. (UNDR 2020).

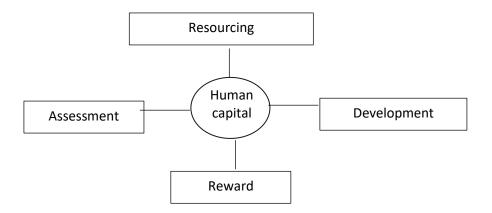
In a broader context, the World Bank Report (2018) explicates human capital as a stock of knowledge skills, and other personal characteristics embodied in people that help them to be productive. Such include communication skills, technical skills, problem-solving skill among others. These have been further grouped into three classes of human capital and they are; knowledge capital, social capital and emotional capital. (World Bank 2018).

According to Batesman and Neil (2013) human capital encompasses skills and abilities of employees that have economic value and managing human capital is to sustain a competitive advantage which is perhaps, the most important part of an organizational personnel functions. These concerns include attracting talent, maintaining a well-trained, highly motivated and loyal workforce, maintaining diversity, designing effective compensation system, managing layoffs, and containing health care and pension costs. Balancing these issues is difficult as it is affected by the prevailing circumstances but a way out is through human resources planning.

On his part, Muo (2019) human capital development is a new term that replaces stalling in organizations. To him, human capital development generally refers to those aspects of managerial activities concerned with the maintenance of the relationship between the organization and its employees as individuals and as groups. It involves taking "care" of people as they join the organization, stay in the organization and leave the organization. It specifically focused on the people—their needs, expectations, values and legal rights within the work organization and the use of appropriate strategies that would ensure satisfaction and accomplishment. It seeks to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic development

of highly committed and capable workforce, using an integrated array of cultural, structural and personnel techniques in managing personnel affairs.

Price (2011) explicates that human capital encompasses investment in the skills of the labour force, including education and vocational training to develop specific skills. This is because, economic growth, employment levels and availability of a skilled workforce are interrelated as economic growth creates employment and this partly depends on skilled human resources. He contends that human capital development is a crucial component of a country's over-all competitiveness because personal and national success is increasingly correlated with the possession of skill and skilled individuals can command a premium salary in periods of high economic activities. This is usually the trend worldwide that unemployment levels remain high, while organizations have difficulty filling vacant that requires specific expertise. This is because, human capital development, when effectively handled in form of education and skill training can be effective response to constrains imposed on the employment market in a country. He explains further that a shortage of skilled people can act as a limiting factor on' individuals and organizations and on the economy as a whole and hence, it is in the interest of any country to maximize its human resources by investing in the skills of its workforce.



Source: Allen Price (2011) Human resources Management, Australia: South Western/CENGAGE Learning Publishers.

The diagram shows that human capital begins with assessment for recruiting right and qualified candidates through a well-designed resourcing method; this is followed by human development strategies, accompanied with good rewarding system. It is through this processes that human capital can be attained.

In essence, human capital is the economic value of a worker's experience. It includes assets like education, training, intelligence, health and other things employers' value such as liberality and punctuality. In fact, Individuals generate, retain and use knowledge and create intellectual power and the knowledge generated is enhanced by the interactions between them and this helps to generate the institutional knowledge possessed by an organization as human capital consists of the knowledge, skills and ability of the people employed in an organization.

Human capital can be effectively managed through systematical analyzing, measuring and evaluating how people policies and practice create value as this helps in distilling value-adding people management strategic investment and operational decisions at corporate level and at the level of front-line management. In addition, the use of measurement (metrics) to guide an approach to managing people which regard them as assets through employee's engagement, retention, knowledge management and learning and development programme (Armstrong,

2010). The measurement elements are workforce data, people development data, perception data, performance data etc and factors affecting the choice of measurement are the type of organization, its goals and drives (b) the existing key performance indicator (KPIs) and availability of manageability data (Armstrong, 1984). Hence, the development of human capital helps in improving the overall capabilities in a nation and its impact on the people by promoting social progress, personal welfare and all-round development in a nation state.

In fact, national development is a socially desirable state of affairs in any nation and it does not happen by chance as it is a product of conscious efforts in harnessing, articulating, managing and channeling the resources (personal resources and others) of a nation to achieve growth and development with environmental sustainability (Egbuwalo, 2018).

Personnel Management

According to Banjoko (1984) it refers to a set of peoples' functions and activities that involve the effective acquisition, use and maintenance of human resources within an organization. Specialists in the field focus on the peoples, their needs, expectation, values, legal rights within the work organization and use appropriate human resources strategies that would ensure the accomplishment of individuals and corporate goals.

In his view, Armstrong (1984) contends that personnel management is a strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization most valued asset are the people working as individuals and collectively contributing to the achievement of the goals of an organization. The overall purpose of the human resources management is to ensure that the organization is able to achieve success through the people. He further notes that the overall aims of the personnel management include, provision of range of support, aspect of the process of running the organization, enabling the organization to obtain and retain the skilled and well-motivated work force that it needs, creation of climate in which productivity and harmonizing relations can be maintained between the management and employees, developing an environment in which team work and flexibility can flourish, among others.

Fajana (2006) posits that personnel management deals with policies, strategies, plans, programmes, rules and regulations and other activities that are connected with the effective acquisition and utilization.

The main objective of the personnel management is to see to achievement of the goals of the organization through the effective utilization of human resources and creation of soothing environment for employees to secure their integration so that they may feel a sense of involvement, commitment and loyalty to the organization. The personnel department must maintain good human relations within the organization, ensure respect for human personality and the wellbeing of the individuals, maximum individual development and satisfaction of various needs of individuals for the ultimate realization of organizational goals (Sharma *et al*, 2012).

The development of personnel management spans centuries with its historical roots planted in 1800B.C, when the Babylonian code of minimum wage and other incentives were formulated by their king. King Hammurabi It further developed in the age of feudalism in Great Britain and the coming of industrial revolution and attendant institutionalization of capitalist ideology which spirited the need for personnel practices (Obisi, 2015). In the age of enlightenment and with the advent of different management schools of thought in early twentieth century led to academic fields of study such as sociology, personnel management and industrial relations in Europe. The coming of the behavioural and post behavioural schools of thought has equally fan the ember of personnel management practices globally.

In the main, personnel managers/ specialists must be aware of critical factors that could instigate effective performance of duties in the contemporary period. Some of these factors include the realization that the objective of an organization is to record surplus through the execution of personnel programmes with cost effectiveness. They are equally expected to modify goal by giving

a human face through welfare programmes. There is need also to adopt fairness, equity, and justice in the implementation of personnel programmes and the need to narrow the differences between individual and corporate goals within the organization (Fajana, 2006).

In the twenty first century, personnel specialists must be versatile, technologically friendly with electronic administration and associated human resources packages. In fact, creativity and innovative steps through necessary networking and collaborations are very critical to achieving success in the contemporary age. They are expected to have the ability to analyze turn-over, retention, and productivity and give advice to potential personnel solutions. Coupled with the ability to overcome resistance to new personnel policies and procedures, technology and work design. They ought to possess necessary experience on how to coach and counsel employees and present their views to the management (Dibbie, 2014).

The status of personnel manager in organizations differ and this depends on qualities, ability, qualification and expertise of the manager as well as the size of the organization, its technology, purpose, management attitudes and the needs of the organization. Fundamentally, a manager must maintain good staff relations, maintain cordial relations with line manager and ensure effective coordination of his department (Lawal, 2012).

Furthermore, personnel specialists in an organizational context, perform some critical functions in every corporate organization in the contemporary time in a bid to realize the collective goals of their establishment.

Nwachukwu (2000) observes that in a modern organization, the function of personnel management department fundamentally handles manpower recruitment having been assigned the role to select, train, develop, assimilate and remunerates employees. The department is equally expected to formulate manpower policies and have a detailed study of financial incentives programme. The department equally coordinates performance appraisal, administration of discipline and promotion of formal organizational communication through diverse means such as newsletters, notice board and lately online dialogue media. The department equally promotes management relations and administration of labour contract among others.

Dibbie (2014) explicates that human resources specialists are saddled with basic functions such as:

- i. Staff/ services function: This involves hiring, training, evaluating, rewarding, counselling, promoting and firing of employees. Also, they help line manager to ensure compliance with policies, laws and codes of conduct in a working organization.
- ii. A Line function: They direct activities in their division and service area and they help management in the areas of testing and policy implementation in the corporate entities.
- iii. A Coordinate function: They serve as coordinators of personnel function and assistants.to top executive to assure that personnel objectives, policies and procedures are adopted and followed.

In essence, personnel managers must struggle to ensure that multifarious needs of workers are met. Such needs include: physical needs, safety needs, social needs, self-expression needs are met in the organization. Other related needs are on-the-job satisfaction and off-the-job

satisfaction. In organizational setting, an atmosphere or environment that satisfy all the afore-listed needs must be created and sustained through formal structuring of an establishment, communication networks in which people live during office hour and controlling system in the establishment (Newman *et al*, 1965).

Indeed, personnel management is concerned with all aspects of worker's relations with the management and is involved in different processes of managing human resources of an organization. Such include human resources planning which according to Bateman and Neil (2019) involves planning, programming and evaluating. Planning deals with structuring staffing plan with the organizational goals to ensure that right persons are available now and, in the future, (b) programming of specific human resources activities such as recruitment, training and lay-offs and (c) human resources are evaluated whether they are producing results needed to contribute to the organizational goals.

However, there are challenges facing personnel management processes in Nigeria, particularly, in implementing human capital policy in corporate organizations and in both private and public sectors of the economy.

Bamgboye (2002) identified such challenges instigated by the under-listed factors: Firstly, lack of cooperation by employers through breaking or violation of collective agreement codes with the workers' unions,

Secondly, the challenge of inadequate finance to cater for workers' needs such as emolument packages, severance allowances, among others. The situation is not equally by galloping inflation and daily increase of cost of living in the country. This has accentuated poverty level in the country.

Thirdly, the rising level of strikes, lock out and picketing among others in corporate entities instigated by breakdown of collective bargaining systems and undemocratic management practices in various work organizations.

The performance of personnel management functions is fundamentally affected by internal factors such as structural pattern of an organization, coordination system, organizational culture and goals policy objectives among others! Externally, there are influences of education, socio-cultural milieu legal and political situation of the organization. The influence of international environment such as geo-centric attitude of workers and diversity at work place constitute another great constraining factors affecting the conduct of personnel management functions.

Various literatures have outlined and explained the history and functions of personnel management, but with less emphasis on the importance of the human capital in corporate organizations and at national level. As part of the efforts to overcome the challenges of scarcity of skilful and knowledge endowed experts in the country, the imperatives of human capital development become a line of enquiry and purpose of this research.

Theoretical framework of analysis; behavioral theory.

Theoretical framework can be viewed as a mode of analyzing, interpreting, describing and predicting issues under investigation (Obasa, 2017). Based on basic fact above, behavioral theory of management was chosen to analyze the issue and importance of human capital development in personnel management practice in Nigeria.

This theory is relevant to the study as the organization needs to appreciate the fact that the employees which are human capital are reservoirs of untapped capital and therefore the need to invest heavily on their development. The aim is to use a variety of strategies in order to tap out the capital contained in them and thus, improve the performance of the organization.

The modern behavioral science movement was an outgrowth of the human relations school after the World War II and prominent behavioralists include Abraham Moaslow, Douglas McGregor, Renkis, Likerts among others. (Sharma et al, 2012). This school of thought believes that management must reconcile organizational goals with individual employee's goals with the use of right attitude, learning, adaptation abilities interaction, change mechanisms, formal and informal behavior etc.

The research work is contextualized within the behavioral school because it aligned with the fact that leaders and managers operate dynamically when they have right skills, training, experience to handle assigned tasks at a given time, owning to the benefits of human capital (Sharma et al, 2012). The behavioural science approach also concentrates more on the nature of work itself and the degree to which it can fulfil the human needs to use skills and abilities.

According to Ingham (1974) individuals who have been trained in the social sciences such psychology, sociology and cultural anthropology began to study people at work. They had advanced to applying the scientific approach to the study of human behaviour. These individuals have become known as behavioural scientists and new approach is considered to be distinct from the human relation approach:

The behavioural school of thought was choosing because of its recognition of human talents, skills.

values, attitude, motive, desires possessed by the workers and the need for management to harness

personal goal and ambition with the organizational objectives. This is an agreement with the research objectives of human capital development with the aim of advancing the practice of personnel management in Nigeria. It is expected that the development of human capacity will help to achieve efficient and effective performance in both public and private sectors in Nigeria.

The Nigerian State and Human Capital development in Personnel Management

The roles of human capital development in achieving personnel management goals are enormous and the impacts on citizens and the nation at large can be glaringly seen overtime. Its importance's are identified and explained below.

Firstly, human capital development provides ample opportunities for the development of individual skills, expertise and employability. Fundamentally, the goal of the human capital development is to empower the pauperized citizenry by providing health, education and social protection in order to achieve sustainable development. The core objective is to aspire to build a better world and to be leaders in the core sub-sectors of the economy (Ejaife, 2009). Human capital is a key to empowering the citizenry in a bid to achieve national and even, sustainable development goals in Nigeria.

According to Dibbie (2014) human capital helps to enhance the skill for effective performance of roles in the contemporary period as it increases intellectual capital of workers such as creativity, productivity and service rendered by employees. There is a continuous demand for cognitive skills, mathematical skills and verbal ability and inter personal skills to be able to work in a team and interact with customers in a service economy. Public institutions demand for excellent customer service and high productivity level- in the contemporary period.

Secondly, human capital development enhances employees' productivity and economic growth and this can positively induce socio-economic development in Nigeria. The importance of human capital is crucial as development in human society behavior has many sided processes. At the level of individual, it implies increased skills and capacity, greater freedom,

creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and national wellbeing. The achievement of any of these aspects of personal development is tied with the stage of the society at large in that investment in human capital development can lead to increased productivity of an organization and consequently profitability (Rodney, 2005).

Obasa (2017) contends that human capital development will enable the country to catch with the industrialized countries since its contribution to economic growth is significant. According to him, human capital signifies building a critical mass of human references base and providing an enabling environment for everyone to participate fully in national development. To enable Nigeria to excel, the government has to recognize the need for on-the-job training, sensitize citizens on why they have to enrol for the-elementary, secondary and tertiary education as well as adult education and the ruling elites trained on the rudiment of administration at various levels.

Thirdly, human capital development fundamentally helps in human resources development and staff motivation in corporate entities in Nigerian. One of the keys to realizing organization goals is the nurturing and development of a crop of skilful and productive, human resources or work force that can inspire the realization of social advancement in Nigeria.

Hence, human capital development is an important step in Nigeria to overcome the uncertainty, and recession of the economy and existing dependent economy and the need to produce skilful individuals with orientation for quality and excellence. The anchors include technical or functional competence, security and stability of workers, creativity, and autonomy/independence. Other concern is service to others, influence and control.

The tools for human capital development for realizing corporate and national goals are effective recruitment, selection and placement, open and objective performance approval system and performance related reward system that is internally equitable and externally competitive 2006).

Fourthly, a sound and effective result oriented human capital development usually help to achieve a reliable workers' career progression and succession plan in private and public organizations in the country. Human capital issues are about sourcing, assessing, developing and rewarding processes by the personnel manager in any reputable organization. It is a significant unifying concept and practice in personnel management that link four major people management activities resourcing, assessment, development and reward.

In the twenty-first century, organizations operate in the climate that requires constant organization or learning and training that continues throughout that individual's career in order to fulfil the need for new knowledge, skill and attitudes. Also, employee development encompasses a long-term agenda of action (training and education) to prepare workers far career advancement within the organization This is because, training is central to improving performance and reduces the probability of employees becoming obsolete in an ever-changing environment and it is vital to the accomplishing work force plans as well as improving competencies (Holzer & Schwester, 2011).

Staff development or career development involves the systematic development of the individual's career so that his interests, ability, education, formal or informal training and work responsibilities are closely related to one another with the desire of achieving his full potentials (Maduabum, 2006). This can be achieved through deployment of reliable, sustainable and practical human capital development processes in Nigeria in the twenty-first century.

Fifthly, human capital development is a partway to national development in the contemporary period. It is common sensical that human capital development constitutes a strong, tool for national advancement in countries of the world, Nigeria, cannot be an exception.

Alele-William (1999) underscores this basic fact that human capital development is an essential requirement in the total growths and development of a nation. This is because, as noted human capital is the intermediary, between available resources and development, as no development can take place without adequate well managed human development. She advanced three-pronged approaches or strategies to enhance the process of human control development in Nigeria. Such steps include: Firstly, a deliberate well assigned policy and programme to reducing population growth in Nigeria. This can be done through effective planning scheme and discouragement of early marriage in the regions of Nigeria.

Secondly, a comprehensive health-care system with strong emphasis on eradication of epidemic, parasitic and infectious diseases, functional hospitals and clinics to take care of the sick on the society.

Thirdly, a well-structured educational system to take care of pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. This should be adequately funded, with trained and well-motivated personnel's to effectively handle them.

Hence, human capital revolves around building a deployable mass of human resources base and this invariable provides an enabling environment for the citizens to participate in national development in this contemporary period.

Issues in the Functional Areas of Human Capital Development in Nigeria

In a systematic manner, the human capital in personnel management is in a state of flux. In Nigeria, the human capital development in the process of personnel management has experienced challenges since independence. Human capital has not impacted on the lives of the workers in particular and the development in the country as a whole. This is due to the fact that the quality of Human Capital development available in the country is currently insufficient. Some scholars listed politico-administrative problems such as inadequacy of skilled and technical manpower, lackadaisical attitude of workers, lack of qualified professional staff, unskilled workers, management problem, corruption amongst other are factors responsible for low performance (Bello – Imam & Roberts 2021).

Another area of challenge is that the organizational systems (public and private) is a notoriously slow recruiters, yet virtually no one refute the notion that a solution is readily available (Hays 2020). To him, forward looking public organizations have embraced the conventional wisdom of reinvention by eliminating paper and pencil exams in favour of performance – based examinations (Hays, 2020).

Virtually, some of the officials are performing their functions without the relevant qualifications to perform efficiently. As a result, they lack the skills to identify changes in technology to accelerate development. To change this negative narratives and positions, the human capital should increase the personnel demands and provide adequate training of career personnel's as strategies to pursue the agenda. Though, the aforementioned roles appear simple and crucial, the work unravelled some challenges which include corruption, Nigeria factor, political instability, social injustice, paucity of funds, economic inequality and general poverty amongst others.

Conclusion

The study has tried to examine the human capital development in the process of advancing the personnel management practice in Nigeria. From the foregoing, it is incontrovertible that human capital development is a key to achieving sustainable development. However, the researcher noted that the human capital development has not fully make use of modern

technology due to paucity of funds, corruption, Nigeria factors, general poverty amongst others. The paper therefore provides pathway for citizens skill development, productive capacity and social awareness and a veritable tool for realization of over- all development in the country. The work posits out that it is the human beings which integrates and deploy all factors of production in all human society, hence, human capital development is germane to the reality of plausible fact of life.

Recommendations

Arising from the study, therefore, the work under-listed the following recommendations:

Firstly, issues of human capital should attract necessary attention in governmental policy, plans and programmes in Nigeria. This will, invariable instigate the realization of the lofty idea of human development and consequently impacted well on skill development of the citizenry at large in the contemporary period.

Secondly, there is need to strengthen institutions for human-capital development in Nigeria. 'This can be done through adequate funding, supports for training and staff development agenda, inter-agency transfer and entrenchment of electronic governance.

Thirdly, there is need to strengthen net-workings and collaborations among staff development institutions at all levels of government in Nigeria. This will enhance the process of human development in the country and collaboration with international institutions in this regard is highly necessary to fan the ember of human capital development in the country.

Fourthly, there is need for the provision of infrastructural and operational facilities that can enhance human development capacity in Nigeria. This extends from constant electricity supply, provision of computer facilities and internet services among other is highly desired at corporate levels in Nigeria.

Fifthly, the entrenchment of elements of global best practices such as accountability, transparency, responsibility, innovation, etc in human capital development system in Nigeria in order to liberalize the process of skills acquisition and development in Nigeria.

Based on these recommendations, it is incontrovertible that human capital development is a key in achieving sustainable development of personnel management practice in the Nigeria state.

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