

MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT FOR EFFECTIVE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The paper discussed manpower development and how it can bring about effective information management in Nigeria. It stressed that effective management of information can only be guaranteed when there is proper training to develop manpower irrespective of age and level of education. One of the problems found to be militating against effective management of information in Nigeria is shortage of technical manpower. As such, schools and institutions in Nigeria have the challenges to efficiently and effectively train manpower to meet the needs of modern information management. This can be done by starting from the cradle that is reviewing school curriculum generally. For our dream of effective management of information to be actualized, there is need to invest significant proportion of the country's wealth to manpower development.

Keywords: *Manpower, development, information management*

INTRODUCTION

Manpower occupies an indispensable position in any establishment, be it an industry, commercial or educational institution. This means that without manpower no establishment can function. In essence, human effort is greatly desirable and crucial in achieving the goals and objectives of the organisation. Effective management is used to mean the training of personnel to improve their application of knowledge, skill, behaviour or problem solving techniques which they acquire through previous education, training and experience. In the past, libraries and information centres had to manually manage their information resources. The labour of such practice, the attendant delay in information processing and delivery services and the general ineffectiveness of information services at that time no doubt motivated serious research into better means of effective management. The high point of the research outcome is the much cherished information technology of the present day. For Nigerians to become an active participant of the new world information order, it is imperative to introduce modern information management techniques. The school curriculum at all levels of education need to be reviewed.

Manpower Development: Effect on Effective Information Management

Hamlin (2004) examines different views and definitions of training and development and submits that it implies any activity which deliberately attempts to improve a person's skill in a job. It also creates learning in the areas of knowledge, skill, experience and attitudes. This tends to suggest that the essence of manpower development goes beyond job skills but extends to personal development in terms

of knowledge acquisition. In fact, it can be interpreted to mean a transformation of men. Furthermore, Conroy (2000) defined manpower development as a purposive effort intended to strengthen the library's capability to fulfill its mission effectively and efficiently by encouraging and providing for the growth of its own human resources. He described manpower development as a factor that improves the competence of personnel through opportunities for learning on the job. This implies that manpower development can be achieved through training and education of staff. However, the continual enrichment of staff with knowledge is to the mutual benefit of the individual and the organisation. McNamara (1999) views training as involving an expert working with learners to transfer to them certain areas of knowledge or skills to improve in their current jobs. However, manpower development is not a responsibility of just an individual; rather it is a combination of different factors.

Biscoe (2002) sees that staff development as a two-way responsibility within the organisation and individual. Sodipo (2005), investigated the effect of manpower development on productivity with the aim of determining the different factors that play important roles in any organizational set up for effective utilization of manpower resources available to it, its main focus is on different factors that play important role in organizational set up to ensure effective information management. Marmoin (2001) discussed the challenges of technological training in libraries and argued that one of the biggest technological challenges facing the libraries and library staff is using the available and emerging library technology effectively. He concluded that to meet this challenges, libraries must pay much more attention to technological training and computer skills than they traditionally have done in the past. Though this study is not limited to technological training alone, yet general training. Weingort, Kacham and Hendrich (2001), examine the importance of new employee orientation programmes in libraries and information centres. He stressed that a successful new employee orientation programmes welcomes the newcomers, provides necessary tools and information, and familiarizes the individual with the institution. He submitted that it is an initial investment of time and effort which yield more productive happier workers and increase turnover. The benefit of the institution is the efficient accomplishment of work and a more stable workforce.

Manpower Development in Nigeria

Manpower development in Nigeria is vital in acquiring knowledge and skill by employees for the collection, storage, processing and movement of information to ensure effective management of information. From the above, individuals and organisations can adequately develop themselves and its employees through various national institutions and agencies responsible for human resource development. Some of such institutions in Nigeria are as follows:

Approve Government Institutions in Nigeria: These are universities, polytechnics and colleges of education, etc, approved to train all categories of persons by refining the product of secondary education to the level that can actually induce development

when they are properly utilized.

Industrial Training Funds: It was established to promote and encourage acquisition of skill in industry or commerce sufficient for the nation's economy. It also provides courses, fund and facilities for training employees in industry and commerce.

Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON): It was established in 1973 by Decree 39 for the development of senior executive in public and private sector of the Nigerian economy. The College conducts research into problems of management and administration arising from different spheres of national life. It awards grants, scholarship or travel fellowship for research. They maintain and establish library for both public and private sectors and undertake, organise, and facilitate study courses, conferences, lectures, seminar and they provide publication of journals and research papers and books. Other national agencies of human resources development are:

- i Centre for Management Development
- ii Nigeria Institution of Management
- iii Financial Train Centre
- iv Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria

Factors Necessitating Manpower Development in Nigeria

There are many factors necessitating manpower development in Nigeria. These are:

Technological Change: There is constant change in technology, as such there is need to also train old employees on the use of the new technology or recruit new employees that have the necessary qualification, skill and ability to operate and perform the job.

Social Change: Change in the taste of customers or environment which needs to be adhered to if organisation wants continuity and growth.

Economic Change: This happens when there is low purchasing power, employees are then sent for training that will enable the organisation engage them in a new job or position that will attract more pay.

Political Change: Changes in the political situation of the country and demands for more politicians, leads to training in politics etc.

Product Change: This happens when there is change in market demand; manpower development is required to move with the new trend of product change and the demand in the market.

Organizational Change: Manpower development occurs when there is a change in administration, organizational structure, business climate and of course location of business.

The following are some specific objectives of manpower development in Nigeria:

- i To ascertain recruitment needs and level that is, by training qualitative and quantitative manpower need.
- ii To anticipate redundancies and avoid unnecessary dismissals.
- iii Preserving the skills to determine the optimum training and

development needs.

- iv To provide basis for management development programme.
- v To assist in productivity bargaining
- vi To assist future accommodation and requirement.

Method of Manpower Development in Nigeria

The most popular method used in developing manpower in Nigeria is the in-house-training method, where courses, workshops and seminars are conducted regularly within the organisation. Below are other methods of manpower development in Nigeria:

Study Leave with or without Pay: Staff can apply for this leave to study a course of choice with the recommendation of the employee's immediate boss. Study leave with pay attracts full salary while study leave without pay do not.

Study Fellowship: This is granted to employees to enhance the development of the institution. This is also called organisational development approach or learned centre approach e.g. seminars, workshops, etc. This can be in form of the following:

In-Service Study Fellowship: It is only granted to a staff that has been confirmed. It takes the form of on-the-job training used for both old and new employees.

Sabbatical Leave: Granted to administrative and professional officers on salary grade level 14 and above to take a year off in every five years of service.

Leave of Absence: Granted with pay to employee whose services may be needed by the local, state or federal government or recognized international body. This is also called political approach of training used in acquiring knowledge and skill that are entirely different from the one employees for

Weekend Programme: This is also being used by most Nigerian universities for professional courses ranging from teaching to banking and accounting. However, not much is known for librarianship in Nigeria under this programme, especially at the undergraduate level. The most popular of such is the long vacation training (LVT) programme started by Amadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria in mid-1980s. Other universities such as University of Ado-Ekiti also initiate the programme.

Problems of Manpower Development in Nigeria

Agaja (2000) examined the nature of professional continuing education in Nigerian universities and looked at the reasons why they are unable to capitalize on available opportunities. These according to him include lack of finance, obsolete equipment for practical, apathy toward further training by employees, delay in remuneration of beneficiaries and wrong perception of development by the society. He submitted that training prospects are good if the problems associated with it are reduced to a minimum level. Other problems like poor linkage between school and work, lack of encouragement on research work, etc also militate against manpower

development in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The place of manpower development in effective management of information is clearly defined in this study, the Nigerian revolution that has political independence to the former colony since 1960 is accompanied by social and economic changes that have affected the life of virtually every person in the country. This process of bringing traditional societies into the world of contemporary technology has become known as "Modernisation" which has direct link with manpower development. Basic to all modernization is education, not only with the former system of the schools but also at the level of adult literacy and specialized extension work in agriculture, and public health. The popular demand has been such that no Nigerian government would have been able to resist rapid expansion of educational facilities even if it had desired to do so. One problem has been to maintain a balance between economic growth and educational advancement. One therefore expects governments and development agencies and institutions in Nigeria to do more in developing information infrastructure and institutions that can bring about effective manpower development, which will in turn result to effective management of information.

On the basis of this paper work which has been carried out so far, the following recommendations are hereby made:

- i. There is need to address the problem of poor linkage between school and work so as to ensure effective manpower development in Nigeria.
- ii. Encouragement on research work should be highly considered as this will create an avenue for the identification of new ideas, methods and techniques that will enhance the growth of manpower development and effective management of information in Nigeria.
- iii. The governments and development agencies and institutions should draw attention towards the development of information infrastructure and institutions that can bring about effective manpower development, which can in turn result to effective management of information in Nigeria.

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