

# SUCCESSFUL NIGERIA POLITICAL TRANSITION AND HUMAN CAPITAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AT GRASS ROOTS LEVEL

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## ABSTRACT

*The public service is deeply involved in shaping the values and practices of the society in which it operates. To be able to perform these functions; the staff must be trained and developed in their requisite skills. In view of these, this paper intend to identify the extent that Nigerian Local Government has achieved its aims and objectives as stated in the training policy of Nigerian Local Government Commission .It also intends to evaluate how effective and adequate are training and development programmes as well as assess the benefits of training and development to both the staff and the society and states their impact in sustaining a successful Nigerian political transition. This paper then suggests methods of improving the human capital development in Nigeria public service.*

**Keywords:** *Human Capital, Training, Development, Public Service, and Political Transition.*

## INTRODUCTION

An organization's manpower represents all calibers of employees, skilled and unskilled professionals and generalists, permanent or temporary that are working directly or indirectly in accomplishing the organization's set goals. The human resource available to any nation constitutes the most important asset to the nation (Dalhatu, 1998). This is because all other resources, money (finance) machines, information, technology and the likes are inanimate and therefore need to be activated by human resource, which is the most important factor in any productive organization/enterprise. Human capital has been recognized globally as one major factor that is responsible for the wealth of the nations. Yalokwu (2006) in the same vein says that no matter how effective and sophisticated your machines, tools and other resources may be, people who constitute the human element will have to put them to use. Draft and Mastic (2007) assert that training is one of the most frequently used approaches to changing people's mindset. Yalokwu (2006) adds that efficiently developed human resources are vital to the total development of any country in providing continuous and efficient management of its commercial enterprises, public institutions and civic organizations.

National Universities Commission (NUC, 2004) reiterates the massive

unemployment of Nigerian Universities' graduates. This problem is said to be traceable to the disequilibrium between labour market requirements and lack of assertive employable skills by the graduates. Diejona and Orimolade (1991) opine that this obvious critical skill gaps inhibit the development of youths and the entire development of the nation and call for training and development of human resources in Nigerian Local Government. Planned training and development programmes will return values to the organization in terms of increase performance and productivity, enlightened morale, reduced costs and greater organizational stability and flexibility to adapt to changing external environment. The purpose of staff training, therefore, is to increase the competences of staff or personnel and to provide a continuity, supply of qualified civil servants for various positions in the public service. The public service is deeply involved in shaping the values and practices of the society in which it operates. To be able to perform these functions, the staff must be trained and developed in their requisite skills. A systematic and purposeful staff training and development policy is a one way to ensuring optimum utilization of any organization human endowment for sustainability of political transition. Again, the society is currently undergoing rapid change, particularly in the area of skill obsolescence and technological capability, training is not exclusively reserved for only newly employed staff, but also for the old employees. It is therefore, important for the purpose of enhancing individual performance. Hence, training and development should be a continuous process lasting an employee's entire working life so as to contribute positively to the Nigerian political transition.

The primary objectives of any serious government should include the development of her human resources rather than the basic goals of maintenance of law and order. Although it is believed that an effective training and development programme can solve varieties of manpower problems, but yet there are still inadequate manpower training and development programmes in Nigeria, but President Goodluck Jonathan is aspiring for efficiency in his government. In fact, according to the new-classical management theorist, especially the system theorist, what matters most in all kinds of organizations, large or small, complex or simple, public or private, is the caliber of personnel within. The calibers of manpower available to an organization, more than anything else, determine whether the organizations will succeed in achieving its objectives or no (Banjoko, 1996).

The ability of any Local government, for example, to perform functions granted to it by the constitution depends on the skills, energy and creativity of the people working in it. The military handed over power to civilian administration on May 29, 1999 with the inauguration of President Olusegun Obasanjo and 36 Civillian state governors. Nigeria experienced direct military rule for 29 of its 51 years as an independent nation. After 8 years of Obasanjo's regime he handed over to President Yar'adua whose transition led to the swearing in of the Vice President, who was re-elected as the President of Nigeria currently through an adjudged transparent election conducted under the Professor Attahiru Muhammed Jega led Independent National

Electoral Commission (INEC). According to Banjoko (1996), people are the core-things that matters most in an organization. Indeed, all social organizations are established by people, managed by people and meant to serve the people. Resource of manpower is however, only limited to those categories of people that are involved in the internal management of the organization, and because manpower plays a unique role in the realization of organizational objectives.

Ubeku (2001) asserts that properly trained employees gain the necessary confidence with which to carry out their task while those who are not adequately trained perform below the expected standard on the job. It is therefore imperative for local government administrators to ensure that its employees are adequately trained and developed which in turn enhance the sustenance of political transition. Nwachukwu quoted in Akingbade (2005) observed that adequate and uninterrupted supply of qualified manpower is a prerequisite for the social, political and economic development of a nation. Banjoko (1996) states that once a local government has employed those it considered qualified, suitable and competent to perform those jobs for which they were hired, it must embark on an effective training and development programme necessary to enhance the productive capabilities of the newly hired employees.

Ubeku (2001) describes manpower development as a process of intellectual and emotional growth achieved through providing the means by which people grow on the job, while training is a part of manpower development programme. It implies a lot, it emphasizes the opportunity to apply one's knowledge and the opportunity to learn and grow on the work place. Nmereole cited in Balogun (2008) describes education and training of human being as means to broaden their horizon of knowledge, qualities of life as well as awareness of their environment. This awareness will make them realize what the society expects from the government. He further explains that a well educated and trained person is easier to manage and mobilizes for social and economic development of a nation.

According to Eromosele cited in Balogun (2008) training is the term which is used to embrace all stages concerned with increasing the capabilities of individual and group in contributing to the attainment of defined objectives. It therefore includes the determination of training and development needs, induction and orientation, skill-training and programme for managerial professional and staff development. Attendance of High Schools, Colleges and Universities, as well as other self-initiated development activities during off-hour are also the aspect of training. Every organization must have "system" which informs its men about the job requirement and skill to perform the job efficiently and motivate them to do the job as best as they can. This system is built through the method of staff training, either on the job or both, depending upon the work situation. He goes further that training is a modern management tool which no organization can afford to ignore. A system of training is therefore of necessity which must be developed to achieve the corporate task of the present as well as the future as they can be foreseen.

Furthermore, a systematic approach to training includes, defining the corporate goal, setting up objective tasks, planning activities and identifying the manpower used to carry out the activities. After the needs are identified, an investor has to be taken off the existing skills and knowledge of the work force and those, which are needed to carry out the planned activities. The gap between the existing skills and knowledge and those, which are needed to sustain this Nigeria successful transition has to be bridged by the manpower development process. A planned training programme is very essential in manpower development process. The essential components of a training programme according to Balogun (2008) consist of the following process:

- i. Identification and analysis of training needs
- ii. Definition of training objectives
- iii. Designing training programmes
- iv. Implementation, and
- v. Evaluation and feedback (Bajoko cited in Yalokwu, 2006).

Although, training is costly investment in terms of men, every organization with training investment would expect reasonable returns in form of improved performance of its staff and optimum utilization of its resources. The returns however cannot exactly be quantified although it can be fairly assessed by comparing the operation ratio with the cost of training after the operation of the training programme. Yalokwu (2006) concludes by adding that in most of the developed countries there is increasing awareness of the need for staff training in the context of development activities but a systematic approach to assessing the training need and then develops. This, according to him, is often due to lack of expertise on the subject and intense desire of some policy makers to 'lead forward' in mounting a systematic and comprehensive training plan for balance development of the system, which will assist successful political transition in Nigeria. On the whole, a training plan, which aims at growth of the system, must take into accounts cultural trends, technological achievement and manpower composition, if it has to succeed.

Dalhatu (1998) describes human resources of a nation as comprising men and women, young and old, engaged in the production of goods and services, as the greatest and indeed, the most precious asset of a nation. The growth and development of a nation is measured by the human resources it possesses. Consequently, the effective harnessing and management of human resources could not be over emphasized. It is therefore not a luxury to consciously train and develop human resource. It was in recognition of the importance of human resource (Dalhatu, 1998), that the Federal Government took far reaching decision aimed at encouraging training and development through the establishment of training institutes like:

- i Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) 1973
- ii The Center For Management Development (CMDI) 1973
- iii The Industrial Training Fund (ITF) 1971

- iv Six Federal Training Center (FTC) at Lagos, Kaduna, Ilorin, Maiduguri, Enugu and Calabar. etc

While appreciating the effort made by government through the establishment of the training institutions, it is disheartening that training in itself has not made the desired impact in view of increasing embarrassing cases of embezzlement, swindling, official corruption and other forms of corrupt practices. Knowledge, skills and techniques have not changed the attitudinal behaviour of people in Nigerian Local Government. Donli cited in Dalhatu (1998) observes that any management that is interested in increasing productivity of its employees ...must at least possess two things.

- a. It must have a valid performance evaluation system
- b. It must continuously attempt to increase the abilities and motivation of its employees.

He attempts to answer these questions:

- a. Why do we need training and development?
- b. How should training be done if it is to realize its potential of making people more effective?
- c. How do we evaluate the success of a particular training effort?

Also, training is typically undertaken to correct an individual employee's performance appraisal and prepares individual employees for greater challenges. Dalhatu (1998) advanced the following reasons why organizations may need to train or develop their employees.

***To tackle the problems of selection error:*** Appointment today is influenced by politicians, quota system, etc. Training will help to correct if an employee is wrongly selected which in turn will help to sustain Nigeria political transition.

***To meet individual interest growth needs:*** Psychologist have repeatedly argued that individual have certain needs, which if satisfied will lead to motivation, and if not satisfied will lead to different degrees of dissatisfaction and in some cases to psychotic behaviour. Maslow cited in Bature (2010) refers to an individual's need for self actualization as the need to realize as much of one's potential as is possible.

***To adapt to dynamic environment:*** Organization must strive to achieve job equilibrium. If it is not done, the result is that skills get obsolete and square pegs might be found in round holes which signal an obvious need for retraining, retrenchment and new hiring.

***To make sure that an individual's promotion is meaningful:*** Individual's potential to perform effectively on the new job must be enhanced by proper training. According to Beatty and Schneider cited in Balogun (2008), an individual's performance on present job will perfectly predict performance on higher job.

On the question of how training should be done, Dalhatu (1998) states that there are three levels of training needs. These are:

- i The organizational level
- ii The occupational level and

iii The individual level

The organizational level refers to the assessment of the organization in totality to determine where training is most needed at a particular point in time. At the occupational level, that is, discovery of what is needed in terms of skills, knowledge and attitude to carry out the various duties that are related to a particular job or occupation. The third, which is individual level means discovering delinquencies related to individuals. To tackle the training needs at the organizational level, we must analyze in detail, the organizational objectives so as to determine the short and long run goals. These goals are then translated into performance and skill levels of human resources required in order to meet them. To address the occupational needs, he added that we required detail job analysis to determine the task that is required to set the short and long run goals.

Finally, to determine training needs on the individual level, we need information on the current performance level of individual through the use of valuable valid performance appraisals. As to the third question of how do we evaluate the success of a particular training efforts, Donhi cited in Amstrong (2003) says that the question to answer is whether the training programme was implemented at the least possible cost or a very low cost. He added that to answer is difficult because it is a function of several controllable and uncontrollable variables. Moreover, he added “trainees, often are not given the opportunity to put into practice, the skills they have acquired”. Amstrong (2003) concludes that organizations are bound to face challenges in the future than they are facing today as such they need to train the personnel or human resources to a level greater than where they are today to ensure further survival. Denyer cited in Auwalu (1998), affirms that training is important because of the following reasons:

- i. It leads to greater efficiency of the staff/personnel
- ii. It improves the morale of staff
- iii. It assists in the recruitment of staff and ensures a better quality of application.
- iv. It increases the reputation of the firm/organization
- v. It increases loyalty and adaptation of staff
- vi. Ensures decrease in labour turnover which means, saving the cost of recruitment and training of staff.

He asserts that training should be given attention, so as to affect the performance of staff according to the requirements of such training which include:

- a. Induction training (for new staff)
- b. Job training (aimed at teaching the technical details of particular task, so that correct working methods are used to make workers become efficient in the shortest time.
- c. Supervisory training-concerned with the preparation of workers for the control of others, so that management policy can be properly interpreted and implemented.

On the issue of training policy, he said that some of the essentials of a good training policy are listed as follows:

- i All staff should have the opportunities of training appropriate to their job positions.
- ii Training should aim not only at improving working in their present jobs but about preparing them for higher positions in the future.
- iii The best method should be chosen if training is to be effective.
- iv The right number of staff should be trained for post that will give a high labour turnover.

### **The Concept of Training and Development**

Cuming cited in Balogun (2008) defines training as a systematic modification of behaviour through learning, which occurs as a result of education, instruction development and planned experience. Similarly, training could be seen as providing the conditions in which employee can learn and gain effectiveness in the present or future work through the development of appropriate habit and actions, skills, knowledge and attitudes. Another thing is the building up of an efficient and effective labour force through proper recruitment, selection, placement, staff training and development. Akingbade (2005) defines development as growth or realization of a person's ability through conscious or unconscious learning. He conceives development as a multinational process, which involves major changes in social structures, popular attitudes and national institution as well as the acceleration of economic growth, reduction in inequalities and the eradication of absolute poverty. This therefore, refers to the total transformation of the economy, society, politics and culture of a country, and the liberation of one from exploitation and oppression. Flippo (1996) establishes three basic components or core values that should serve as a conceptual ground and guideline for conceiving the central meaning of development. These core values are:

**Life sustenance:** The ability to provide basic needs which its absence definitely result in under - development. Therefore, economic development is a necessary condition for the improvement in the quality of life.

**Self Esteem:** This refers to sense of worth, dignity, respect, honour or recognition. Nowadays, self esteem is increasing especially in the countries that possess economic wealth and technological power - those that have developed. Every organization and staff therefore, seeks development in order to gain the esteem, which enables him or her to contribute his or her best toward the development of the organization.

**Freedom from Servitude:** This means emancipation from alienating materials, condition of life, extra influence and dominance; and freedom involves empowerment of their members to gain greater control over nature and the external environment. Rodney cited in Akingbade (2005) sees development as an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationship. A development on its own could be seen as a sort of social change by which many ideas are introduced into the social

system, in order to produce high per-capita income and the level of living through more modern production method, and improve social organization. According to the Federal Ministry of National Planning (1991), it is clear that development does not start with people, their orientation, organization and discipline. At the beginning of development all human resources remains nothing and untapped potential and the society can be poor amidst the most popular material resources. In general, development means more efficient, more productive, more progressive ways of doing things rather than that of the economic, social or political matters. Similarly, development simply means increasing the production of goods and services within the country and to improve the welfare and quality of life of the citizens, it also involves mobilization of human and material resources to achieve economic growth and development of any organization or country.

In addition, it is seen as general improvement in the material and social well being of a society as a whole. It is a process, which enables man to actualize his potential, build self-confidence and line of dignity and fulfillment. Development is often viewed as change, advancement, improvement and positive change in the quality and span of life of the people. The primary focus in this respect is the quality of life of the people, while other factors are seen as contributing to change in the quality of life. Development is the ability and willingness of an individual in a society to contribute his best in any form to the collective output to service from which he will in turn receive services that enrich him materially, culturally and economically. What is essentially required to achieve this aim is the provision of education, health service, social welfare services, security etc. In summary, training and development are the back bone of any organization be it government or private sector. They are very essential to equip the employees to perform competently on their jobs and are concerned with the acquisition and development of those knowledge, skills, techniques, attitudes and experiences which will enable an individual to make his most effective contribution to combine efforts of the team of which he is a member in the attainment of the organizational objectives. Staff training and development, therefore, involve a complex and continuing personnel process in which the employee is made, not only to master the instance of his recent job, but also to prepare for satisfaction and life long career in his chosen profession.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The development of staff or human resources cannot be entirely the concern of our nation's educational institutions. It is also the responsibility of other institutions capable of performing training functions. This is because every organization, both private and public are striving towards achieving their predetermined goals and objectives, and this cannot be done or attained in the absence of staff or human resource development. Why? Because the success of any organization lies in the hand of effective personnel which when improved through developing staff skills,



knowledge, and capacity can be realized in their daily tasks. Staff development is concerned with the growth of the whole man, the expansion of his ability to utilize his capacities fully and to apply his knowledge and dependence to the resolution of different situations. For effective and efficiency in Nigeria public services which will enhance and sustain the successful political transition in Nigeria, the following points are proffered.

- i Government should ensure adequate seminars, conferences and workshops for all public servants to boost their morales.
- ii The Local Government training policy should be reviewed from time to time to ensure that all workers are carried along.
- iii All public servants should join or belong to relevant professional Associations.
- iv Government should assist and sponsor the civil servants that are undergoing any course of training.

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