

Human Resource as a Valued Asset for National Development

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ABSTRACT

*The socio-economic and political advancement of a country is dependent on the human resources available which the most valued asset is. However, an increasing drop in such countries human resources will equally affect the pace of development hence the number of people expected to perform the role activities will not be enough. Thus, the paper highlights the concepts, models of human resources and features of development. In other to grasp at the root of the study, the study examines the thesis surrounding human resources as a valued asset for development and concludes that the fundamental prime index for national development lies on human resources.
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INTRODUCTION

The global socioeconomic and political growths are dependent on the involvement and utilization of people's skills and abilities to execute some of the programmes and projects for the development of man. However, the human resource otherwise known as people or personnel is grouped into different strata such as skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled. These strata of people are genuinely and differently assigned to roles to perform according to their qualifications and capabilities in order to meet developmental needs vis-à-vis economic, political, and social. In Nigeria, the overall growth in all facets of developmental processes is anchored on people. Even in the era of science and technological inventions, people are still involved in the inventive processes as well as in work. All these are to ensure rapid socio-economic and political development. Thus, human resource in a layman's view is referred to as the people. But from a classical perspective, human resources according to Oxford dictionary refers to people skills and abilities seen as something a company, an organization etc. can make use of. Human resource is set of individuals who make the workforce of an organization, business sector, or economy. Human capital is sometimes used synonymously with

human resources, although human capital typically refers to a more narrow view that is the knowledge the individuals embody and can contribute to an organization. Like wise, other terms sometimes used manpower, talent, labour, or people. However, the professional discipline and business functions that oversees as organizations human resources is referred to human resource management (Elwood and James (1996) at www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/human-resources). However, the term development is conceptually and practically delicate to handle, yet it is the cornerstone of every economic growth especially in the thesis of sustainable development (Okpata, 2004). He further asserts that development in common parlance may mean growth or change or planned growth. As a concept, development is not very easy to define. Nevertheless, the guideline to the fourth National Development plan 1980 to 1985 according to Okpata (2004) has attempted to define what “true development” should imply. It says true development must mean the development of man. As a concept, development is the attainment of an ever-shifting but always higher level of equilibrium between the positive and negative elements within a society and the individual.

In a generic sense, according to Okpata (2004), development is constantly rising national goals and objectives formulated by the national machinery. Rodney (1969) in Okpata (2004) defines it as “a many-sided process. At the level of the individual, it implies increase skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility, and material well being”. Obasi (1985) quoted in Okpata (2004) aggregates the social science usage of the term development to mean a sort of progressive transformation of the economic, social and political structure of a society from relatively less complex, less efficient and less desirable forms, to more complex, more efficient and more desirable forms. In the context of this work, development is a strategized process of transformation or movement from the traditional values, norms, behavioural patterns and so on to orthodox approach for the development of man in all ramifications. It is also concerned with a systematic changing process arising from old values of economic, social and political practices to new ones for betterment of the society. Whatever these definitions may suggest, it is our desire to infer that human resource as an engineering pillar of any organization, stand out as one of the most important vehicle for development thesis in productive and non-productive economy. Olewé (1995) suggests these to be the characteristics of development:

- (a) Exploitation of national resource
- (b) Participatory process of direct social change
- (c) Control over the environment
- (d) Rational process of organization
- (e) Systematic formulation and implementation of programmes
- (f) Economic growth
- (g) Quantitative and qualitative transformation
- (h) Mass mobilization
- (i) Deliberate (manpower) training
- (j) Autonomy

- (k) Appropriate technological base
- (l) Even distribution of development benefits
- (m) Adequate infrastructural facilities
- (n) Population growth rate
- (o) Efficiency in production and cost reduction
- (p) Information spread or communication
- (q) Value orientation

These features of development are what human resource managers aspire to achieve for effective achievement of developmental goals

Models of Human Resources

Manpower requirement models are designed to tell the human resource planner how many of what types of people are needed to produce given levels of output. Models range from large-scale simulation types to statistical model that show the numbers and types of people historically used to accomplish a measured amount of work. Simulation model tends to explore manning situations beyond the range of direct observation by large industrial engineering approaches, which emphasize statistical analysis of work load and manpower.

Personnel models: The traditional feature of military personnel system is that it has an “in-at-the-bottom, up-through-the-ranks structure”. These systems are frequently modeled as a Markovian process, where movement through the system is determined in a set of transitional probabilities. These probabilities are either explicit policies. Only a specified percentage of a cohort will be allowed to pass to next year or averages of observed behaviours overtime. In general application today, personnel planners and managers use three kinds of model: steady state, dynamic and transition. The most common model is the static or steady-state model in which the entire flow system is in equilibrium. That is total number of people who enter the system equal to the numbers who leave. Although such models help us to understand the long-run-effects of policy changes on personnel profiles, they do not show how the personnel profile will look next year if the transition probabilities are modified directly by policy or indirectly through behaviours (www.cna.org/.../5500037000.pdf). These models particularly dynamic and transition are part and parcel of the values in which people or human resources adopt towards actualization of development goals.

Human Resources as a Valued Asset

It is pertinent to note that human resource as a valued asset contribute immensely to development, be it economic, social, or political. This is because, the skills and abilities that are potent in man are the prerequisites for developmental process. It is the relevance of societal needs in development that led to the utilization of humans in scientific inventions and technological advancement for national and international development. However, the measure of growth in Nigeria’s development has been attributed to the importance attached to human resources. Hence, past and present government in Nigeria has

implemented developmental policies through the involvement of (bureaucrats) people in her day-to-day administration. Modern approach to development has more or less reduced the use of human's in work performance. Rather organizations in today's management in productive labour make use of machines. However, the issue is that these machines are operated or manipulated by people. In this resolve, it became apparent that human resource is the most valued asset for development even in the face of multiple machines. The operations of these modern machines require the skills, knowledge, and abilities of people for it to be used in production. After critical overview of the term HR, it became conclusive that the HR is a vital asset for development.

CONCLUSION

The relevance of human resource in the circle of development and any other cycle of life is a potent force for self, group, and national development. Thus, the concepts were examined and the central thesis highlighted some central issues that presented an acceptable resolve that human resources is a valued asset for development in all factors of the economy. It is working to mention that any meaningful development has its attending pains naturally attached. Hence, be it human resource development, material development, infrastructure development there are certain pains it will inflict which is only short lived. This implies that while attempting human capital development, certainly, there are gaps (pains) which will be created as a result in the short run. But in the long run the ultimate benefits cut across society.

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