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Human Resource Development and the Productivity of the Civil Service of Cross River State, Nigeria (Pp. 17-24)

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Abstract

This study was designed to determine the level of training and development of civil employees and how it affects their present and future productive capacities. Survey design was adopted for the study. Civil employees selected from six ministries constituted the population for the study from which a sample of 90 was randomly drawn, 15 employees from each ministry. Two research questions and a null hypothesis was formulated to guide and direct the study. The t-test statistic and simple percentages were used to analysis hypothesis and questionnaire respectfully. The result revealed that civil employees in cross river state civil service were not exposed to regular training workshops and refresher courses required to cope with job challenges and organizational changes. Hence, they are denied the opportunity of acquiring the relevant skills and knowledge required to perform tasks effectively and these has a direct and immediate impact on productivity. It was recommended that government should expose its

employees to regular training workshops and refresher courses as well as award scholarships to intelligent employees to improve their educational levels.

Introduction

A systematic approach to human resource development will logically start with the employees' job performance appraisal and then the establishment of a training policy and the required resources for its sustainability. What follows sequentially is an appraisal of training needs for which appropriate training is provided. The sequence of activities ends in an appraisal and feedback of the effectiveness of the training. This sequence is known as training Circle. As noted by Cole (2002) training requirements emanate from four sources; namely the job requirements of the newcomers, shortfalls in employees' performance appraisal, organizational changes and the employees' expressed needs. It is imperative to indicate at this juncture that, training and development are two dimensions of human resource development.

Training will be understood as any learning activity which is directed towards the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills for the purpose of an occupation or task. The central theme in training is the task or job. On the other hand, development could be seen also, as any learning process or activity which is directed toward future needs rather than present needs. It is more concerned with career growth than immediate performance. It is however worth noting that both training and development are learning activities and are both concerned with the acquisition of knowledge, understanding, skills and attitude. They occur simultaneously to a large extent during the learning process (Shaw, 1996).

Training could be conducted at the work site and in the context of performing actual job (on-the-job training) it may also occur or be conducted in a location specially designated for training outside usual work site (off-the-job training) and finally, it could be a combination of on- and off-the-job training (apprenticeship training). Training is actually supposed to be a continuous process (re-training).

On the other hand, productivity is the ratio of total output to input. In other words, it is the relationship between units of labour input and units of output of a workman. As stated by Nwachukwu (1992), "productivity is the effective use of factors of production to produce goods and services."

It is pertinent to indicate pointedly from the foregoing, that what determines productivity is the effective utilization of factors of production and one key factor that determines the effective utilization of the factors of production is the availability of skills, specific knowledge and work attitude needed to do a job. In the same continuum, what basically determines the skills and specific knowledge content an employee possesses is the quality of training and retraining the employee has received.

Problem of the Study

The continued complaints of low productivity and the demonstrated lack of commitment and efficiency of the civil service has been an issue of great concern. Various efforts have been expended by researcher, in an attempt to find a solution to the problems of the civil service and also successive government administrations have consistently increased the remuneration and allowances paid civil employees, still in an attempt to boost the effectiveness and productivity of it workers. However their productivity levels are unarguably not commensurate with the increment. The question that may naturally emanate from these is, could there be other factors apart from money that may account for the ineffectiveness and unproductivity of an employee? And of course one of such key factors apart from pay that determines employees' productivity is the employee's skills and knowledge of the job and again what ultimately determines the amount of skills and specific knowledge an employee possess, is the level of training received by the employee. As strongly note by Inyang (2001), the civil service has a penchant recruiting untrained and unqualified personnel and does little or in most cases makes no attempt to train personnel even after recruiting them.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between employee training / development and productivity, and also to find out the extent to which civil employees are given access to training and re-training workshops and programmes.

Research Questions

1. Is there any significant relationship between employees training, development and productivity?
2. Is there any significant relationship between employees skill and specific knowledge required to do a job and training / development?

Research Hypothesis

One of the research questions was converted to a null hypothesis.

H₀. There is no significant relationship between employees' training/development and productivity.

Methodology

The design for this study is survey.

The population for this study is all the civil employees in the six (6) selected ministries used for the study. A sample of 90 was randomly drawn from the population, 15 from each of the 6 ministries.

The instrument for this study was a training / development and productivity questionnaire. The instrument was divided into two sections. Section A sought information on respondents demographic data, section B contained items that measure the extent to which training and development programmes are conducted in the civil service and how it affects productivity.

The instruments were given to experts in measurement for validation. They offered useful hints that ensured standards that eventually aided the final itemization of questionnaire.

The researcher went to each of the ministries selected and administered the instrument to the 90 respondents. At the end 75 questionnaires representing 83.3% were returned and 15 representing 16.7% were not returned.

Data Analysis

Simple percentages were used to analyze the questionnaire while the independent t-test was used to analyze the hypothesis. In this studies any item that has 50% and above is said to have great impact on training and development.

Questionnaire Analysis

As shown in the table 1 (attached), 10 out of 15 items on the negative (no) category scored above 50% while on the positive (yes) category only five were above 50%. The method of data analysis described in the study stated that any questionnaire item that has the percentage of 50 and above is said to have a great impact on training/development and productivity in the civil service. Civil employees occupy centre stage in the implementation of government policies; there is therefore a need to regularly expose them to training and retraining workshops and to exercises to equip them with new and relevant skills, ideas and knowledge. Civil employees also need to be

encouraged to take up academic and professional programme by awarding them scholarship. But however, as indicated on table 1 above, it is observe civil employees do not have such provisions or opportunity, hence the items scoring 50% and above is more on the negative.

Test of Hypothesis

Analyzing the t-test at 95% confidence interval, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between training/development and productivity was accepted because t-(t critical one tail = 2.353) is greater than t- (t calculated = 09523).

Discussion of Findings

The result of the analysis on table I revealed that the percentage of response score of the questionnaire that are above 50% are more on the negative side than those on the positive side. Hence, civil employees lack the required exposure to training workshop / refresher courses, as well as academic and profession exposure. It also show that civil / service are not awarded scholarships to go for further studies nor are they compensated for personal efforts at self development.

The result of the only hypothesis also revealed that civil service employees are not given the opportunity to attend training workshops and refresher courses which are necessary to provide them with new and relevant skills and knowledge to cope with new challenges and organizational or policy changes that may occur in the civil service. The results of the questionnaire and hypothesis analysis aptly agrees with the studies of Inyang (2002) who observed that the civil service has a penchant for recruiting untrained and unqualified staff and does little or nothing about training or improving their productive capacities even after recruiting them.

Conclusion

Training provides the requisite skills, ideas, attitudes and knowledge to perform current job assignments and tasks effectively. This has an immediate impact on productivity.

Development activities also enhance future and continuing productivity and growth by equipping employees with skills and knowledge for future jobs challenges. In the nut shell, training and development offers employees' skills and knowledge required to effectively enhance their productive capacities to meet present and future organizational challenges and task. Hence, an organization which refrains from training its employee's (such as

the Cross River State civil service) voluntarily denies itself the opportunity of equipping its staff with current and relevant skills and knowledge, and these definitely has a direct correlation with both present and future productivity.

Recommendation

The following recommendations were made:

- Training /retraining workshops should be regularly organized and made compulsory for civil employees to boost productive capacities.
- Scholarship should be awarded to employees by government agencies to enhance their academic qualification.
- Government should provide sponsorship for civil employee willing to attend seminars and conferences.
- Government should specifically organize short training course for employees whenever it effects major organizational policy changes to equip its employee with new or relevant skills and knowledge to cope with such changes.
- Government should encourage its employees to acquire the membership and qualifications of relevant professional bodies to help inculcate professional ethics and values in performing their duties.

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Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Civil Employees' Response and Percentages on Training and Development Exercise

S/N	QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS	YES	%	NO	%
1	Have you acquired any additional qualification after employment?	10	13.3	65	86.77
2	Wish to go for further studies?	70	93.3	5	6.7
3	Have financial ability to go for further studies?	15	20	60	80
4	Currently on or previously received a scholarship for further studies?	7	9.4	6.8	90.6
5	Already in school through personal effort?	20	26.7	55	73.3
6	Have you required qualification to pursue further education?	15	20	60	80
7	Have compensation for personal efforts in self development?	1	9.4	68	90.8
8	Have you ever attended training workshop/refresher course?	10	13.3	65	86.6
9	Have you been encouraged by government to join a professional body?	12	16	63	84
10	Attend re-training exercises regularly	10	13.3	65	86.7
11	Implementing new government policies is sometimes difficult especially when key changes in skills are involved?	50	66.7	25	33.3
12	Retraining exercise avails you the opportunity of acquiring new skills and knowledge to cope with new policies?	54	72	16	28
13	Would you wish to join a professional body and acquire its certificate?	55	73.3	20	26.7
14	Personal efforts made to develop self are geared toward gaining promotion than acquiring new skills and knowledge?	56	74.7	19	25.3
15	Usually receive periodic examination or study leave to allow you concentrate on your studies or exams?	25	33.3	50	66.7

Table 2: t-test comparison of response of civil employees who attend training workshop/refresher courses and those who did not

t-test: paired two sample for means		
	Variable 1	Variable2
Mean	47.5	27.5
Variance	441	441
Observation	4	
Pearson correlation	-1	
Hypothesized mean difference	0	
Df	3	
T stat	0.952380952	
P(T <= t)one tail	0.205582468	
T critical one tail	2.353363016	
P(T <= t)two tail	0.411164936	
T critical two tail	3.18244291	