

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYEE WELFARE PRACTICES AND  
THEIR EFFECT ON PRODUCTIVITY IN THREE SPECIAL LIBRARIES IN  
GHANA.**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Staff development and employee welfare are valuable assets in an organization since an organization's primary aims are productivity and profitability. Every organization primarily needs committed and dedicated staff that will help the organization to meet its tactical and strategic objectives.*

*The study examines whether staff development policies exist in three special libraries in Ghana, and whether training programmes are being offered to increase staff competence, efficiencies and performance. It was also aimed at assessing staff welfare practices and how these affect productivity and performance.*

*In conducting the survey, two sets of questionnaires were drawn up. One set was administered to management and the other set went to Library staff.*

*The survey revealed that all the organizations under study have staff development policies and training programmes for staff to enhance their capabilities and efficiency. Again, the survey revealed that staff welfare is catered for since several motivational avenues and incentive packages are available to boost their morale.*

**KEY WORDS:** STAFF DEVELOPMENT, EMPLOYEE WELFARE,  
PRODUCTIVITY, SPECIAL LIBRARIES, GHANA

## **Introduction**

Staff development and employee welfare practices were developed during the period of industrial revolution by early management authorities like Robert Owen, F.W. Taylor and others. Their philosophy was that, people's behavior depended on how they were treated. Owen, for example, stipulated that employees should work hard to develop their talents and human beings should therefore eliminate practices that would lead to poor health (Porter, 2003).

The accelerating pace of market and technological change, the growth of information and the shifts in economic and competitive pressures are all imposing demands on managers to continually renew their skills and capabilities (Anderson, 2002). Every organization needs committed and dedicated staff that will help it to meet its tactical and strategic objectives. These objectives can only be achieved if the knowledge and skills of staff are upgraded through training and development. This will serve as a source of motivation to employees and drive them to contribute their quota towards the achievement of the organization's goal. Competent staff at all levels of an organization are needed to effectively push ahead the objectives of the organization. It is known that results cannot usually be achieved by any single management on its own. All the good things management require such as efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, creativity can best be achieved when everybody works effectively as a team player, and not as individuals.

This study focuses on staff development and employee welfare practices and their effect on productivity in three special libraries in Ghana. These are the libraries of the Volta

River Authority, Internal Revenue Service and Customs, Excise and Preventive Service respectively

The Volta River Authority was established by the Volta River Development Act 1961, to plan, execute and manage the development of the Volta River which comprises among other things, the generation of electrical power for the operation of an aluminum industry, and for general industrial and domestic users in Ghana.

In pursuit of the aforementioned objectives and also having regard to the training needs of its engineering and professional staff, a Library was established in 1964. The Library has a staff strength of three, and a total stock of sixty eight thousand (68,000) materials. Out of this number, twelve thousand (12,000) consist of books and forty-six thousand (46,000) non-book materials. The Library offers the following services: loan management, reference and information services, bibliographic services, periodical management, current awareness, enquiry services and non-document supply services.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) was initially named Income Tax Department. This was later changed to the Central Revenue Department in July 1963. However, in 1986, the department was re-organized and renamed Internal Revenue Service under PNDC Law 143.

The IRS is a tax-collecting agency responsible for the collection of all direct taxes from income generating organizations and income earning persons. The Library has a staff

strength of three (3) and stocks ten thousand (10,000) materials. Out of this, four thousand (4,000) are books and six thousand are non-book materials. The Library offers the same services like the VRA Library.

The Custom, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS) was established with the responsibility of collecting taxes on import and export duties. The Library was, however, established in 1997 to serve the needs of staff and the general public with information relating to their duties. It has a total stock of four thousand (4,000) and a total staff strength of five (5). The Library offers few services as compared to those of VRA and IRS.

### **Welfare practices**

Welfare practices are motivational avenues put in place by management to enhance productivity and motivate staff to give off their best. These include incentive packages, training opportunities etc.

### **Literature Review**

Staff development is designed to improve the overall effectiveness of staff in their present positions and to prepare them for greater responsibilities. To be able to meet the needs and achieve the objectives of an organization simultaneously, there is the urgent need for staff training and development to be given a priority. Thus, staff will need on-going training and development programmes throughout their working lives.

Employers should establish development plans in all organizations. The plan should involve establishing what the organization wants to achieve or where it wants to go in the short or long term, and identifying its needs in terms of skills, knowledge and competence. The plan should also define the development that is appropriate to meet those perceived needs (Anderson, 2002). It is worthy to note that employers know that the primary objective of human resource development is that employees have positions which include purpose, satisfaction and freedom to act.

Developing staff involves training, educating, appraising and preparing them for present and future jobs. These activities are important for the economic and psychological growth of staff. The need for personnel growth cannot be satisfied in an organization that does not have an active staff development programme. The proper use of people involves understanding both individuals and organizational needs so that the full potential of human resource can be utilized.

Development should always make a positive difference that would help to make an organization stronger, more effective and better able to cope with the challenging environment in which it doubtlessly exists. For all intents and purposes, development is necessary, its execution is like any management task, it must be done in a way that maximizes the results from the time and effort involved, it does not just happen, it takes time (Forsyth, 2001).

Staff development also involves training. Training is any “systematic process used by organizations to develop employees’ knowledge, skills behaviors, or attitudes in order to contribute to the achievement of the organizational goal” (Poole, 2002).

Stoner (2002) also believes training refers to improving an employee’s skills to the point where he or she can do the current job more effectively. Organizations spend large sums of money on remedial training for employees because they believe that if employees can master certain basic skills, they can perform a variety of jobs and be able to deal with some of the new technologies. Training is therefore the “process of changing employee behavior and attitudes through some type of guided experience” (Kreitner, 2000).

Mullins (2002) reported that few people would argue against the importance of training as a major influence on the success of an organization for staff as a crucial and expensive resource. He said that in order to sustain economic and effective performance, it is important to optimize the contribution of employees in academia with the aims and goals of the organization.

Training is short-term and skill oriented, whereas development is long-term and career oriented. Both training and development programmes include assessing the needs, designing training activities to meet the identified needs, and evaluating the effectiveness of the training.

One major contribution a manager is uniquely expected to make is to motivate the staff working under him to perform. A basic operation in the work of the manager is to

develop people and to direct, encourage and train subordinates. Training is necessary to ensure an adequate supply of staff who are technically and socially competent and capable of career advancement into specialist departments or management positions (Mullins, 2002).

Effective training needs analysis is particularly vital in today's changing workplace since staff who are exposed to new technologies and flexible working conditions need to update their skills on a regular basis (Anderson, 2002). Effective training or development should, thus, depend on knowing what results are required for the individual, the department and the organization as a whole. With limited budgets, and the need for cost effective solutions, all organizations need to feel secure that the resources invested in training are targeted at areas in which training and development is needed and a positive return on the investments is guaranteed.

The purpose of training, according to Mullins (2002), is to improve knowledge and skills and to change attitudes. This can lead to many potential benefits for both individuals and the organization. Training again can increase the confidence, motivation and commitment of staff, provide recognition, enhance responsibility, enhance the possibility of increased pay and promotion, give a feeling of personal satisfaction and achievement, broaden opportunities for career progression and help to improve the availability and quality of staff. Training is therefore a key element of improved organizational performance. Again, the purpose of training is to supplement the trainee's academic

education or to undertake work in a higher grade. Training courses must suit the type of work and grades for which the trainees are to fill.

It is important for managers to note that those already in the system who have the requisite skills to qualify for a specific post, but who in the opinion of management can make the grade through a systematic orientation course should be given every encouragement. Management must encourage the development of every individual worker and provide the promising ones with opportunities to study and apply what they have studied. Development and training programmes are intended to help employees gain a broader perspective than that needed in the current or next job. Organizations may encourage employees to attend these more general development programmes as part of a long-term strategy for the development of high potential employees and lower level managers who in the future may eventually become upper level managers (Hellriegel et al, 1999).

It must be noted that no matter how carefully job applications are screened, typically a gap remains between what employees do know and what they should know. Training is therefore needed to fill this knowledge.

Training programmes are directed towards maintaining and improving current job performance, while developmental programmes seek to develop skills for future jobs. New employees easily acquire the skills and behaviour expected in their new positions. The training needs of such employees are not always easy to determine. However,



managers can use certain mechanisms to determine the training needs of individuals in their organizations. Once the organization's training needs have been identified, the Human Resource Manager must initiate the appropriate training effort (Kreitner, 2000).

In addition to orientation programmes, many organizations offer employees more extensive training and development experiences. The main purpose of training and development is to overcome the limitations, current or anticipated that are causing an employee to perform at an undesirable level. An organization saves money by recruiting and training individuals, but many organizations prefer training and development to hiring experienced employees.

When an organization undergoes major changes, training and development activities often are necessary to help employees make the transition to a new way of doing things. Redesigning work around teams is one type of change that creates high demand for training and development (Stoner, 2002).

One important aspect that goes hand in hand with training and development is motivation or incentive pay. Incentive pay is meant to link at least a portion of pay to job performance and encourage superior performance. For training and development to be effective, incentives must be aligned with the behaviours that help achieve the organization's goals. In addition to increasing employee motivation to perform well, incentive pay can reduce turnover among good performers. High performers are more

motivated to stay with an organization when they are rewarded more generously than poor performers and it can be cost effective (Hellriegel et al, 1999).

An important goal of human resource management is to maintain a qualified workforce even in a dynamic environment with constantly shifting work demand and labour market. It is not enough to attract and develop workers with the talents to achieve high-performance results for the short term only. They must be successfully nurtured for long-term effectiveness. When adverse turnover occurs and talented workers leave to pursue other opportunities, the resulting costs to the employer can be staggering. The best employers commit themselves to progressive human resource systems that support the retention of those workers who count most, the talented ones (Hellriegel et al, 1999). It is therefore important that employers should take staff welfare seriously. Staff welfare practices include good salaries, conducive work environment, available working tools, medical facilities etc.

The organization-employee-benefit programme also plays a role in attracting and retaining capable workers. Fringe benefits are the additional non-wage or non-salary forms of compensation provided to an organization's workforce. The employee gains from being more responsive to a wider range of needs in a diverse workforce (Schermerhorn, 2002).

## **Methodology**

Staff development and employee welfare practices in special libraries in Ghana was a research undertaken in 2005 using three special libraries in different organizations as case study. They are the Volta River Authority (VRA), Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and Customs, Excise and Preventive Service (CEPS) all based in Accra.

The questionnaire method was used to gather data. Two sets of questionnaires were drawn up. One set was administered to management and the other set went to library staff of the organizations under study. Certain questions were peculiar to management staff and library staff only. However, other questions cut across. The aim was to check responses from each other.

In all, fifteen (15) questionnaires were distributed to the management staff and out of the total number, twelve (12) were retrieved. This represented eighty percent (80%) of the responses from management staff. To analyze the responses, the writer followed the layout of the questions and since the questions could not be analyzed one after the other, they were grouped under different headings.

The writer again, distributed fifteen (15) of the second questionnaire to the library staff. Out of the total of fifteen (15), fourteen (14) were retrieved representing ninety-three percent (93%) of the total. Responses from the library staff were analyzed alongside with that of the management staff. Questions were asked to elicit responses from management and library staff that threw light on their opinion and attitude on staff development

policy, training programmes, impact of training avenues to motivate staff and incentive packages.

## **Findings**

### **Staff development policy**

The accelerating pace of market and technological change, the growth of information and the shifts in economic and competitive pressures are all imposing demands on managers to continually renew their skills and capabilities (Anderson, 2002).

The need for personnel growth cannot be satisfied in an organization that does not have an active staff development programme. Bearing the above in mind, management was asked whether the organizations have staff development policies. All the twelve respondents representing eighty percent answered in the affirmative. This was also collaborated by all the fourteen responses retrieved from the library staff representing one hundred percent (100%).

When probed further to find out whether a budget was allocated for such a programme, all the twelve (12) respondents from management staff responded, yes. This was an indication of a healthy development in these organizations and it went to buttress several scholars' belief that the prime asset of any manager of any organization for that matter, is that which relate to people. The manager has many responsibilities, but two are especially high, those of ensuring that people are able to develop and undertake whatever is necessary to meet their objectives, and ensuring that people produce the desired performance.

## **Staff training**

Several scholars believe that training should be the surest way through which business organizations can achieve their set of objectives. Such training policies will secure competence in the performance of workers within the company and prepare them for higher responsibilities. Management should as a matter of course provide suitable means of training to make the workers more competent in performing their duties.

Training, according to Kreitner, (2002) is the process of changing employee behaviour and attitudes through some type of guided ingredients. Stoner (2002), also believes that training refers to improving an employee's skills to the point where he or she can do the current job more effectively. Mullins (1999), on the other hand asserts that one major contribution a manager is uniquely expected to make is to give others vision and ability to perform. Thus, the basic operation of the work of the manager is to develop to ensure an adequate supply of staff who are technically and socially competent and capable of career advancement into specialist departments or management positions.

To ascertain the propositions of the above authors, the respondents were asked several questions to elicit their ideas and opinion on training. When management was asked whether they accept that training can improve staff performance and productivity, all the twelve respondents responded in the affirmative. In addition, all of them agreed that training opportunities were available to staff. These opportunities are study leave with pay, study leave without pay, and in a few instances scholarship are awarded to staff.

When asked further about the frequency of the training, all the twelve (12) respondents said as and when the need arises. This was also confirmed by all the fourteen (14) library staff.

Again, when management was asked about the type of training given to staff, all the twelve (12) respondents agreed that the training programmes included participation in workshops, seminars and conferences. All the fourteen (14) questionnaires administered and retrieved from the library staff also confirmed this assertion.

The management staff of one of the organizations under study went further and provided detailed a programme of staff training for the period 2005-2006 to the writer. From the above it could be deduced that management had put in place training programmes for staff to upgrade their knowledge, skills and competency.

### **Impact of training on staff**

The purpose of training according to Mullins (2002) is to improve knowledge and skills. This can lead to many potential benefits for both individuals and the organization. Training can increase the confidence, motivation and commitment of staff, provide recognition, enhance responsibility, the possibility of increased pay and promotion, give a feeling of personal satisfaction and achievement, broaden opportunities for career progression, and help to improve the availability and quality of staff.

In order to elicit management and library staff opinion on impact of training, the same question was put to both management and staff. All the twelve (12) management staff responded positively to the question. Their responses included the following:

- Training improves staff performance and increases output.
- Workers are able to achieve better results
- It re-shapes their approaches towards problem-solving methodology and exposes workers to best practices.

The same question was asked the library staff. All the fourteen (14) respondents responded favourably. The following were some of their responses:

- It brings and adds new development in their field of specialization and staff become abreast with technological advancement.
- New ideas are discovered, wrong approach to work is corrected, and one's confidence is raised.
- New knowledge is acquired, improved performance and higher productivity is achieved.
- One is exposed to new developments, and new skills for performance enhancement.

It could be seen from above that both management and library staff did not mince words about the impact of training on staff.

### **Link between training, motivation and productivity**

On the question of whether there is a link between training, motivation and productivity, all the twelve (12) management staff agreed to the question. In the same vein, all the fourteen (14) Library staff also affirmed the question. The above responses confirm Hellriegel's et al. (1999) view that, one important aspect that goes hand in hand with training and development is motivation or incentive. It is meant to link at least a portion of pay to job performance and encourages superior performance. For training and development to be effective, incentives must be aligned with the behaviour that helps to achieve the organizational goals.

### **Motivational avenues**

There are many avenues available for management to motivate workers. Porter et al (2003) say that any manager who pretends not to be aware of avenues available to motivate his employees must take a look at his production. According to them, it is surprising to see a manager who does not motivate his employees.

When management was asked to indicate avenues available to motivate staff, all the twelve (12) respondents said salary is one of the means to motivate workers. This was also confirmed by the fourteen (14) library staff. The survey revealed that management sees salary as one of the best means to bring out the best from workers. Many scholars assert that in developing countries like Ghana, what workers need most are not social needs but physiological needs of which salary is a component part. Again, the survey revealed that management used training opportunities to motivate staff. All the twelve (12) respondents of management staff confirmed that assertion.



## **Incentive packages**

One important goal of human resource management is to maintain a qualified work-force even in a dynamic environment with constantly shifting work demand and labour markets. Management must know that it is not enough to attract and develop workers with the talents to achieve high-performance results. They must be successfully retained and nurtured for long-term effectiveness.

The survey revealed that several incentive packages are available for the organizations under study. These include bonus, personal loan, housing loan, car loan and medical allowance. All the twelve (12) respondents from the management staff confirmed the above assertion. This was further collaborated by the fourteen (14) library staff.

The study revealed that bonuses are given to staff normally at the end of the year. It is aimed at showing management's appreciation to the employees for the work done throughout the year. It is comforting to workers that if they work hard to improve productivity, at the end of the year, "something" would be given to them.

In many organizations, managements which want to achieve higher productivity always attempt to provide shelter for their employees. Through this, they are able to fulfil one of Maslow's hierarchical needs identified in the theory of motivation. Indirectly, management is able to retain its workers for longer years because employees will like to take advantage of the scheme. Since it takes a longer time to pay off the loan, the employee is compelled to stay on the job longer. Naturally, this enhances production too. It is common in Ghana to find many workers, who live in "compound houses" where there is always rancor, confusion and fighting among inmates of the house. "Compound

house” in the Ghanaian parlance means a house with limited facilities like toilet, bath and kitchen but shared by many tenants.

It is always the desire of every worker to live in his own house and have his peace of mind. Therefore, if management offers loan schemes to enable the workers either to buy or put up houses, then it is a laudable attempt to relieve workers of the problem of continuing to stay in “compound” houses. The survey revealed that even though such facilities exist in all the organizations under study, not all the workers can access it at the same time. It depends on one’s position in the organization.

On personal loans, all twelve (12) respondents from management staff and fourteen (14) of library staff confirmed that such a facility was available. It is believed that anything can happen at anytime but when it does, the worker is assured of a loan to offset such a problem. This facility gives total confidence to the workers and his image is maintained in the society. Such a facility urges the worker to give of his best because he is assured that he will never be handicapped in any way.

The survey also revealed the availability of medical allowance. It is obvious from the survey that when workers are taken care of by the organization in case of indisposition, they become happy and so they whole-heartedly offer their best to improve productivity. Again, the survey revealed that management provides loans for workers to purchase vehicles. However, one has to get to a certain level before one can qualify for such a facility.

From the above analysis of the survey, the writer has come to realize that many workers join an organization because there are various avenues by which they could be motivated.

## Conclusion

Staff development and employee welfare practice have become major issues in management . In this global economy where human resource management has received much recognition, many employers are only interested in seeing their employees work without caring for their welfare and development. Invariably, this attitude tends to demoralize the employee who is poised to give of his best towards the success of the organization. The study was carried out under the following assumption:-

- That staff development and employee welfare have corresponding effect on productivity.
- That much attention is paid to employee's welfare.
- That organizations under study have staff development policies.

The assumption that staff development and employee welfare have corresponding effect on productivity was confirmed. All the twenty-five (25) respondents made up of management and library staff confirmed the assumption. The survey further revealed that productivity cannot increase without training and staff motivation. They are inseparable, for, one cannot do without the other.

Again, the assumption that attention is paid to employee welfare was also confirmed. All the (25) twenty-five respondents agreed that incentive packages are available for staff. This explains why such organizations have been able to retain and attract staff.

Furthermore, the assumption that the organizations have staff development policy was also confirmed. All the (25) twenty-five respondents of both management and library

confirmed the assumption. The existence of the staff development policies perhaps is one of the factors contributing to enhance the status of the organizations under study.

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