

## **EDUCATION AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING IN NIGERIA: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES**

by

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### **Abstract**

This paper examines education and resources management specifically focusing on prospects and challenges of human resource management. Secondary method of data collection was used to collect the available information. The problems of human resource management was identified to include favouritism and ethnic considerations in the recruitment and promotion of staffs; corruption; increased enrolment without adequate funding; embezzlement of funds, non-identification of workers needs and inability for prompt management of workers grievances. To curtail these problems, it is suggested that the principle of merit should be strictly adhered to in the recruitment and promotion of staffs. Adequate funding is required to cater for increased enrolment of students and supply of other resources. Teachers should also be well-motivated through the prompt payment of salaries and timely promotions. Political victimization of workers should be stopped while there should be adept management of our economy to mitigate the problems of inflation and other economic problems.

**Keywords:** Human resource management.

### **Introduction**

The roles of education in national development cannot be overemphasized and this has attracted the attention of policy makers and governments. The current government attached importance to

education as part of their Change Agenda and this is the reason while education has been giving prominent place. It is the importance attached to education globally that has made several governments to be spending heavily on education and “investment

in education as noted by Osokoya and Aminu (2002) has traditionally been justified by optimistic assumption that an educated population contributes to the socio-economic development of the society as a whole and that education contributes to the well-being of individuals within the society. According to them, this widespread belief that education is a major means of achieving industrialization permeates the world and both technologically developed and developing countries attempts to design educational programme to achieve their economic goals, thus the heavy spending on education and as evidenced by Brookover and Erickson (1997), the return on investment in education is often greater than the return on investment in other capital goods.

Investment in education by successive governments in Nigeria as evidenced by the yearly budgetary allocations cuts across all levels, except the Nursery education, the finance of which is the responsibility of the respective owners. Investment in education is not a vacuum but is made essentially to provide essential resources for the smooth running of these institutions. These resources include human material and financial resources. Each of these resources is germane in the achievement of organizational goals and objectives.

It needs to be emphasized that while all resources are scarce in relation to demand, it must be available. It must also be optimally allocated and utilized. Moreso, their optimal utilization depends on the managerial ability and acumen of the owners or the managers employed to manage the organization. Thus, resources management is very critical for an organization to achieve its objectives. Organizations which may be private or public or profit or non-profit making organization operates in all spheres of human endeavours. However, not minding the motive or nature of the organization, resource management is crucial for their survival, especially those operating in the education sector.

Therefore, this paper focuses on education and resource management and the main objective is to examine the prospects and challenges of human resources management in institutions of learning. To achieve these therefore, the paper is divided to three sections with introduction as section one. Section two is on review of literature while section three deals with conclusion and recommendations.

## **Conceptual Framework Resources**

Oxford Dictionary of Economics defines resources as anything which can contribute to economic activity. This includes natural resources including both those located on land and those in or under the sea; human resources including labour of various skills and qualifications; and capital goods or man-made means of production. In relation to education, “educational resources refer to all human and non-human efforts brought together and used in the teaching and learning process. These include instructional materials, building and structure, laboratory and equipment, libraries and ICT etc.” (Ibukun, 2009).

Deriving from above, resources in any organization are composed of human, material and financial resources. However, it needs to be emphasized that the level and quality of human and materials resources depends on the financial resources.

In any corporate organization or educational institution, the preponderance of these resources, their quality and effective management go a long way in determining the level of achievement of organizational goals and objectives. More so and specifically to institutions of learning, the availability resources improves the academic performance of students (Oluwatoyin, 2010). Ekundayo

(2007) observed that facilities constitute a strategic factor in organizational functioning. This is so because it determines to a large extent the smooth functioning of any social organization or system including education. He stated further that their availability, adequacy and relevance influenced efficiency and high productivity. Akanmi (2011) also corroborated this by stating that school effective utilization of material resources in teaching and learning processes save time and money and also result in improved learning and effectiveness’

Also with reference to human resources, Adeniji (2006), opined that there is a need to focus on teacher’s adequacy and competency in respect of their pedagogical practices and strategies and the mastery of the curriculum and subject content. The roles of financial resources in the achievement of organization goals cannot be overemphasized. It is one of the major resources of an organization and without financial resource, no organization can survive. The quality and quantity of other resources is determined by the level of financial availability.

### **Definition and Functions of Management**

Salako, Oladokun and Adeagbo (2003) quoting Gullick (1937),

defines management with the abbreviation “POSDCORB” implying that management means planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting.

Although, the structure of a business enterprise may differ, the basic tasks or functions of managers are the same. Thus, the functions of management are:

1. **Planning:** Planning is the charting of a course of action. The manager must first decide on what he wants the workers to do. He sets short and long-run objectives for the organization and decides on the means of achieving them. In this process, he forecasts the economic, social and political environments in which the organization operates and the resources available to make the plans work.
2. **Organizing:** This deals with decision on the positions in the organization and the respective duties and responsibilities of each position.
3. **Staffing:** This involves filling and continuous filling of the positions provided for by the organization’s structure. Since business is a dynamic one, both organization and staffing are likely to be continuous because changes in plans and objectives will often require changes in organization and occasionally necessitating a complete reorganization.
4. **Directing:** In directing, the manager provides day-today direction to his subordinates. Since no one can predict what problems and opportunities will arise in the day-today work, schedule of duties must naturally be couched in general terms. The manager must make sure that his subordinates know the results expected in each situation. The manager must help them to improve their skills and in some cases tell them exactly how and when to perform certain tasks.
5. **Coordinating/Controlling:** Here, the manager determines how well the jobs have been done and what progress is being made towards the goals. He must know what is happening so that he can step-in and make changes if the organization is deviating from the path set for it.
6. **Reporting:** This entails reporting the details of their activities, including results to the top management board members. The essence of reporting to the board members is for their activities to be evaluated alongside the objectives of the organization.
7. **Budgeting:** Budgeting serves as planning as well as control tool. A budget is an estimate of expected income and expenditure which is usually prepared annually. It is a

tool of determining whether an organization has achieved its aims and objectives or not.

The other functions of management include:

8. **Representation:** The manager represents his organization in dealing with the outside groups and other stakeholders which include government, unions, civic groups, financial institutions, suppliers, customers and the general public. A good representation leads to the achievement of organizational goals.
9. **Innovation:** This involves developing new ideas, changing old ideas to new ones, picking up ideas from other fields and adapting them to his own use or acting as a catalyst to stimulate other to develop and carry out innovations.

### **Education and National Development**

The contributions of education to development cannot be overemphasized. All the contributions of education to national development are embedded in the National Policy on Education which has been revised several times. The five main national objectives which will be achieved using education as a tool include; a free and democratic

society; a just and egalitarian society; a united, strong and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy and a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens.

It is generally an unassailable fact that education enables people to read and unite thereby improving literacy rate. Education is also responsible for producing human capital at all levels.

The other contributions of education to national development are illustrated by the human capital theory which shows how education leads to increase in productivity and efficiency of workers by increasing their level of cognitive skills. This was supported by Adelakun (2011), who introduced the notion that people invest in education so as to increase their stock of human capabilities which can be found by combining innate abilities with investment in human beings. Salako, Ogunbunmi and Adejumo (2014), also showed through their empirical work that education contributes to economic growth. This was also corroborated by the works of Babatunde and Adefabi (2003); Lawal, Wahab and Iyiola (2011).

**Resources Management in Institutions of Learning in Nigeria**  
Resource management in institutions of learning revolves mainly around the head of the institution concerned

while other subordinates also performed some management functions. At the primary school level (public), recruitment, supervision, promotion and discipline of staffs are done by the state Universal Primary Education Board (SUPEB). Each primary school is under the headship of Headmaster or Headmistress who is responsible for the day-today management of each school. It is the SUPEB that also finance the payment of staffs and responsible for infrastructural facilities development of primary schools. The Headmaster and teachers managed the facilities provided in each school and the reports of their activities are made known to SUPEB through the secretary of SUPEB in each local government.

Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM) of each state is responsible for the recruitment, discipline and promotion of secondary school teachers. TESCOM is operating under the Ministry of Education, which is a parastatal responsible for the management of education sector in each state. Each secondary school is headed by a principal and assisted by vice-principals (academic or administration) as may apply in different schools. The principal is responsible for the human and material resource management in each school. All the resources needed

are supplied through the Ministry of Education.

Tertiary institutions consisting of University, Polytechnic and Colleges of Education are managed by their respective Governing councils who appoint the Vice-chancellor, Rector and the Provost respectively as the case may be. The Vice Chancellor, Rector and the Provost are responsible for the day-today management (human, material and financial resources) of their institutions. Each of this head are the chief financial officer of their institution. The funding of each institution is done by the government (Federal and state) while the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) help considerably to fund these institutions, especially in the supply of infrastructural facilities and the attendance at conferences.

Resource management at the private institutions is done by their respective owners but their activities are also subjected to approval and monitoring by government. This is to ensure quality control and management. While the National University Commission (NUC) overseas the affairs of the Universities, the National Board For Technical Education (NBTE) regulates the affairs in the polytechnics while the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) overseas,

regulates and monitors the activities of College of Education.

### **The Essence of Human Resource**

The centrality of human resources to the survival and growth of organizations, both private and public, can no longer be controverted. Human resource has become recognized as a strategic resource to be managed in a more explicit and proactive manner (Oribabor, 2000). Human resource is referred to as the life -blood of an enterprise and that "even with the wonders of modern technology, human resources are the most versatile and adaptive resource available to organization".

The inevitability of human beings to the success of an enterprise cannot be overemphasized and the human resource of any organization constitutes its most important assets. Its success and failures are largely determined by the caliber of its workforce (including managers) and the efforts it exerts.

It is also the believe of many that manpower is the most important resource to the management of an enterprise and for an organization's success, great numbers of people with the right skills and in the right place should be engaged. However and in order to achieve this feat, personnel specialists play a core role in aiding the planning of the

enterprise manpower needs.

To the economy as a whole, the economic development of a country depends on the quantity and quality of its resources, the state of technology and the efficient deployment of resources in both the production and consumption process. During the early post - world war II period, economists stressed that rapid physical capital accumulation was the main cause of economic growth and therefore emphasized these as the policy for rapid capital investment. In the 1960s, economists such as Frederick Harbison reconsidered and recalculated the role human beings played in the development process. Man is the dynamic factors of production. His energies, skills, knowledge and ingenuity are applied to the exploitation of raw materials and the production of final goods and services. The human resources according to these economists are similar to the physical capital resources in that, not only can the stock increase but also investments can improve its productive capacities.

Expenditures on formal and informal education and improved health care can upgrade the quality of the labour force. On the other hand, they also believe that human resources differ significantly from physical capital "in

that productivity is affected by thought, feelings and even customs. Workers productive activities are directly influenced by relationships with fellow workers on the job or with the employees".

While comparing human resources vis-a-vis other resources, Oribabor (2000) opined that human resources are the most versatile and adaptive resources available to organizations, the strategic value of which is derived from, among other things, its discretionary decision - making power. Continuing further, he said while other resources such as capital and technology remain necessary and the important sources of competitive advantage, they are generally passive and they contribute to productive effectiveness of the human resource. Above all, human resources are needed to make things happen, to combine other resources in the right mix through the formulation of appropriate strategies to guide the setting of things in motion, to direct, coordinate, monitor the implementation of plans and control operations towards the cost effective accomplishment of desired objectives. Thus, the essential strategic attribute of human resources is that they represent a firm's capacity to make appropriate decision and to respond to environmental threats and opportunities. The firms are therefore highly dependent for their success

and survival on human resources. This dependence has become stronger because of the increasingly variable, illiberal, complex and turbulent nature of business environment, which more than ever before, requires human intervention. The essence of human resource in this regard is that business survival increasingly required effective management of processes and not things.

It means, for instance the management of the process of decision making to bring the right people together as a team around the right problems, and ensuring that relevant resources are available on time, and are critically utilized to achieve desired objectives.

### **Personal Administration/ Human Resource Management**

Personnel administration is that function of any work-organization concerned with providing for its human resources. It involves planning for human resource needs, finding and hiring employees, training and compensating them and finally retiring them "(Akanmi, 1987).

In Fadipe et al (2000), Carell and Kuzmits (198.2) defined personnel administration/management or human resources management as a set of programs, functions and activities designed to maximize both personal

or organizational goals. To Flippo (1983), in Fadipe et al (2000), personnel management is the planning, organizing directing and controlling of the procurement, development, compensation, and integration, maintenance of the individual, organizational and societal objectives. Here personnel administration is varied from the management and operational functions.

This viewpoint is also held by Pigors and Myers (1985) that personnel administration, as an integrative system cannot be regarded as entirely separate from operational management. From another perspective, Armstrong (1979) opined that 'personnel management is concerned with obtaining, organizing and motivating the human resources required by the enterprise.

The focus of these definitions is on people, implying that people are a special kind of resource. As amplified further by Osunkunle in the Nigerian Tribune, February 12, 2002 "Your most precious possession is not financial assets. Your most precious possession is the people you have working there, and what they carry around in their heads, and their ability to work together. People are less predictable than machinery and move. One of life's difficult and challenging experiences is analyzing

human behaviour.

### **Objectives and Functions of Human Resource Management**

The personnel department according to Fadipe et al (2000) is performing the conventional personnel functions of recruitment, selection, training, development, job evaluation, salaries/wages and fringe benefits administration, motivation, formation of manpower policies and the provision of data by top management for planning and decision-making, coordination of performance appraisals, promotion of organizational communication, industrial relations, personnel research and health and safety administration as well as administration of discipline.

Thus in a general sense, every organization must hire, train, pay, motivate, maintain and ultimately separate employees (Flippo, 1983) and all these functions are being carried out through the personnel department.

The above personnel functions are classified into functional and interrelated groups of personnel utilization and personnel motivation. However, Light (1982) divides these functions into six broad divisions which include employment, training and education, health and safety, joint consultation, employee services

and research. He however concluded that the six divisions are not completely self-contained.

### **Challenges Confronting Human Resource Management**

Although, education is taking to be a social service, the resources available to educational institutions is 'sine qua non' to resources available to other corporate organization. However, while the end result of resource management in education is to better the academic performance of students, corporate organization's objectives centered mainly on the maximization of profits.

However, despite the importance attached to resource availability and management, the resources provided by government for the execution of education projects are inadequate and irregular. This is revealed by the frequency of industrial actions in the education sector. Moreover, due to the general level of poverty in the country, the contributions of other stakeholders have been negligible, consequently, the best alternative is the prudent use of available resources.

Also, increase in enrolment of students in the country across levels has made the public funding of education too cumbersome and this result to unstable financing of education in Nigeria. This has also, overstretched the ability of

administrators to manage this situation effectively.

It needs to be brought to the fore the fact that it is possible to mobilize and allocate educational resources without utilizing them optimally. But it is the optimal utilization of these resources that can bring about the actualizing of the desire goals of education. These resources are to be used to produce the desired output that is to meet the expected standard for socio-economic transformation of the society at large.

The politicization of educational leadership position in Nigeria is another challenge confronting the effective utilization and management of educational resources. We have had situations of promotions and appointments which are basically not on merit.

Related to above is the policy of instability which has given birth to continuous revision of national policy on education to accommodate social, political and economic changes in the country. Nigeria educational resource management is also confronted with the problem of corruption and embezzlement which cuts across the various strata, not only in the administrative sections of the education sector, but also in institutions of learning.

Unstable academic calendar in institutions of learning has also been a bane in the management of resources across levels. The causes of this are legion, but mostly related to the problem of inability to pay workers' salaries as at when due. This has engendered incessant strikes at all levels. Other problems, according to Bamidele (2002), include lack of coordination between the labour market and the educational system culminating in a dysfunctional system. There is also the problem of staff list which talks about inventory of staff which is often substituted for manning list which would show the crucial position that must be filled for the purpose of daily operations.

The problems of favouritisms, nepotism, ethnicism and federal character abounds in the employment promotions and training of staffs which neglect merit and promotes mediocrity. Insensitivity of management to workers' needs and problems leads to labour unrests. Related to this is the inability of the management to manage workers' grievances as at when due.

A good human resource management involves not only punishing workers when they misbehave, but also rewarding them adequately for excellent performance. This may not be the situation in many organizations. Untimely payment of

workers salary, delay in the promotion of staffs, shabby treatment of workers, political victimization of worker and lack of motivation affect the morale of staffs and lead to declining productivity. This is rampant in all states of the federation. This is exacerbated by the current economic recession engendering inflation and many other economic problems.

### **Solutions to the Challenges Confronting Human Resource Management**

Having identified the challenges confronting human resource management in organizations, some solutions are hereby proffered. Since resources are scarce especially in this period of economic recession, prudent management of the available resources is highly essential.

Enrolment of students has increased astronomically without corresponding increase in funding. Government should increase their allocation to education to cater for this and more personnels needs to be recruited to avoid overstretching of the available human resources. Optimal utilization of the available resources is suggested in order to achieve the goals of education. Optimal utilization centres on teachers commitment to their duties instead of absenteeism and laziness on their job.

Merit should be accorded right priority instead of the politicization of educational leadership. Merit should also be giving prominence in the recruitment and promotion of staffs. Favouritism, nepotism and ethnic considerations should be downplayed in the recruitment, promotion and training of staffs.

National policy on education should be formulated to address current problems. It should not be subjected to changes due to political and ethnic considerations. Sensitivity to workers grievances boosts their morales and productivity. This is what leadership at all levels entails. Workers should be punished justly if they violated rules and regulations, otherwise, they should be rewarded accordingly for excellent performance. The salary and allowances of workers should not be delayed but be paid timely to boost their morales and productivity.

Above all, leaderships at all levels should be well-acquainted with human resource management because labour is an active factor of production that coordinates all other factors for productivity.

### **Conclusion**

Resource management is germane for any organization to achieve its corporate goals and objectives. Corporate organization's success

revolves around the effective and efficient management of resources at their disposal. It is a well-known fact that resources are most-often than not scarce in relation to their demand. This typifies what happens in organizations including educational institutions of learning. It now behooves on all the managers at all levels to discern different methods of managing these scarce resources to achieve the objectives of the organization. There are many problems inherent in human resource management. These problems need to be solved for effective human resource management and for the organization to achieve its goals.

### **Recommendations**

The contributions of education to national development cannot be overemphasized. Apart from reducing literacy level, producing manpower and contribute to manpower development, it is one of the major pillars of economic, political and social development of any country.

It is therefore compulsory that solutions should be advanced to curtail the problems identified in the resource management of an organization. Resource management in education may not be an easy task when compared to other organizations because education is a social service while other

organization exists for profit making. Therefore, adept management acumen is required in the management of all resources at their disposal.

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