

## **EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND PRODUCTIVITY IN NIGERIA IMPLICATION FOR NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

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### **Abstract**

*Training of workers in any organization is regarded as the engine of employees' productivity. This is because training helps to improve worker's skills, knowledge, and abilities. These reasons contributed to why in the past two decades or more, government at various levels in this country, initiated and established different training programmes such as the Nigeria Institutes of Management (NIM), the Centre for Management and Development (CMD) , the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) and a host of others to help in the development and motivation of the workers. In view of this therefore, the paper discusses the types of employees training in Nigeria, the benefit of training, the causes of low productivity ,the benefits of high productivity and proffers recommendations that can foster national transformation viz, national consciousness should be of utmost concern by workers and employers in this country for improvement in employees productivity, workers and employers should work as partners in progress, amongst others, as a way of nurturing management function that leads to national transformation in the country.*

*Keywords: Employee, Training, productivity, national transformation management function, commitment, motivation, growth*

## INTRODUCTION

Sometimes, many employees fail in an organization because their training needs are not identified and provided for as an indispensable part of management function. This is because training is the only way of developing organizations' intellectual property which in turn can be used to build employees competencies. Emphatically, employee training in an organization is regarded as the pivot of employee utilization, productivity, commitment, motivation and growth. Many scholars argue that any organization that train its' employees constantly have better outcomes in terms of productivity than those who do not. In this case, training is necessary because it creates in trainees the idea of how best organizational function and tasks could be carried out. In fact, Puke (2001) points out that an employee who has not received adequate training before being assigned with responsibilities in an organization lacks the necessary confidence with which different tasks can be performed. In this case, training is therefore considered as the means of acquiring necessary skills and traits needed to perform certain task in an organization. Accordingly, Horner (2006) opines that investment in human resources through training and development, improves individual employee and organizational capabilities

In support, Kline and Harris (2008) also points out that training in an organization help employees to acquire basic skills, required for efficient execution of functions for which they are employed. Training reduces cost of production as it increases productivity and promotes goal convenience. This is because productivity is the relationship between output generated in the cause of production and the input provided to create such output. It is the best ways of integrating inputs that make organizations reach the highest level of performance with the least expenditure of resources. Training also plays an integral role in the Socialization process of many employees. Usually, Employees enter employment relationship with many expectations and desires. When these expectations and desires are fulfilled, the employees will then be able to acclimatize themselves with work environment. The result will make the employees to be more committed and productive on the job he or she is assigned to. On the other hand, when training program fails to meet the expectations of the employees, the result is negative attitude to work. Following this scenario therefore, the importance of training as perceived by the federal government of Nigeria made her to establish many institutions to help in the management and training of employees in this country. For instance, the National Manpower Board responsible for periodic appraised of manpower requirement in all occupation and in the development and organization of in-service training for employees in both private and public sectors was established. Also, the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON) was established to provide diverse training facilities for senior man power in the country. Likewise, the Nigeria Institutes of Management (NIM), the Centre for Management Development (CMD) were also

established for manpower development, training and coordination. The Industrial Training Fund (ITF) was supposed to promote and encourage the acquisition of skills in industry and commerce with a view of indigenous trained manpower sufficient to meet the needs of the economy. Furthermore, Phillips & Phillips (2006), opine that training is redundant if it contributes little or nothing to national development. In view of this, the paper discusses the types of training, the benefits of training in an organization, the consequence of lack of training, the benefits of training and its implication to national transformation.

## TYPES OF TRAINING IN WORK ENVIRONMENT

Training in any organization can be categorized into two sections viz: informal and formal training .Informal training can also be sub-divided into:

- **On-the-job-training:** This is the type of training given to organizational employees while conducting their regular work at the same work venues. Examples of the on-the-job training according to Delinder (2005) include job rotations and transfers, coaching, monitoring and supervision. This type of training enables the employees familiarizes themselves on the job. they are assigned.
- **Off-the-job training:** Off- the job-training involve taking the employees away from their usual work place to allow all their concentration be on the training. For example, off-the-job training includes conferences, role playing to mention but a few. Armstrong (1995) argues that off-the-job training may consist of teaching or coaching by more experienced people or trainers at the desk or at the bench. Different organizations are motivated to take on different training methods for a number of reasons which may depend on the organization's strategy, goals and resources available, the needs identified at the time, and the target group to be trained (Nassazi 2013) .
- **Job rotation and transfers:** This according to Nassazi (2013) involves movements of employees from one official responsibility to another for example taking an officer in any organization from one position within the organization to another or movement of an employee from one location to another. This rotation and transfer enables employees to acquire knowledge on different operations within the organization and existing difference in the locality where the organization operates. Usually, the knowledge acquired by the employees through this method is beneficial to the organization as it may increase the competitive advantage of work in that organization
- **Orientation, Coaching and monitoring:** This method of training is usually applied to new employees. It involves getting new employees acquainted and trained on the new job within an organization. During this process of orientation, the workers are exposed to

different undertakings such as, the nature of work they do, their responsibilities, how to take their tasks and what is generally expected of them by the organization. Other aspect of orientation and coaching according to Harrison (2000) include general overview of the organizational work environment such as working systems, technology, and office layout, briefing about the existing organizational culture, health and safety issues, working conditions, processes and procedures to mention but a few.

- **Conferences and workshops:** It involves presentation of persons to a wide audience. It is more cost effective than the other methods as it involves training of group employees on a particular topic at the same time with a large audience. This method is however disadvantageous because it is not easy to ensure that all individual trainees understands the topic at hand as it may be difficult for all the trainees to follow the trainer at the same pace during the training sessions. This is because focus may be directed on a particular trainees who may be a fast learner at the expense of others which may lead to under training

## FORMAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES

In this type of training programme, employees are released from their work environment to the place of training which usually may be or may not be in their work places. In formal training programme, courses for the training are designed, defined and known and all the contents of training, durations and details about the training are clear to both the organization and the personnel to be trained (Harrison 2000). Unlike informal trainings and programmes, formal training is planned earlier and is used for evaluation. Employees may undertake these courses and programmes off the work environment for certain duration of time or alternatively on a part-time basis while at work. The programme can sometimes be held within the organization (in-house) or off the job. Off the job is said to be more effective since it makes employees to be away from their work places so as to concentrate fully on the training (Harvey, 2002)

Following these assertions therefore, it is important to note that training programmes in any organization has a lot of benefits. Such benefits according to Kamoche (2002) include the followings:

- **High morale:** Training increases employees' confidence and moral to work. Training enable employees to be competent on the job and such competency result to high productivity.
- **Lower cost of production:** Training eliminate risks because trained personnel will be able to make better and economic use of material and equipment thereby reducing and

avoiding waste of resources; Lower turnover and a sense of security at the workplace which in turn reduces labour turnover and absenteeism;

- **Management of changes:** Training helps to manage changes by increasing the understanding and involvement of employees in the change process and also provide the employees the skills and abilities needed to adjust to new situations;
- **Provide recognition:** Training enhances responsibility and the possibility of increased pay and promotion; it also helps to improve the quality of staff in work environment.

However, any organization that neglect training as an indispensable factor in improving the efficiency and dedication of staff on the job may find it difficult to increase its productivity. This is because absence of training, whether formal or informal, makes employees to produce at higher cost per unit thereby resulting to low productivity. Furthermore, Nwachukwu (1988) maintains that apart from training there are a lot of factors that causes low productivity in Nigeria. Among these factors are:

#### ***Economic Factor***

The economic factor deals with the rewards system employed in most work environment. Puke (2001) points out that if there is no correlation between efforts expended by employees and the reward they receive from the employer they are bound to withhold a measure of productivity in order to restore equity. In the same vein, if the employer refuses to compensate the employee adequately the attainment of organizational goal by the employee may be defeated (Ahuja 2006). Thus, the commitments and goal congruency of the organization will result to low productivity.

#### ***Technological Factor:***

Low productivity in Nigeria has been perpetuated by poor technology. In fact, there is death of new methods and techniques of production in the country. This is because Nigeria lacks indigenous technology to suit local conditions. Many production activities require foreign technology whose components are not easily sourced (Puke 2001). Thus, the inability to obtain such technological components is responsible for low productivity level of labour.

#### ***Socio-cultural Factor:***

In Nigeria, there is a low level of discipline among many works. This is because bureaucrats, private and public employers as well as employees are characterized by lack of national consciousness. Many of them lack sense of belonging in their organization. In public service for instance, government has often treated employees not as partakers who have a stake in the

success or achievement of the system, but as mere agent who are employed and assigned to earn a living and or to reduce crime and social vices in the society (Peter 1994). In fact, many workers both in public and private sectors do not share in the well being of their organization, rather, they respond to their organization as external bodies from which they are alienated. These attitudes have a lot of negative influence on workers commitment, dedication to duty and productivity.

***Human Factors:***

Poor human resources management according to Harrison (2000) is a bane to productivity in Nigeria. This is because most organizations heads lack basic tenants of management principle especially the human relation approach. Most managers and bureaucrats who rose through low rank to the top organizational hierarchy are often not ready to delegate responsibilities and authorities to their subordinates (Groen 2006). Furthermore, the personalization and monopolization of offices by bureaucrats and managers dampen employees' commitment to the realization of productivity objective. Also modes of recruitment especially in the civil service are based on who know man, nepotism, as well as favoritism. Appointments are also based on primordial considerations instead of merit. These types of attitude retard disciplinary action when the need arises (Peter 1994). Also, when many public sector organizations are over staffed because of favoritism, it makes the optimization of labour difficult and productivity warning.

***Financial Factor:***

In the financial sector, wage rate is a major factor that affects labour productivity. In fact, money has been identified as the major motivator depending on the needs of particular employee, the standard of living and the overall level of development of the society (Peter 1994). A good financial reward on jobs will attract a well trained and qualified employee and increase productivity. On the other hand, if employees who are not qualified educationally or inexperienced earn more or about the same amount with the educated personnel, it will lead to demoralization, frustration and even withdrawal from job by those educated (Parry 1996).

***Power supply:***

The poor state of electricity in the country has greatly influenced production process. The recent incessant power failure does not only reduce productivity but causes damage to machines and losses of vital information needed in production process. Such losses according to Mali (1998) have adverse affect on productivity in this country.

### ***Under-employment:***

Under-employment is a situation where employees after training are employed outside their areas of specialization. For example, lawyers, accountants, engineers, employed to teach in the classroom or a historian employed to work in the bank is the act of under-employment. The existence of such anomalies affects the morale and attitude of such persons and therefore reduces productivity level.

Many achievement oriented studies about Nigerian workers shows that some Nigerian workers are generally lazy, slow, reluctant to act, unconcerned and deceitful in their approaches to work (Mali, 1998). This attitude makes some dislike hearing about efficiency, dedication, honesty, competency, determination and productivity. However, despite the above exhibited characteristics, the dream of Nigeria employers for years has been on how to attain the level of high productivity. This is because high productivity is bedrock through which national transformation and other economic activities revolves

Wondell (1997) pointed out that for a county to achieve a high level of economic growth and development, high level of productivity has to be attained. In fact, every individual employer, organization and country is always eager to ascertain the current level of its productivity so as to compare past with current performance and assess whether its productivity level is stagnant, increasing or decreasing. The result from this assessment aids the country determines improved performance in future. The significance of high productivity therefore originates from major position that influences the social and economic activities of the country. Hence, for such goals and aspirations to be attained, collaborative efforts of both employers and employees in the country are required to attain high levels of productivity. This is because high productivity according to Sevcik (2006), contributes to the following:

### ***Improvement in Employee Performance:***

The improvement in employees' performance in any organization requires financial motivation translated into high wage. Usually, high wage leads to high purchasing power, while low wage results to low purchasing power. Low purchasing power among workers usually results to deprivation, which breeds aggression.

On the other hand, a relatively deprived worker perceives inequality which is transferred into the production process, thereby leading to stall productivity (Mali 1998). Furthermore, workers who receive high wage and other incentives necessary for motivation will have morale and attitude to job.

***Control of Inflation:***

High productivity helps to control inflation through increase in supply of goods and services. These increases reduce the unit cost of production as products are relatively cheaper in local and competitive markets (Parry1996). The dual advantages have the propensity to reduce domestic inflation especially when inflation is cost induced. Usually, many employers in Nigeria produces below capacity because of high process and cost of raw materials, high cost of hiring qualified manpower, with required technical and professional competence to improve productivity. Reduced costs are process through which high productivity can be used to control inflation.

***Investment:***

High productivity induces investment (local and foreign) and transfer of technology to stimulate growth. Sustainable growth usually manifest as a result of sufficient supply of goods and services which leads to the attainment of self-sufficiency in food and other commodities needed for production purposes (Harrison 2000).

***Improve Standard of living:***

Improvement in the national productivity can positively affect income, poverty level and overall national development. This is because countries with high productivity level everything being equal pays higher wages, and embarks on the provision of infrastructural development in the country than a country with dwindling productivity. With high income, reduced inflation and adequate supply of goods and services resulting from high productivity, there is usually an improvement in the standard of living of individuals and groups in the society (Parry 1996).

***Improved balance of payment:***

High productivity is a base through which a country's balance of payment position can be improved. A rise in external trade that results from high productivity improves a country's external reserves. Also, a country that records a favorable balance of payment will attract both foreign and domestic investors which further raise investment, expand production and create employment opportunities' leading to overall increase in productivity and national transformation.

**PRODUCTIVITY AND NATIONAL TRANSFORMATION**

Usually, national transformation occurs when there is structural change in every aspects of the economy. This change according to Gattiker (1995), is suppose to bring about a rebirth in the



structure and way of live of those involved in making the country conducive for all and sundry in different societies. Transformation according to Asobie, (2012) is a fundamental shift in the deep orientation of a person, an organization, or a society. It is the situation that makes the country and individuals' conscientious to new ways and actions that result to national transformation. National transformation is also referred to the ability to inspire and motivate followers to achieve results greater than originally contemplated, for internal rewards. Usually, national transformation encourages hard work and provides a vision for the future. It makes individuals and organizations invest their time and effort to ensure that high productivity is attained. This is because high productivity in the pivot through which national transformation is achieved. Hence, for national transformation to be sustained, high sense of patriotism, dedication to work, transparency and prudence have to be exhibited by all and sundry in the society.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

In order for Nigeria to meet the yearnings and aspirations of high productivity and national transformation, the following recommendations and suggestions are proffered.

Firstly, transparency and national consciousness should be the utmost concern of employees and employers in Nigeria. This is because if the workers and employers realize that this country belongs to all, their attitude and morale towards work and neighborliness will change and that will lead to higher productivity and hence, national transformation.

Secondly, Governments' at various levels should make sure that the workers and employers work as partners in progress whereby what is due for workers in terms of wages and salaries and other incentives are paid to them promptly, while workers on the other hand, reciprocate such gesture through hard work to improve the productivity at their work place.

Thirdly, employment opportunities should be spread and appointment based on merit instead of nepotism and sectionalism. If the attitude and culture of Nigerians are changed towards making this a reality, productivity and national transformation will be a thing of the past.

Fourthly, right persons should be put in right places to enhance productivity. That is, the rate of under-employment should be addressed with much concern. Enough jobs should be created in Nigeria to make sure that people who are employed in different occupations are employed in their areas of specialization. This will increase productivity and reduce laziness. Also hard work with reward policy has to be adopted to encourage other workers to increase their productivity level. This if adopted will lead to structural development and national transformation.

Finally, regular training programme should be organized for workers at different levels of employment. This is because regular training will lead to positive attitude to work which

invariable will result to a change in productivity and national transformation. Also, effort should be intensified by both public and private employers to train their works on the use of modern technology which can be used to produce Nigerian-made-goods that are equitable to foreign goods. If this happens, output will be expanded, and employment increased, thereby resulting to overall national development and transformation.

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