

## **CONTEMPORARY ISSUES OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

**Ikati Lawrence**

Department: Vocational/Technology Education,  
Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island,  
Amassoma, Bayelsa State, Nigeria  
E-Mail: [Juwar1970@gmail.Com](mailto:Juwar1970@gmail.com)

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### **ABSTRACT**

Resource scarcity is a problem experienced by virtually all human organizations. The Nigeria education sector has endured consistently declining levels of federal government funding over the last two decades. This comes in the face of ever increasing inflation rates and a growing demand for formal education. Unfortunately, this zeal for providing education as a social service in Nigeria has not been matched with a zeal for funding it. The under-funding of Nigeria education has been made worse by recent global economic crises for educational programmes to be implemented. The resources needed to accomplish this feat are, to say the least lacking. This study assesses the management of physical and human resources in Nigeria post-primary institutions. Its purpose was to highlight the problem of physical and human resources inadequacy in the education sector in Nigeria and the importance of achieving managerial effectiveness through the use of prudential measures to facilitate the achievement of education objectives, particularly at the secondary school level. Availability of funds in the management and maintenance of school resources is indispensable but the management and utilization of the funds is very crucial. There must also be a commitment of the school administrator and other school personnel to maintain the resources at their disposal. This will be effective if all concerned

imbibe the maintenance culture. This paper recommends the exploration of prudent measures for managing existing educational resources

**Keywords:** Effective Management, Human Resource Management, Secondary Education

## **INTRODUCTION**

Resources scarcity is a central focus of economics. This is because resources (physical and human) are scarce in supply relative to the various uses to which they can be applied. Economics has therefore evolved to establish how to best apply limited resources to achieve the greatest advantage. This formula applies to post-primary educational institutions as organizations. The best alternative in the effective management of education is prudence in the use of those human resources which are available. When a given level of resources is utilized efficiently, more services are provided and more goods produced. Such economy in the use of resources begins with the adequate exploration of all sources of relevant resources. This is mark of efficiency in management. Therefore, the focus of this paper is to highlight the problem of human resources inadequacy in the education sector in Nigeria and the importance of achieving managerial effectiveness through the use of prudential measures to facilitate the achievement of education objectives, particularly at the secondary level.

### **Concept of Educational Resources**

The rapid increase in staff and the plethora of new rules and regulations, the complexity of HRM has grown enormously. New approaches and an increase in specialization are inescapable if the task is to be done satisfactorily. Evolving from the notion that staff are generally interchangeable to a view that trained

individuals represent resources for the solution of sector challenges and must be managed accordingly, HRM today is making extensive use of concepts and instruments developed within and for the private sector. Bratton and Gold (1999) defined HR as that part of the management process that specializes in the management of people in work organizations. HRM emphasizes that employees are critical to achieving sustainable competitive advantage, that human resources practices need to be integrated with the corporate strategy, and that human resource specialists help organizational controllers to meet both efficiency and equity objectives. Human Resource Management is the strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets for the effectiveness and achievement of the organization's goals and objectives. In a school system, the overall goal of the Human Resource Management is to see that the students receive educational services through the effort of the school personnel. (Oyedeki, 2000).

This implied that the personnel management services in the school systems are directed towards the attainment of educational objectives (student's academic performance). In this regard, it becomes necessary that management must recruit adequate and qualified staff so that they will be willing and able to render effective and efficient educational services to the students. For this reason, adequate and qualified teachers must be supplied to face the task set for them in the school system. For this to happen/certain procedures and steps must be taken to provide the necessary services in the schools (Tijani 2011). These include: staff recruitment and selection, staff training and development programmes, compensation and staff welfare and finally the performance appraisals.

**Human Resource Management:** Management of people is no different from the management of other resources of organizations. In practice, what makes it different is the nature of the resource, people. One set of perspective views the human being as potentially a creative and complex resource whose behaviour is influenced by many diverse factors originating from either the individual or the surrounding environment. Organizational behaviour theorists, for example, suggest that the behavior and performance of the 'human resource' is a function of at least four variables: ability, motivation, role perception and situational contingencies. Another set of perspectives emphasizes the problematic nature of employment relations (Watson, 1986). Human Resource Management is the strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets for the effectiveness and achievement of the organization's goals and objectives. In a school system, the overall goal of the Human Resource Management is to see that the students receive educational services through the effort of the school personnel (Oyedeji, 2000).

The human resources differ from other resources the employer uses, partly because individuals are endowed with varying levels of ability (including aptitudes, skills and knowledge), with personality traits, gender, role perception and differences in experience, and partly as a result of differences in motivation and commitment. However, human resources management in secondary education does not rely on effective utilization of staff and students of the school environment but complete harnessing of the totality of energies, capability, talent, belief system, social character disposition and hidden potentials of individuals geared towards achieving school objectives and goals.

## **Scope of Human Resources Management (HRM)**

According to Peretomode, (2001) identified the following as scope of HRM;

- Work analysis
- Manpower planning
- Recruitment
- Selection and placement of staff
- Orientation and socialization
- Compensation/ maintenance
- Appraisal of staff performance
- Employee education, training and development
- Labour relation
- Collective bargaining
- Personal health and safety
- Employee conduct and discipline
- Legal aspects of employment

The above items are not completely within the scope of school administrator; rather some of the items are exclusively within the scope of supervisory government agencies, all streamed to properly manage the human element in the school environment

## **The Role of the School Principal in Human Resource Management**

The principal is the leader of the school and he/she is expected to perform several roles as may be desired to achieve school objectives. Some of which include; assuring instruction aligned to state academic content standards, maintaining continuous improvement in the building, designing instruction for student success, developing partnerships with parents and the community, and nurturing a culture where each individual feels valued. In performing these and other roles, the principal' success is relied

on the support of staff, students, which is the human resource. School principals are the most important employee in the school level where by their play a role as a leader, administrator and school managers. Principals are the highest officer in the schools, appointed by the Ministry of Education, responsible on what happen in the school and its environment. The importance of resources in the management of education cannot be over emphasized. It is not possible to deliver effective education without some level of relevant resources. This has been highlighted by various education analysts and professionals. As observed by Nchor (1998), instructional resources provide a solid basis for conceptual thinking; increase the propensity of the brain to retain information; make learning more interesting; and take care of differences that may exist among learners. Finance, as a resource, plays a crucial role in the development of education (Kosemani, 1995). This supports Fadipe's (1990) opinion that proper funding and a good supply of qualified teachers can greatly improve the facility index of a school.

In addition to all these benefits, it is important to note that the quality and quantity of resources available to any education system provides a basis for the assessment of the managerial abilities of an education manager. This is because even the most resourceful manager requires a resource base upon which to exhibit resourcefulness. For instance, a school principal in a rural school with unfurnished classrooms, a large enrolment, poor supply of instructional materials and a grossly inadequate number of trained teachers cannot be said to have a good resource base. His counter-part in a sub-urban area, who is managing a school with a similar teacher-pupil ratio, well-furnished classrooms, and a regular and good supply of instructional materials, has a better resource base. Efforts at resourcefulness may yield better

results for the latter because of an improved resource base. The responsibility of managing human resources is in four distinct areas;

**Management of School Environment:** This includes ordering supplies, Delegating responsibilities to teachers, ensuring proper record keeping and setting the school daily for academic work. According to Piltch & Fredericks (2005), effective school head uses knowledge of the social, cultural, leadership, and political dynamics of school community to cultivate a positive learning environment

**Strengthening External Communication Mechanism:** Effective school heads are good at communicating with teachers and students in order to building strong relationships because they value their feedback and ideas they receive. Effective communication can connect a school head to teachers and students that is crucial to meet school goals (Rechard, 2008). Proper and adequate report of school activities to relevant supervisory authorities, creating conducive working relationship with affiliated organizations and agencies and making school records available for easy access and inputs. The principal must also ensure that educational policies are implemented and communicated to authorities for show of compliance. Communicating shared goals; monitoring and providing feedback on the teaching learning process and promoting school-wide professional development are influenced and stimulated among others by the school principal.

**School-Community Relations:** The ultimate goal of a community relations program is to improve the quality of education for all children. Cooperation between parents and educators be maintained. This cooperation should enhance the success of each

student's school experience. The demands of school-community relations involve working with community councils, community development associations, parent-teacher associations, and other local organizations that have an interest in the schools (Cody, 1998). The goal for such relations is to encourage community support for the school, for teacher subsidies, facilities construction, and maintenance or for the schooling process encouraging parents to ensure that their children do homework, send their children to school. Generally, the school utilizes the community resources for teaching and learning purposes and at the same time derives its curriculum from the community. The opinion that school community relationship have significant impact on the provision and maintenance of school facilities, school discipline, teachers job performance, academic achievement of students and overall success of the schools. This clearly shows that school community relationship exists and helps greatly in the development of education.

**Student Relations:** It is truism that the school system cannot exist without students. Therefore, school administrators major role and responsibility is to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of students since all packages are to prepare and transform them

**Instructional Supervision:** The school administrator is responsible to organize both staff and students for the smooth implementation of the instructional programme. This process involves the teaching requirement as provided in the syllabus and provision of right tools for teaching and learning. Other instructional supervisory functions include time table preparation and ensuring proper written of lesson notes.



**Promoting Student Achievement:** from several research works, it is found that school heads influence student achievement by shaping the school's instructional climate and instructional organization.

### **Role of Human Resource Management in Education**

Human resource management in education is aimed at developing both teaching and non-teaching staff, students, the immediate community and other physical facilities that enhances teaching and learning in the school environment. Some of the roles of human resource management in school include;

**Operational Role:** This role of school administration include planning, controlling of human and capital resources of the school as well as communicating effectively to members of the school community. A wide range of activities typically associated with the day-to-day management of people as provided by laws and regulations must be performed efficiently.

**Staff Relations Role:** Cordial relationship with staff within the school community enable staff to be constantly informed of the progress being made in the school. Staff should be encouraged to participate in planning and decision making process in the school. Administration should develop concern for staff in terms of feelings, interest, needs and emotions and treating them as such with fairness and respect.

**Motivational Role:** Motivational role includes reward on Job Performance of staff and students which will further encourage staff to be more dedicated to duty. It is of essence and great importance for a school administrator to and government to put modalities to appreciate excellence.

**Staff Development Role:** Staff development is well established as a positive force in the improvement of education and a key element in human development efforts. In addition to training in effective instructional pedagogy, staff development programs can assist staff in developing enhanced skills in other areas that impact the quality of instruction.

**Rationale for Managing Human Resources in the School** The need for managing human resources in the education industry cannot be understood

- **Need for Achieving the Objectives for the System:** Just like any other human organization, education enterprise has basic objectives for its establishment for this reason, the human element within the organization should be well managed and developed if such predetermined objectives must be achieved.
- **Need for Effective Performance and Productivity:** Researches and evidences have shown that effective management and development of human elements within an organization through mobilization can bring forth effective performance and high productivity, poor management or utilization of human resources, will lead to wastage and poor performance.
- **Need for Improvement on Standards:** There is no doubt that when human resources are well articulated, properly managed and developed in the system, the standard of the system would be improved. In other words, if the human elements are made to improve their orientations in handling educational matters and issues their students and standard would be improved.
- **Need to Ensure Effective Teaching-learning Outcome:** Teachers in the education industry must aim at ensuring

effective teaching-learning outcome towards realizing this teachers' must be effectively trained, developed and managed, of course, since the primary goal of teaching is to bring about learning, Teachers in the system must aim at ensuring that effective teaching learning outcome takes place.

- **Need to Prevent Wastage:** Wastage takes place when proper and good maintenance culture is not considered in the scheme of things within an educational system. In other words, good and effective management and development of human resources in the education industry can only prevent wastage to take place.

- **Need to Improve Performance:** It rewards good performance of teachers, students and the school community to motivate staff and students discipline as corrective measure

### **Administrative Challenges of Human Resource Management in Secondary School**

The school is a formal organization like every other organization. An individual has to take responsibility of functions and activities of the school system towards achieving aims and objectives of the organization. In the secondary school system, the principal is the head of the school. It is the duty of the principal who is ably assisted by other heads to oversee the running of the school in terms of educational planning, staff and student's welfare, development and implementation of educational programmes, provision of proper instruction, discipline, school-community relations and several other functions. In the spirit of under-taken these functions, the following challenges are encountered;

**Organizational Strategy:** The first administrative challenge is the strategies on the vision and mission of the school, what objectives

are set to actualize at the short and long run. Having clear lines of administration and communication with staff and students are key in managing human beings in the school environment.

**Diversity and Inclusion:** Another challenge is the multigenerational workforce. Employees between the ages of seventeen and sixty-eight have different values and different expectations of their jobs. Any school administrator who tries to manage these staff from varying generations will likely have some challenges. Even compensation preferences are different among generations. The concept focuses on the attachment of value to individual differences in the school environment which is made up of heterogeneous groups. The school management must ensure that no group of staff has advantage or disadvantage over the other. Besides he/she must also ensure that the productivity, creativity and commitment of the workforce are maximized while meeting the needs of their diverse interests.

**Ethics:** ethics is necessary when considering challenges of human resources. Schools have the responsibility of designing codes of ethics and developing policies for ethical decision making and as well as ensure that laid down rules and regulations are adhered.

**Talent Management:** Knowledge management focuses on identification of employees with intellects and expertise and how to channel same towards organizational effectiveness. In the information age, knowledge rather than physical assets or financial resources is the key to competitiveness. As pointed out by Mecklenberg et al (1999) knowledge management allows companies to capture, apply and generate value from their employees' creativity and expertise. Consequently the role of School administrators is to ensure that the school has the intellectual capital it needs in the right proportion and at the appropriate time.

This is the process of appraising staff performances and identifying their key skills and competence that need development or training to improve their skills for better performance. It involves providing development programme and training courses that are suitable for the programme. The success of educational organization hinges on the strength and quality of the staff members. There is need to change through training and to improve and grow in competence. This can be done through in-service training, conference, workshop and seminars.

## **CONCLUSION**

School administrators have the responsibility to ensure equity in the management of human beings in the school environment. If equity is achieved, a sense of belonging is established resulting in commitment to achieving school objectives. Though like in other organizations where training, selection, promotion, recruitment is exclusively handled by government, school administrators are left with the day to day activities of the school system while reports are made to supervisory agencies of government for action.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

The following suggestions will help in the management of human resources in the school organization;

- School administrators should be appointed on merit and experience as task of managing school affairs is huge.
- Government should provide the enabling tools and resources for school management team to function effectively
- On-the-work training programmes should be provided for staff
- There should be constant orientation programmes for staff and students

- Rules and regulations guiding staff and students should be strictly adhered
- School management team should ensure equal treatment for all
- Motivational models should be applied to encourage excellence

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