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Man Power Development in the Global Business Environment: Relevance to Industrial Technology Education Students in Nigeria

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Abstract

Manpower development or human resources development is an ongoing process that analyze, forecast and projects on organizations future manpower requirements. This is an important factor because there is an increasing interconnectedness and independency among the worlds, regions, nations, government, businessmen, institutions and individuals which characterized the global economic environment. Hence, people have been found to be an important asset in the paradigm shift to the knowledge-based economy. Therefore, effective training of these individuals would lead to high level of productivity in business. Various training approaches such as vestibule training, on-the-job training, and off-the-job training among others are essentials in man power development process.

Keywords: Manpower Development, Global Economic Environment Globalization, On-the-Job-Training, vestibule training poverty alleviation

Introduction

In the contemporary global situation, education especially at the higher level should attempt to shift the minds of learners to realize that learning is not just the acquisition of knowledge and skills, but a human quality and disposition to cope with human uncertain world, a complex life style and ever changing world environment. In the light of this exposition, the fast changing world with its rapidly transforming social, economic, political and technological factors, bring about constant modifications in the internal and external business environment. Training and development of company personnel, through its effectiveness and influence on the behaviour,

skills, potential capabilities of the employees, acts as a formidable tool for dealing successfully with the complex nature of challenges that confront the organization.

Training should not only be viewed as a means of fostering the growth of individual employees but as an integral part of organizational growth. However, the quantity and quality of training and development in organization and by extension the global business environment is influenced by factors which include:

- a. The degree of internal change (new processes, new markets, etc).
- b. The degree of change in the external environment (e.g emerging technologies, new legislation, etc.)
- c. Availability of suitable skills within the existing work-force
- d. Adaptability of existing work force.
- e. The extent to which the organization supports the ideal of internal career development.
- f. The commitment of senior management to training as an essential part of economic success.
- g. The extent to which management see training as a motivating factor in work.
- h. Knowledge, skills and attitudes of those responsible for carrying out the training.

Global Business Environment: Prospect And Challenges

The concept of globalization has not only created a global village where hitherto stand-alone nations have now been integrated into one business entity but has also changed the ways people do business. Globalization can then be defined as the increasing interconnectedness and interdependence among the world's regions, nations, governments, business, institutions, communities and individuals. It fosters the advancement of "global mentally" due to its acceleration in the use of information technology to create and strengthen financial and economic integration. Great opportunities have been thrown up in various sectors of the economy. There is free access to business information and the like. Several concepts such as e-mail, e-commerce, e-business, e-governance, etc have evolved out of globalization. (Omonedo, 2008).

Along with the need to expand the frontier of trade and business, comes the challenge of how to secure investment funds and create enabling business environment. There is the need to build and develop both new and existing infrastructures. There are greater challenges of how to project local industries in the developing economies such as in Nigeria. Today, technological advancement of the developed nations is a challenge to the developing nations.

Whereas the developed nations have access to cheap investment funds, the developing nations are grasping with debt burdens. Due to the availability of skilled manpower in the advanced nations, goods and services are produced at relatively cheap costs, which therefore translate to lower selling prices. Though, there is abundance of natural resources in the Africa-sub-region, this has not translated into the expected wealth creation and better living condition for the people. The advanced nations have instead used these natural resources in their raw state, to refine/transform and export back to the African sub-region. (Omonedo, 2008).

In Nigeria, for instance, in order to encourage the development of the economy, the Federal Government has variously introduced some measures to attract foreign investors. The problem is, how do Nigerians guarantee the safety of such investment vis-à-vis the appropriateness of the repatriation of accrued returns on such investment? How are local industries to be protected against the dumping of the cheap imported goods (Ake, 1989). There has also been policy drive towards encouraging private sector participation in business that was hitherto undertaken by government. Key amongst this is the liberation of the economic environment including the oil sector, communication, housing, energy, and all kinds of every operation. All of these no doubt has direct relationship with the global economic environment. Also, the National Economic Empowerment Development Strategies (NEEDS), was by no means one of the direct responses to the achievement of Global Millennium Development Goals. (MDGs) now Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Characteristics of Global Business Environment

According to Samiesha, (2021) global business environment is characterized by the followings:

1. **Totality of external forces:** Business environment is sum total of all those failures/forces which are available outside the business and over which the business based control. It is the group of many such forces that is why, it nature in of totality.

2. **Specific and General Forces:** The forces present outside the business can be general and specific.
Specific: These forces affect the firms of an industry separately e.g customers, suppliers, competitive firms investors.
3. **Inter-relatedness:** The different factors of business environments are co-related for example if there is a change in import and export policy with the incoming government. In this case, the coming new government to power and change in the import – export policy are political and economic changes respectively. Thus, a change in one factor affects the other.
4. **Dynamic nature:** As it is clear that environment is a mixture of many factors and changes in some or the other factors continue to take place therefore, it is said that business environment is dynamic.
5. **Uncertainty:** Nothing can be said with any amount certainly about factors of business environment because these factors continue to change quickly. Professional people who determine the business strategy take into consideration the likely change before hand, But this is a risky job. For example technical changes (emerging technologies) are very rapid. Nobody can anticipate the possibility of these swift technical changes. Anything can happen anytime the same in the situation of fashion.
6. **Complexity:** environment comprises many factors. All these factors are related to each other and therefore, their individual effect on the business cannot easily be recognized. This is perhaps the reason it is difficult for business to face these factors.
7. **Relatively:** Business environment is related to local conditions and this is the reason as to why the business environment happens to be different in different countries and different in the same country at different geo graphical locations.

The following are some of the challenges inherit in the global business world:

1. Rapid changes in Technology (computerization).
2. Rapid changes in the Monetary Policy (interest rates, inter-bank rates, and other prudential guidelines) suggesting that managers and workers need to respond appropriately with new skills, attitude and knowledge.
3. Reduced demand for local goods and services.

4. Increase in the incidence of fraud especially cyber crimes and the role of employers to prevent and control malpractice from all possible sources.
5. Job losses occasioned by use of mechanized system such as computers, money counters, ATM in banking, etc.
6. Security of business information made available through the internet.
7. Lack of adequate infrastructure in the developing nations to tap into the gains provided by the internet and other on-line business transaction processes.

Concept of Manpower Development

Business executives believe that people are most important assets in the organization and that investment in people leads to improved business results, and thus contribute to the wealth of the nation (Omonedo,2008).

Manpower development is a process that seeks to optimize an organizations usage of its human resources. It requires an integrated approach that addresses multi-dimensional aspects employees, ranging from enhancing technical and interpersonal skills to creative thinking and leadership. Organizations with high productivity level have made manpower development an integral part of their business culture (Srinivasom, 2018). In such business culture, manpower development is an ongoing process that analyzes forecasts and projects organizations future manpower requirements. Quite often, when people speak of infrastructure, it is for the benefit of the people and business, it is forgotten that the people must be developed, at least, to appreciate the infrastructure provided and how to put them into proper and beneficial use.

A nation that attracts, retains, and develops the most competent and productive people (manpower) are likely to enjoy a real competitive advantage over others that do not attract, retain and develop the most competent manpower in a globalized world of business (Chalofarky 1988). Effective training therefore, enables employees to learn to do their job better and perform more proficiently. With increasing advance technology, continuous training of personnel has become essential to the success of the organization. Companies increasingly need to provide opportunities for the continuous development of employees not only in their present job, but also to develop their capabilities for jobs with which may be entrusted in future.

Training is the systematic process of enhancing the job related skills, attitude and knowledge of personnel for the purpose of improving individuals and organizational performance, while development on the other hand is “an unfolding process carried on as a form of growth and maturation. It is a long term educational process, utilizing a systematic and organized procedure by which manpower personnel learn conceptual and theoretical knowledge for general purpose.

Effective manpower training and development therefore leads to:

- a. Establishment of a sound relationship between the worker and the job, the optimum man task relationship.
- b. Upgrade of skills and prevention of obsolescence
- c. Development of healthy and constructive attitudes
- d. Increase productivity
- e. Preparation of employees for future
- f. Reduction in labour turnovers and absenteeism
- g. Reduction in cost of production
- h. Enhancement of employees’ confidence and morale.

Hindrances to Manpower Development

- i. Management attitude- always seen as a luxury
 - ii. Nomination of wrong personnel for training
 - iii. Lack of funds
 - iv. Lack of trained trainers
 - v. Gender discrimination
 - vi. Lack of access to scholarship
 - vii. Emphasis on technical training
 - viii. ill-equipped library and educational institutions
 - ix. Monopolistic tendency of trained personnel.
- Reluctance to pass knowledge to others.

Tools for Manpower Development in Organization

Numerous methodologies and techniques have been employed in the field of manpower training and development. They are categorized into the following groups:

i. Lectures

This method entails an instructor communicating his ideals, concepts and theories directly to a group of recipients. This is very economical and widely used. This is so because a large number of people can be trained simultaneously saving man hours and money-some forms of ornamentation including slides and overhead projectors, video, tapes, motion pictures, reading lists, closed circuit Tv have been employed as part of modern-day lecturers armoury.

ii. On-the-job training

On-the-job training is widely used. The recent trainee used the machines and tools that will be used once the training is completed. Although this programme is relatively simple and fairly economical if not handled properly, the costs can be high in damage machinery, unsatisfied customers and poorly taught workers. This means that trainees must be carefully selected and trained. The trainee should be well-versed with effective training techniques and well motivated (Lawal, 2006).

iii. Apprenticeship Training

Apprentice training combined both on-the-job and off-the-job training here, the apprentice commits oneself to a periods of training and learning that involves both formal classroom learning and practical on-the-job experience Duration vary between 2 and 10 years depending upon the complexities of the trade being learnt. When undergoing apprenticeship, the trainee is usually paid a stipend which is less than the salary of the skilled worker.

This approach calls for the cooperation of the employer, trainers at work place and in Vocational Schools, government agencies and trade unions. One weakness that may be identified in this form of training is that the period of apprenticeship is predetermined and does not allow for individual differences in learning time.

iv. Off-the-job Training

With the exception of apprenticeship, vestibule training and on-the-job training, all other forms of training are grouped under the umbrella term “off- the-job training” irrespective of whether the training is conducted in classroom, vocational schools, or elsewhere. Although there are a wide range of off-the-jobs methods, the most frequently used ones

are the conference/discussions, programmed instruction, computer-assisted and simulation approaches (Lawal, 2006).

v. Vestibule Training

Here, the working environment is stimulated as closely as possible for the trainee so that his training experience resembles the work that the trainee is shortly going to be called on to perform. For example, a data processing trainee working on data that are close to the real data, or a machine under the supervision of an experienced worker. The idea is that the trainee learns in conditions stimulated to the real situation until the individual has picked up well and can move on to taking up the task individually (Nongo, 2005).

Vi. Orientation

This method of manpower development could be said to be an integral part of the recruitment experience in that once an employee has been found appointable, it is expected that such an employee needs to be positively oriented in line with the culture, vision and aspiration of the organization for effective discharge of function. And since employee function in an organization is basically affected by individual perception of the organization vis-à-vis the rules and principles that exist in the organization. It therefore follows that, an employee undergoes formal and informal orientation in a place of work (Lawal, 2006).

While the formal orientation focuses on job specification and occupational demands placed on the employee, the informal orientation involves the social interaction that takes place in the place of work which could either boost productivity or be detrimental to it (Koontz, O'Donnel and Weihrich, 1980). Orientation therefore, as a method of manpower development is quite indispensable because it helps in boosting the productivity of workers which is needed for competing in the global market of the 21st century.

Vii. Committee/Work Group Method

This method entails manpower development through the involvement of employees in meetings, committees and work group discussions geared towards injecting inputs in form of decision making as regards solving organizational problems. This method is quite indispensable, especially in the aspect of training employees for managerial functions leading organizational units.

Problems of Manpower Development in Nigeria

i. Colonial Experience:

There have been several arguments regarding the distortions in manpower development of national growth in Nigeria as a result of colonialism which was fashioned towards economic exploitation (Ekpo, 1989; Ake, 2001; and Dauda, 2003). It could be recalled that the advent of colonialism led to the integration of the Nigerian economy into the world capitalist system thereby placing minimum premium on labour when compared to other factors of production. This poor performance of indigenous labour by the colonial government, no doubt, has persisted in the post-colonial Nigerian State. As a result, this problem accounts for the lack of adequate attention given to labour as a critical part of the production process in Nigeria.

ii. Poor Political Leadership:

Closely related to the problem of colonial experience as a problem of manpower development in Nigeria is poor political leadership which is further deepening the problem of manpower development in Nigeria. This factor has manifested itself in poor funding of education over the years (Baikie, 2002), disparity or class in manpower development between children of the rich and that of the poor (Omedia, 2006).

iii. Poor Manpower Planning:

This problem is associated with the poor data base that is needed in Nigeria both in the rural and urban centres. This problem no doubt constitute a major hindrance on effective manpower development in Nigeria(Baikie, 2002) and (Oku, 2003).

Relevance of Manpower Development to Industrial Technology Education

As individuals have already seen, various approaches and methods exist for training and development in an organization. The technology education students as a medium of manpower training programme provides the basic tool for developing the needed manpower for nation building and growth.

The economy of most developing countries such as Nigeria remains grossly under-developed, the place of trained personnel such as technology educators who are required to provide financial and economic advice becomes very important and relevant.

Economic Development: The relevance of manpower development in Nigeria could be situated vis-à-vis economic development. This is because manpower development captures the actual

meaning of development in that it is people centered (World Bank, 1991), Crawboski and shields, (1996). In addition, it involves the building of capacity and harnessing the state's human resources which constitute a sine-qua-non for development.

The above advantage was vividly conceptualized by (Harbison, 1973) who stated that, Human Resources Constitute the ultimate basis for wealth of nations, capital and natural resources are passive factors of production; human beings are the active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organizations, and carry forward national development. Clearly a country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and to utilize individuals effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else.

Poverty Alleviation: It has been argued that effective poverty alleviation scheme must involve the development and utilization of local resources including human for solving local problems (Robb, 2000) and (Omodia, 2005). Thus, manpower development is relevant to technology educators as it is control to solving the present problem of poverty in Nigeria.

Political Stability: There is no doubt that a country which fails to adequately develop its manpower would be doing so at the expense of her socio-economic and political stability. In the aspect of political stability, Omodia (2004) stressed the dysfunctional use of the nation's human resource among the youths propelling political instability when author stated that, there have been situations in which the Nigerian youth especially, those of poor family background were used as tools for disrupting the political democratic system through rigging, thuggery in addition to economic miss-management, personal ambition or selfishness among others, were the factors that terminated the first and second republic. The present insecurity situation in Nigeria is a great evidence and strong factor against political stability.

Thus, manpower development could help the technology education students in the development of self and in improving the quality of their political participation.

Conclusion

Manpower is an essential force in the current trend of trade globalization this is because the characteristics of global business environment require people that would provide knowledge to deal with the complexity, dynamic and uncertain connections of the business world.

Human capacity building and development serve therefore, as veritable tool for handling the ever-changing nature of the global business environment. Training and development can be carried out using different approaches and methodologies. The role of manpower development should focus on building capacity, success, motivation, knowledge-based, performance, enhancement and individual growth.

It is very important that personnel be given appropriate training so as to be able to harness the prospects and handle challenges inherent in the global business environment. It is instructive to note that the whole world has become a global village, a feat that was made possible by the advent of information technology.

Recommendations

The options for effective manpower development in the global business environment could be viewed from two basic perspectives:

1. The option of an enhanced regulatory capability on the part of government for effective enforcement of manpower policies. This is quite indispensable based on the need to ensure quality manpower development irrespective of sex, class ethnic affiliation to mention a few. This point could best be appreciated considering the liberal nature of most government policies which tend to snowball into elitist benefit in terms of policy outcome.
2. The need for government to be persuasive in making organizations embrace well designed policies at improving the development of manpower in global business environment. This could be done both internally and externally. Internally, organizations should be made to see reasons why a careful manpower development plan should form part of their plans and objectives for the financial years, externally.

As a matter of fact, the success of organizations should not only be measured in terms of the magnitude of profit through the adoption of outdated personnel administration technique, but, basically on the contribution of the organization in enlarging the confidence of its workers through manpower development.

The external factor involves the contribution of organizations to the development of manpower through financial support meant to boost Adult Education, Vocational Education, and specialized research institutes to mention a few.

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