



Research Paper

An Overview Of The Impact Of Human Capital Development On The Nigeria's Correctional Service

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ABSTRACT

Human capital development is a key factor in organizational efficiency, hence, a conscientious efforts towards discerning, articulating and implementing a robust human capital development in public organizations for improved work performance have become imperative. This study investigated human capital development and organizational performance in Nigeria's correctional services. The study employed the Human Capital Theory as its theoretical framework. The study revealed amongst others that; the content of human capital development programmes in Nigeria's Correctional Service is grossly inadequate. As such, the study recommended amongst others that; the Nigeria's Correctional Service should improve its human capital development programme by partnering with other stakeholders of the Nigerian state such as the Civil Society Organizations and international humanitarian organization, with the view to creating the enabling environment for innovations and creativity on the inmates.

KEY WORDS: *Correctional, Development, Human Capital, Impact, Service*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Nigerian Correctional Service formally known as the Nigerian Prison Service is a social service organization established by the State to provide a rehabilitation and correctional facility for those who have violated the rules and regulations of their society. Generally, workers in the Nigerian Correctional Service are human beings who are complex, dynamic and erratic in nature. They reason in diverse ways and are unpredictable; difficult to understand and manage in work setting. They have their individual needs and aspirations that have become more demanding. Rules and regulations prescribed by management of the organization impose some restrictions to what the workers should or should not do. Thus, effective human capital development policies that help rather than hinder the accomplishment of organizational goals must be devised and implemented by well-trained human resource experts (Koko, 2005 p. 14).

This therefore gives credence to the fact that the hallmark of every organization's human resource policy is that at the end, it should be able to lead to positive workers' performance as reflected in the organizational performance. As fantastic as any human capital development policy may be, it will amount to nullity if at the end it does not improve workers' performance. Workers' performance is paramount because workers are the backbone of organizational activities. Thus, the success and failure of organizational activities highly depends on their performance. Employees that work for organizations such as the Nigerian Correctional Service are significant and are of paramount importance in that, they bring to the organization; knowledge, skills, and innate abilities and have the personal energy to converting resources. They are seen or considered as capital assets and the productive engine house of the organization.

The human resource of an organization consists of all the people who perform its activities (Nabie, 2014 p.19). Human resources are the set of individuals who make up the workforce of an organization. Another term used synonymously with human resources is human capital which typically refers to the habits, social and

personality attributes and knowledge the individuals embody and contribute to an organization. The organizations' employees who are described with reference to their training, experience, judgment, intelligence, relationship, and insight constitute the human resource/capital of the organization (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart & Wright in Maduagwu & Nwogu, 2006 pp.10 -11).

Human resources as life wire to organizational operations have over the years, been neglected as the most valuable asset that can create wealth. Nevertheless, in recent times, the development of human capital has been a major concern to organizational managers. People are now seen as the vehicle of actualizing organizational objectives. Some human capital management variables that are adoptable e for actualizing organizational objectives include among others; human resources planning and development, staff training, staff induction/orientation, and staff supervision. The human resources planning aspects deals with the process of taking inventory of staffs' demography in terms of number of workers, qualifications, capability, experience, skills, and others. Planning is a major management function, however, it is said that "failure to plan is planning to fail" (Okoroma, 2008 p.26). To achieve organizational goals, staff activities have to be well mapped out.

Training is the aspect of updating workers with current skills, requisite and technical knowhow for optimum performance. In service organizations such as the Nigerian Prisons workers' performance can be mapped well through arranging training programmes for the workers which in turn get them motivated and increase their confidences and job performance. When a worker is trained and retrained, he or she is meant to be up to date with current realities, modern trends and skills, which will in turn be put into the production process. A worker who does not undergo this often uses outdated methods and practices which have negative impact on productivity. Thus, the importance of training organizational staff cannot be over-emphasized in the changing world and circumstances, changes in knowledge, production techniques and changes in the quality of products and services.

Development is the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and behaviours that improve on employee's ability to meet changes in job requirements and in customer demands. It has to do with equipping organizational workforce with necessary skills needed for their improved satisfactory job performance. Development programmes focus on preparing employees for management responsibility. Since a well-developed staff is likely to perform better than his counterpart without formal training, the need arises to design development programmes to ensure their high productivity at work.

As human resource managers, organizational heads provide many forms of training and development, including workshops designed to help workers master the technical sides of their jobs and seminars to assist managers in developing human and conceptual skills. These workshops and seminars cover a wide area from career planning and time and stress management to effective communication skills, motivating personnel, and ways to improve leadership styles, which leads to high staff morale and consequently efficiency and effectiveness.

Induction and orientation precisely, involves the introduction of the new worker to the organization and its norms, what he has to do, his co-staff and probably, the clients. In the organizational setting, induction in most cases is carried out by the Heads of Department or whichever is applicable. It is during orientation that new staffs get familiarized with old staff, the organizational set-up and also the environment. This is because when people are made aware of what exists in an organizational set-up, they are free to express their candid opinion through the proper channel of communication in order to maintain cordial and friendly atmosphere that translates to effective performance and achievement of organizational goals (Obasi & Asodike, 2007, p.7).

Staff supervision is inevitable in any organizational set-up. This is because the man to do the job must be physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually stable to be able to effectively perform any duty assigned to him. Modern supervision at its finest is both dynamic and democratic, reflecting the notion that the supervisor as a leader is both informed and enlightened. The primary aim of supervision is to recognize the true real value of each worker, so that at the end, the full potential of all those in the organizational process will be recognized, appreciated and utilized. Nwagwu (2004 p.12) asserts that the supervisor has the responsibility of monitoring and evaluating all staff activities and programmes of their organization. The major reason for this is to ensure dutiful compliance of all staff with established laws and declared goals through quality assurance, maintenance of standards and quality control. According to Mecgley (2015), the major function of the supervisor is to assist others to become efficient and effective in the performance of the assigned duties.

Undoubtedly, empirical attempts have been made by the academia, interest groups, and other corporate organizations on the development of human capital in today's business establishments (Obasi, 2000 p.63). Against this backdrop, this study is intended to explore the challenging realities and expose the conceptualized/identified cases of labour turnover because of little or no attempt paid to the development of human capital in organizations. The operational research problem for this study is conceptualized in two key variables: Human Capital Development (HCD) as the independent variable and Organizational Performance as the dependent variable. The study is set to use the Human Capital Development practices as it affects the variables of organizational performance.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework upon which this study was hinged is the human capital theory.

Human capital theory can be associated with the resource-based view of the firm as developed by Barney (1991). This theory suggests that workable modest advantage is attained when a firm has a human resource pool that cannot be substituted by its rivals. Boxall (1996) refers to the condition as one that confers human capital benefit. Boxall also notes that a distinction should be made between “human capital advantage” and “human process advantage”. The former is as a result from engaging people with competitively treasured skills. The latter follows from the establishment of “difficulty to imitate” highly evolved process within the firm, such as cross-departmental co-operation and executive development. Hence, the human capital advantage results the superiority of one firm’s management over another.

The economic theory of human capital, which states that workers as well as employers invest in human capital, is another theory postulated by Davenport (1999) in Chinah (2009). This theory conceptualizes workers as embodying set of skills, which can be “rented out” to employers. Hence, Davenport concluded that, work is a two-way exchange of value, not a one-way exploitation of an asset by its owner. Investment in the productive capacities of individuals which is aptly referred to by Mary John Bowman (1966) as “The Human Investment Revolution in Economic Thought” is largely a phenomenon of the early 1960s. The revolution heralded the birth of the human capital theory which was first formulated by Theodore W. Schultz in 1960 and later developed by Gary S. Becker in 1962 (Obasi, 2000).

The application of the human capital theory to this study stems from its relevance. The relevance is based on the major premise that human capital in the form of knowledge and skills acquired through education; and good health acquired through health care and nutrition makes individuals more productive; and making individuals more productive makes them more employable; and making them more employable guarantees them more future incomes. Hence, to secure more future incomes there is much need to invest in human capital.

From the theory, it would be noted that since the acquired human skills; knowledge and dexterity of staff of the Nigerian Prisons Service increases their productivity and hence their income –earning prospects and job performance, it is considered an investment good. Consequently, any expenditure or resource out-lay meant to create, develop or improve on human productive qualities constitute an investment in human capital.

The human resource in any organization is made up of people, their abilities, knowledge and skills which, when properly coordinated and managed determine the success of the organization. The type of people to be hired in order to achieve the goals of the organization is very crucial to its success. Therefore, putting in motion the process of hiring the best candidates for the job and encouraging them in order to retain them in the organization is the main duty of every manager (Emechebe, 2009; Noe *et al* 2004).

Consequent upon the aforementioned facts therefore, attracting potential employees, choosing employee, teaching employees how to perform their jobs, rewarding employees and retaining them at workplace are responsibilities of organizational managers. Koch and Mc.Grath in Chinah (2009) maintain that companies must learn to frequently pay high wages relative to competitors in order to ensure that they meet or exceed market equity. Moreso, organizations should concentrate in employee stock ownership programmes. This will make the organization share ownership with their most valuable assets which appear to be increasing in popularity, especially in knowledge intensive establishments. In the same vein, Noe *et al* (2004) highlight that a company that wants to provide an exceptional level of service or be exceptionally innovative might pay significantly more than competitors in order to attract and keep the best employees.

Among the most effective baits that can attract and retain best workers into an organization are salaries and allowances. These could be followed closely by good working climate, prompt and regular promotions, health services, fair treatment at retirement and so on. The foregoing is highly magnetic to workers, hence high productivity (Tabotndip, 2009). Rue and Byars (2017) posit that good pay packages are the magic wand for higher productivity level. Job security is a factor of attraction for retraining good staff in any system. Tabotndip (2009) asserts that job security creates job satisfaction, especially if it has in-built packages of insurance policies, personnel development, health services, academic freedom, social cordiality as well as participation in making decisions that affect employees. For organizations to improve in their performance and live up to expectation for the purpose of growth and development, better conditions of service have to be put in place. These improved conditions will not only attract better staff but will also retain the best brains in the industry (Tabotndip, 2009).

Barriers to the Effective Management of Human Capital and Organizational Performance

In measuring human capital development on organizational performance, the barriers making it difficult for organizations to effectively manage the human capital has been identified by Jack (2004) and Jones (2005). They are as follows:

1. **Excessive Focus on Individual, rather than Organizational Capacity:** Individual skills, however necessary, are themselves insufficient for the creation of highly effective organizations. When evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of an organization's employee, the scope must be expanded beyond individual employees and should include vigorous valid systems that enable the assessment of capability at broader level.

2. **The Search for a 'Silver Bullet':** It is not realistic to expect that a small number of questions can reliably predict organizational performance uniformly across different organizations. Each organization should determine her human capital that is most important to its performance.

3. **The Belief that Intuition and Vision are Enough:** The operations and finance sides of the business are not run by intuition. Similarly, the human side of business, which is typically the biggest cost and asset of an organization, cannot run effectively without following the measurement systems. Human resource professionals who focus only on "Vision and shrink from the accountability that human capital creates" will not make a meaningful difference in the organization.

4. **Too Much Focus on Organizational Strengths, not Enough on Areas for Improvement:** It may be possible and even productive, for individuals to focus on their strengths and avoid developing on their weakness. The many organizations that focus on becoming ever better in the aspects of human capital management at which they are quite good, will experience diminishing marginal returns. Improvement efforts should be redirected towards areas of organizational weakness. As in doing so, will make the weakest human capital to get stronger and become more vibrant.

Adeyemi (2009) highlights the problems facing human resource management and organizational performance in the Nigerian education industry to include the following:

1. Gross inconsistency in plan implementation.
2. Perennial insufficiency of skills leading to a mismatch between what the organization needs and what future employees are taught.
3. Productivity which is the ratio between inputs and output seemed to be low in virtually all sectors of the Nigerian economy over the years.
4. Inadequate supervision and monitoring of activities in schools.
5. Absence of effective leadership in many schools.
6. Widespread unemployment at virtually every level of the educational system, and
7. Little emphasis placed on training on-the-job for workers.

Having identified the barriers to the effective management of human capital, organizations are advised to develop their human capital and create the enabling environment in order to surmount the barriers for enhanced performance.

Conceptual and Historical Overview of the Nigerian Correctional Service

Scholarship in the social sciences is awash with the concept "prison", thus, it has been conceptualized from both structural and functional dimensions. For instance, McCorkle and Korn in Obiora (2011) describe a prison as a physical structure in a geographical location where a number of people live under highly specialized conditions, utilize the resources and adjust to the alternatives presented to them by a unique kind of social environment that is different from the larger society in so many ways. Obiora (2011) perceives a prison as a place to punish offenders, where criminals that are removed from the society are dumped to protect the society from further criminal activities of the offenders; and a palace to rehabilitate, and teach offenders to be law abiding and productive after their release. According to Orakwe (2019), prisons are meant to be penitentiaries, a place where people who have fallen short of societal expectations, are sent to for corrective purposes to enable them become better citizens at the expiration of their time.

In ensuring proper correction of inmates, security of life and property which is the primary function of any criminal justice system, the place of the prison cannot be over-emphasized. The prison service is the stomach of the state (Adebisi & Oyewo, 2015); because it is expected to serve as the melting point for the activities of the security agencies (Ajah, 2018) and provides rehabilitation and correctional services for those who dishonored the rules and regulations of their society (Chukwudi, 2012). The prison service is also expected to inculcate in the offenders basic moral values that will make them become law abiding citizens. Prisons are generally conceived as corrective institutions. This is prime objective of establishing prisons all over the world. Prisons are usually structured to identify the peculiar problem of each inmate and devise means of guiding the individual out of the problem (Oduyela, 2003).

The Nigerian Correctional Service is skewed in accordance with three forms of penal legislation like applied in other countries. The Penal Code and the accompanying Criminal Procedure Code Cap 81 Laws of the Federation 1990 (CPC), the Criminal Code and the accompanying Criminal Procedure Act Cap 80 Laws of the Federation 1990 (CPA) and the Sharia Penal legislation in 12 Northern States of Nigeria which is applied to only Muslims (Obiora, 2011). By its establishment philosophy, the Nigerian Correctional Service is empowered to administer penal treatment to adult offenders. On the basis of imprisonment policy, the prison service was

established to manage criminals in prison yards. This constitutional function gives the Nigerian Correctional Service operatives the power to keep convicted offenders for safe custody; keep awaiting trial inmates in custody, until law courts ask for their production; punish offenders as instructed by the law courts; reform the convicted prisoners; and rehabilitate and to reintegrate prisoners who have completed the sentences in the prison (Adetula et al; 2010).

The origin of modern Correctional Service in Nigeria is 1861. That was the year when conceptually, western type of prison was established in Nigeria (Orakwe, 2019). British colonialism played a key role in the development of the Prison service in Nigeria, especially in the 19th Century. By 1910, there were already prisons in Degema, Calabar, Onitsha, Benin, Ibadan, Sapele, Jebba and Lokoja.

The abolition of Native Authority prisons in 1968 and the subsequent unification of the Prison Service in Nigeria therefore marked the beginning of Prisons Service as a composite reality. Consequently, Native Authority prisons were abolished with effect from 1st April, 1968. However, due to the vagaries of the civil war then raging in the country, it was not until 1971 that the government white paper on the reorganization of the prisons was released. It was followed in 1972 by Decree No. 9 of 1972 which spelt out the goals and orientation of the Nigerian Prison Service. The prison was charged with taking custody of those legally detained, identifying causes of their behaviour and retraining them to become useful citizens in the society (Orakwe, 2019).

Following from this was the need to employ skilled manpower to see to the day to day running of the prisons. To this end, between 1974 and 1980 a group of personnel were recruited. Between 1972 and 1974 over three hundred graduates were recruited into the Prison Service as general duty officers to help direct other staff towards the goals of the prisons. It now has a command structure that boast of 8 Zonal Commands, 36 State Commands 1 FCT Command, 144 Prisons and 83 Satellite Prisons, 4 Training Schools, 1 Staff College and 2 Borstal Institutions. There was also the removal of the Services from the Civil Service in 1992.

Nigerian Correctional Service Act

Nigerian Correctional Service act was established by the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2019. The Act repealed Cap p. 29 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004. The objectives of the Act are to:

- Ensure compliance with international human rights standards and good correctional practices;
- Provide enabling platform for implementation of non-custodial measures;
- Enhance the focus on corrections and promotion of reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders; and
- Established institutional, systemic and sustainable mechanisms to address the high number of persons awaiting trial.

The Service is headed by a Controller General, appointed by the President of Nigeria on the recommendation of the Board established in Section --- of the Act and his/her appointment shall be ratified by the Nigerian Senate. The person to serve as the Controller – General shall hold office for a single term of five years or on attainment of the mandatory retirement age of 60 or 35 years in service, whichever comes first.

The Controller General is vested with the power to superintend on:

- (a) inmate's safety and human custody;
- (b) reformation, rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders;
- (c) non-custodial institutions and centres, and
- (d) any other custodial and non-custodial facility

To guarantee efficiency in the Service, the Act establishes the following:

- (a) National headquarters;
- (b) Zonal offices;
- (c) State Commands;
- (d) Custodial and non-Custodial Centres; and
- (e) Training Institutions

Synoptically, some of the notable innovations introduced in the geared towards refining the prison (custodial) system are as follows:

1. Section 10 outlines in clear form, the functions of the Correction Service with correction being the cardinal goal;
2. Section 14 gives direction on reformation and rehabilitation of inmates through opportunities for education, vocational training as well as training in modern farming techniques and animal husbandry;
3. Standard which custodial centres must meet is provided in Section 9(1) which provides for
4. Proper documentation of inmates such as his offence, personal history, biometrics, risk and needs assessment, psychological and mental health status etc and recommendations in respect of the sentencing or committal is provided in Section 13;

5. Sections 34 and 35 give direction for separate facilities for female and juvenile offenders;
6. Due to the challenge of over congestion, Section 12(4) – (10) provides for decongestion of custodial centres when over stretched and gives power to the State Controller to refuse new inmates;
7. Sections 7 and 15 provides for prevention of inhumane treatment of inmates;
8. Non-custodial services to with probation, parole, community service etc is provided in Section 37;
9. Section 12(2)(c) provides for conversion of death sentence to Life imprisonment where inmate has spent 10 years and above in custody without being executed;
10. The establishment of a health centre and deployment of at least a medical doctor in every custodial Centre is provided in Section 23(4)

II. CONCLUSION

Sequel to the analysis of data and the findings made regarding human capital development and organizational performance, the study reached the following conclusions:

The acquisition of knowledge and skills facilitate production and can create an enabling environment that ensures optimal performance in the organization.

Good working environment, culture and attitudes play prominent role towards employees' decision making and even make employees become more innovative and creative in the organization as no right-thinking person will work harmoniously in an unhealthy environment or without the right attitude.

The assessment and evaluation of employees' performance measures current performance against expected results and can correct actions against deviations. This however, will reduce wastages and will make for the efficient utilization of organizational resources.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings made as regards human capital development and organizational performance, the following recommendations were made:

1. Employees of the Nigerian Correctional Service should be trained to learn the right attitudes, organization's values, new skills, acquire the required knowledge and skills that will match specification with job requirements. By doing so, the problems of incompetence and skill scarcity would have been solved or averted.
2. Corporate establishments should attract and try as much as possible to retain and develop employees at work places by allowing them to achieve individual objectives and creating the enabling environment for innovativeness or creativity. This will reduce the rate of labour turn-over.
3. The dream to realizing objectives should not be jeopardized by wastefulness, misappropriation and inefficient utilization of resources. Besides, there should be an adequate assessment and evaluation process/policy that will measure employees' performance and correct actions against deviations. This will sustain economic growth and make for improved performance in the organization.
4. Improvement efforts should be redirected towards areas of organizational weakness in the Nigerian Correctional Service in Rivers State in particular and Nigeria in general.

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