

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN EDUCATION: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES**Dr. (Mrs) Chinyere A. Omebe***Department of Science Education Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki*

ABSTRACT: *Human resource management in education is very important and toy with it would result in jeopardy. This is because education personnel's are the major instrument for achieving educational goals and consequently, national development. Human resources are the key to rapid socio-economic development and efficient service delivery. That's why this paper stressed that without an adequate, skilled and well-motivated workforce operating within a sound human resource management programme, development is not possible. Every educational system at every level depends heavily on the human resources for execution of its programme. The function of human resource management in education includes staff maintenance, staff relations, staff development, procurement of staff and job performance reward. The challenges of human resource management include poor working condition, problem of staffing, funding, incessant transfer of teacher among others. To address the identified challenges, the following recommendations were made. Education should be made attractive by creating a conducive atmosphere for teachers. More government attention is needed for education sector through improved function as education remains the basis for the progress of all other sectors of the society. A united salary structure should be made for all categories of teachers within the education sectors. The paper equally recommended that standard of education in Nigeria should be up dated to meet the rapid social changes in our present Nigeria society.*

KEYWORDS: Educational System, Human Resource, Educational Goals, Work Force, Staff Maintenance

INTRODUCTION

Human resource management can be seen as the design of formal systems in an organization to ensure effective and efficient use of human talents to accomplish organizational goals. Griffin (1997), defined human resource management as the set of organizational activities directed at attracting, developing and maintaining an effective workforce. Human resource management concerns the procurement or recruitment, staffing, welfare, maintenance, training and retraining, placement, promotion, motivation relationship, compensation or rewards, transfer and discipline of staff. It lies at the care of the efficiency of the organization. Human resource management is a basic function of management that determines the performance of staff in any organization. This simple implies that when staff in the education systems are adequately recruited, selected and supervised, inducted and adequately rewarded, and provided for, properly developed, appraised and promoted on the job, they will be committed to the job, remain dedicated and productive in the education systems. This can simply be put that it is the co-ordination of the activities and efforts of the workers in educational organization so that educational goals are achieved. Hence, human resource management in education is the process of motivating workers to maximize their performance in order to obtain maximum output starting from the day they are recruited. That

means utilizing people to perform duties and functions in the school (Oduma, 2012). Human resources are easily recognized as the most important resource out of the resources required for the production of goods and services. Human resources are the key to rapid socio-economic development and efficient service delivery (Onah, 2008). Without an adequate, skilled and well-motivated workforce operating within a sound human resource management programme, development is not possible.

Every educational system at every level depends heavily on the human resources for execution of its programme. Nwaka and Ofojebe (2010) stated that teachers are the critical resources for effective implementation and realization of the educational policies and objectives at the practical level of classroom. A manager, whether in private or public sector, who underrates the critical role and underplays the importance of people in goal achievement, can neither be effective nor efficient (Oduma, 2012). It is the teacher who ultimately interprets and implements policy as represented in the school curriculum, which is designed to actualize educational goals (Omojunwa, 2007). Maintaining and improving educational standards is only possible through teachers. Teachers therefore are the most indispensable entity in the school. They are the greatest aid to learning. The shortage or poor management of teachers reduces the extent to which the curriculum can be delivered effectively. It should be noted that the major premise of human resources management in education is that the end results of the educative process will be determined by the effectiveness of the teachers who facilitate learning for self-actualization and national development.

Human resource management in education essentially is concerned with three major issues namely.

- i. Assessing the need for staff
- ii. Satisfying the need for staff and
- iii. Maintaining and improving the staff services.

Goals and Role of Human Resource Management in Education

The goals of human resource management in education are to develop the workers and to contribute to goal achievement. Human resource management has some specific roles to play. These are strategic and operational roles.

Strategic Role: Human resources are critical for effective educational functioning. Human resources were once relegated to second-class status, but its importance has grown dramatically in the last two decades. Again, its new importance stems from adequately recruited, selected and supervised, inducted and adequately rewarded, provided for, properly developed, appraised and promoted on the job. They will be committed to the job, remain dedicated and productive in the education system. It also represents a significant investment of the educational efforts. If managed well, human resources can be a source of competitive strength for the education. Strategically, human resources must be viewed in the same context as the financial, technological and other resources that are managed in any organization (Onah, 2008).

Operational Role: According to Mathis and Jackson (1997). Operational activities are both tactical and administrative in nature. Griffin (1997) sees operational role from the legal perspective because some have regulated various aspects of employee-employer relations. Human resources

management is therefore, interested in compliance with equal employment opportunities and observation of labour laws; examples; applicants must be oriented to the organizations, supervisors must be trained, safety problems must be resolved; wages and salaries must be administered. 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. It is this collection of activities that has often been referred to as the personnel function, and the newer strategic focus of human resources management has not eliminated. In summary, it is difficult to produce one general interpretation of what human resource management means today.

Functions of Human Resources Management in Education

Human resource management in education is a set of practices and methods of integrating and maintaining the teaching staff in the school so that the school can achieve their purpose and as well as meet the goals for which they were established. It is the motivation and co-ordination of the activities and effort of the teachers in school in order to obtain maximum output from them and consequently achieve the goals of education optimally. The functions include the following:

- i. Staff maintenance
- ii. Staff relations
- iii. Staff development
- iv. Procurement of staff
- v. Job performance reward

Staff Maintenance

This concern making the work environment conducive for workers, pertinent practices include; promotion and transfer, motivation, staff safety, security and health services. It is pertinent that educational establishments have sound policies in respect of staff transfer and promotion to ensure that justice and fairness prevail in dealing with staff. As work to be performed in the school is important, the mood of the man to perform the job is equally important. For maximum and productive goal attainment, the school head must ensure the comfort and happiness of the workers. That can be done through prompt payment of salary, and ensuring a safe and healthy working environment.

Staff Relations

There must be a good communication network in the school to enable workers to be constantly informed of the progress being made in the school. Workers should be encouraged to participate in planning and decision making in the school. Workers should be encourage by recognizing the staff as human beings with feelings, interest, needs and emotions and treating them as such with fairness and respect.

Staff Development

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.

Procurement of Staff

Human resource management functions start with the process of recruitment and selection by which educational institutions get the best personnel to interpret and implement the curriculum programmes. Staffing of schools is a job performed by the ministry of education through its agencies in the federal and state government. Procurement of staff in education deals with obtaining people with appropriate and necessary skills, abilities, knowledge and experience to fill the vacant teaching posts in schools.

Job Performance Rewards

This involves the design and administration of rewards for jobs performed. It is very important that management, ministry of education and its agencies take the issue of reward system very seriously. Staff performance would increase substantially if they are adequately compensated according to the quality and quantity of work done.

Challenges of Human Resource Management in Education

Human resource management has become notably complex in the sense that as human beings, they are not reliable for doing one thing over and over in exactly the same way. They can be expensive depending on their cadres, qualification and skills. Their productivity is highly dependent on the person's ability to instruct. The same content cannot be delivered every time. A number of factors have contributed in this complexity. They Include the Following:

Poor Working Condition

It is not out of way if staff expects to be paid finance rewards commensurate with the services performed. The ideal thing is to have a systematic producer for establishing a sound reward system and structure. A good remuneration tends to reduce inequalities between staff earnings, raise their individual morale, motivate them to work for pay increase and promotions, reduces inter group friction and employee grievances. Teachers salaries are not paid along side with other civil servants and in some cases, teachers are owed many months of salary areas.

Problems of Staffing

The problem of staffing is enormous. There are problem on the quality and quantity of staff recruited for the education of our citizens. The reason is from poor staff recruitment and selection process. Politicians and God fatherism has taken the upper hand. Some staff rarely stay in the remote areas where the management wants their services. They use to stay in the urban areas for self-convenience. The verification exercise carried out by Universal Basic Education Commission (2000), Shows that an additional 275 to 462 teachers were needed to teach in primary schools in Nigeria.

Current Call for the Use of ICT in Education

As the 21st century world is undergoing rapid changes, there is urgency for few educational needs such as the call for use of ICT in education. Current call for ICT usage in education is worthy but, its implementation in the nation is in the toddling stage. Nwifo (2009), evidently noted that ICT penetration and usage remains very low and so the need to train many teachers at all levels in ICT to equip them for reengineering the society through the skills (Offorma, 2009); ICT provides the

most expensive means of rapid dissemination of information and imparting knowledge, decentralization of work, expansion of work force and with ICT, the teacher becomes a facilitator, supervisor and a guide for classroom instruction. However, compulsory acquisition of ICT skill by teachers should be given priority attention despite the fact that most teachers cannot buy the computer set or laptop because of poor salary. Other challenges of human resource management that have direct effect on the achievement of our predetermined educational objectives include;

- i. High rate of students and staff indiscipline
- ii. Funding issues
- iii. Poor recruitment process
- iv. Little or no induction of human resources
- v. Poor supervision/appraisal of staff
- vi. Poor personnel commitment to work and
- vii. Incessant transfer of teachers

RECOMMENDATION

Considering the importance of education in human resource management, the following are recommended.

1. Education should be made attractive by creating a conducive atmosphere for teachers.
2. More government attention is needed for the education sector through improved function as education remains the basis for the progress of all other sectors of society.
3. A united salary structure should be made for all categories of teachers within the education sector.
4. Standard of education in Nigeria should be up dated to meet the rapid social changes in our present Nigeria society.
5. Computer literacy in the spirit of globalization should be brought into the curriculum and the new and the old curricula made coherent for better productivity.

CONCLUSION

The paper concludes that education remains a veritable means of human resource management and nation building in Nigeria. Whatever needs to be done in this sector should be done in all sincerely and with every urgency for education to fully achieve its predetermined educational objectives.

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