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HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING AND IMPROVED PRODUCTIVITY IN NIGERIAN PUBLIC ORGANISATION

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ABSTRACT

The necessity of human resource in any organization whether public or private has long been identified as an instrument for goal attainment. Hence, human resource planning is pivotal to the productivity of any organisation. Productivity has suffered serious setback in Nigeria despite our enormous human resource deposits. It suggests that we lack well planned human resources. This development has made human resource planning to stand out as a solution for improved employee productivity in Nigerian public organisations. The broad objective of this paper is to interrogate the impact of human resource planning on improved productivity in Nigerian public organisation. With the aid of human capital theory, we observed that there is a nexus between human resource planning and improved productivity in public organization. We recommend among others that chief executives should pro-actively engage in human resource planning, recognize employee's talents through reward systems, teamwork and excellent interpersonal relationship to enhance high productivity in public organizations.

Keywords: Planning, Human Resource Planning, Public Organisation, Employee, Productivity

Introduction

The pivotal role of manpower in an organisation informed the importance that its development cannot be optional but something that must be done irrespective of the personnel previous training or experience. Manpower development is "an indispensable component of strategic human resource management as well as a means of reducing inefficiency among organisational key asset- its human resources, and it is vital for workers' productivity and organisational performance" (Wabara, etal, 2017:3). In the face of competitive and dynamic business environment, it is pertinent that business entities should strive to create a cutting edge manpower development in order to remain in the frontline of business (Owolabi & Adenkunle, 2016:1). Hence, the challenge for developing economies in adjusting to the present global best practices, focasting labour demand, analyzing employee productivity by balancing their outputs over inputs have underscored the importance of effective human resource planning in public

organizations. Human capital is the most important agent in human resources development. It contributes 64 percent to fast economic growth of most nations (World Bank, 1974) Harbison (1973) argues that:

“Human resources not capital constitute the ultimate basis for the wealth of nations. Capital and national resources are factors of production; human beings are the active agents who accumulate capital, export natural resources, build social, economic and political organization, and carry forward national development. Clearly, a country which is unable to develop skills and knowledge of the people and to utilize them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop anything else.”

The human resources in question, are the humans in the organization, without them, there cannot be production. They provide the labour power which is the muscle of production. Labour power is the physical, psychic, emotional and intellectual capability of man – (The Worker). Hence, there is need for human resource planning to enhance productivity of any organization, private or public alike. Human resource planning “is an integrated approach to performing the personnel function in order to have a sufficient supply of adequately developed and expected people to perform the duties and tasks required to meet organization objectives and satisfy the individual needs, goals of organizational members” (Megginson, 2015). It is the process for ensuring that the human resources requirements of an organization are identified and plans are made for satisfying these requirements. (Bulla and Scot, 1994). Human resources planning entail creating the brand of employee needed, talent hunt and management, recruitment, selection as well as retention strategies etc. This paper examines the impact of effective human resources planning in enhancing improved productivity in public organisation. This we shall achieve in this sequence: theoretical compass of analysis, definition of planning, human resource planning, processes of human resource planning, nexus between human resource planning and employees’ productivity, impediments to human resource planning, conclusion and recommendation.

Theoretical Compass of analysis

In the midst of variety of theories, this study adopts the aid of human capital theory. Its origin dates back to emergence of classical economics in (1776).The idea of human capital was first developed by Adam Smith who argued in his book titled “The Wealth of Nations” that differences between the ways of working of individuals with different levels of education and training reflected differences in the returns necessary to defray the costs of acquiring those skills. Other economist such as Elliot (1991) queued up and was concerned with human capital in terms of the quality, not quantity, of the labour supply. In partnership, Schultz (1961) recognised the human capital as one of the important factors of national economic growth in the modern economy, (Dae-Bong, 2009).

The basic assumption of Human capital theory is that it is the key competences, skills, knowledge and abilities of the workforce that contributes to organisations competitive advantage. It focuses attention on resourcing, human resource

development, and reward strategies and practices. According to human capital theory, education is an investment because it is believed that it could potentially bestow private and social benefits. Human capital theorists believe that education and earning power are correlated, which means, theoretically, that the more education one has, the more one can earn, and that the skills, knowledge and abilities that education provides can be transferred into the work in terms of productivity, (Dae-bong, 2009). It focuses attention on human resource development, reward strategies and practices. Thus, the utility of the theory will assist in underscoring the nexus between human resource planning and improved productivity.

Planning Defined

Planning is as old as mankind. It predates civilization. Planning started from the epoch of primitively when there is no trace of modern industries or firms. It is a basic function of any organization since it pervades all the structure of management which includes but not limited to personnel, production, research and development, marketing and finance. The concept of planning is used in a multifarious way, hence, the consequent confusion on what people actually mean when they use the word plan, planner or planning. Many of “its usage is so broad that the basic element of planning seems difficult to identify, and it cannot easily be distinguished from related activities such as policy making or plan implementation” (Anyadike 2013). This confusion informs Wildarsky (1993) assertion that “if planning is everything, may be it is nothing”

Conyers and Hill (1984) aver that planning is a continuous process which involves discussion in choices about alternative ways of using available resources, with the aim of achieving particular goals at sometime in the future”. According to Nyerere (1969) planning involves making decisions about which of a number of courses of action to adopt in making choices. He further emphasized that, it is not possible to provide for everybody at once and that the plan represented the result of process of choosing which thing should be given priority attention. For him, it means “choosing between many desirable activities because not everything can be done at once” (Nyerere, 1969).

Planning involves deciding what should be done, how it should be done and when it should be done in determining organizational goals and the means of achieving them (Williams, 2000). In our considered opinion, planning also involve why it should be done, at what time and its value in the organizational strategic goal balancing. In essence, planning assist inmates of the organization to know what is expected of them. Koontz et al, (1981) cap it up in his opinions that unless there is planning, events are left to chance. Its core importance resides in the ability to minimize risk while taking advantage of business opportunities”.

Human Resource Planning Defined

The concept of human resource planning and manpower planning is most often used interchangeably, hence, the concept evokes several meanings with scholars elaborating different dimension of it. On appointment and assumption of duty, a staff becomes automatically a human resource of that organization. Human resource of any organization is the pivot in which the wheel of its survival rotates. Humans are considered as the most crucial, volatile and potentially unpredictable resource which an organization utilizes. Wabara and Sampson (2017:2) discussing the impact of human recourse avers: “the onuses as to how an organisation thrives are at their

whims and caprices; the supply of labour, technical and professional skills, which are apropos for effective and efficient planning and implementation of development policies, programmes, projects and daily functioning of the organisation are their prerogative". Hence, effective management of human recourse requires a wide process; it constitutes one of the major strategies to enhance and improve the productivity of workers through the removal and prevention of deficiencies of employees in both private and public organization. No wonder, Armstrong (2010) argues that the role of human resource planning and development in the achievement of organizational objectives is an art and science in its own right. Ibijofo in (Obojo, 2012) conceived manpower planning as "the process by which an organization ensures that it has the right number of people and the right kind of people at the right place and the right time, doing things for which they are economically most useful." The concept of manpower development could be defined as "the existence of unskilled and/or skilled humans that need training or re-training to perform specific task in society" (Ekpo, 2009). Thus, manpower development could be seen as organizational specific.

Human resource planning helps public organization to design a programme on how to effectively tap talents of employees for interest integration of both the organizational and individual goals. When the talents are effectively tapped, it will reduce the problem associated with low productivity. The model of effective human resource planning includes but not limited to analysis of quality of employees skill in the organization (Skill Inventory), analysis of existing and anticipated vacancies in lieu of retirement of employees, promotion, training needs, transfer, and espansionist targets. The function of effective human resource planning involves functional analysis of how to maintain and improve all aspects of organizational practice that affects cost effective means of advertising for recruitment into vacant positions in the organization. Human resource planning team or consultants must design and prosecute the best selection process for entries into the system, secondly, consistency of procedure as it affects employees, dismissal must be strictly adhered to. Internal bureaucratic anties should not contradict the labour laws like the right of fair hearing appeal and compensation. Thirdly, the team have to devise a comprehensive review programme for members of staff on issues of welfare like health care, promotion, leave matters, training, bonuses, expectional staff award in a legal guide platform e.g. pursuant to the Labour Law and Constitution.

Processes of Human Resource Planning

Human resource planning as a process identifies organization's human resources needs with three specific processes such as; manpower inventory, manpower audit and manpower focasting.

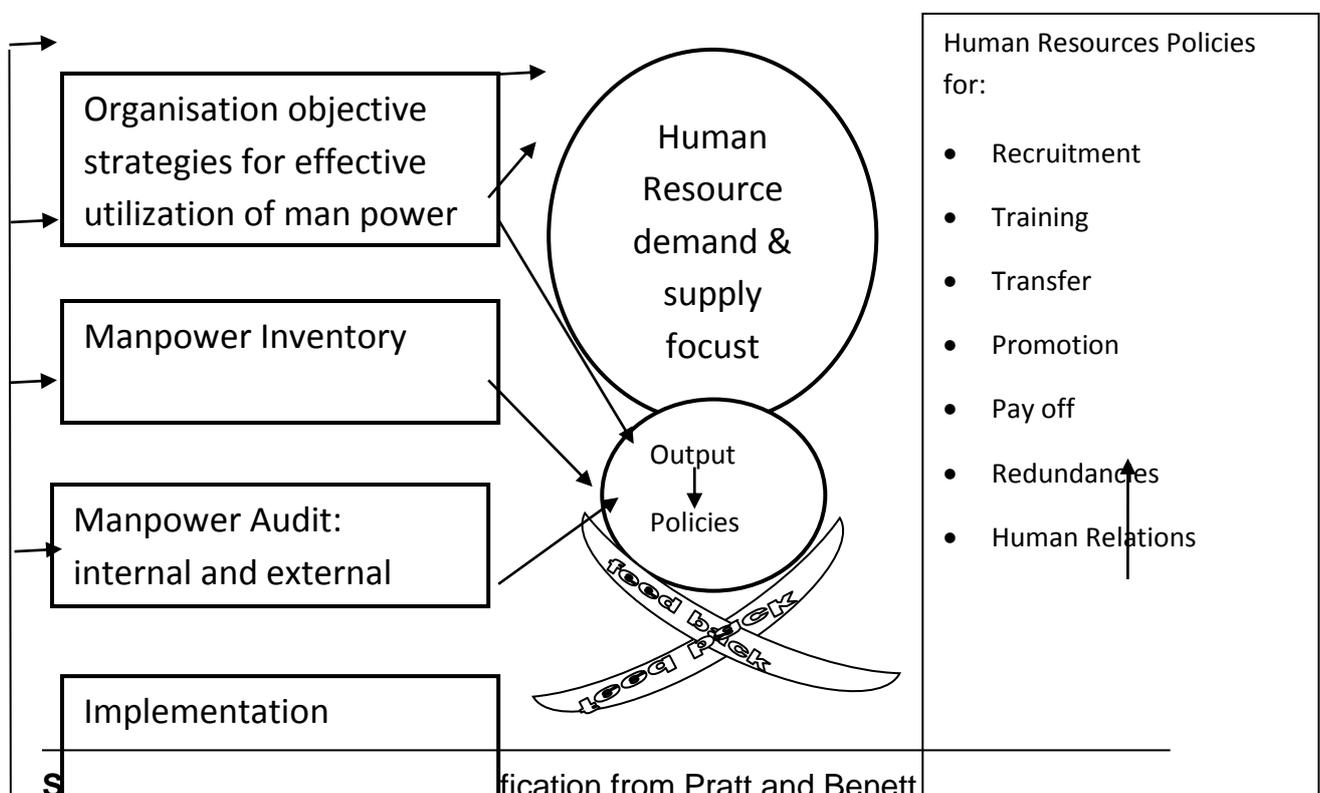
Manpower inventory: This stage focuses on stock taking of the required numbers of employees in the organization. It is the quantative and qualitative analysis of the existing manpower in the organisation. Manpower inventory provides information on the various skills available in an organisation including proffessional and academic qualifications,experience ,the number of employees,age e.t.c. (Ezeani 2006: 318). It is management driven resource management information system that gives information about name, post, qualification, experience, remuneration and allowance, performance appraisal as well as carrear development. Computerized Human Resource Management Information System inventory facilitates in formulation of human resource planning.

Effective human resource planning is mainly concerned with matching organizational needs with employee needs; remuneration and incentive plans; recruitment, selection, career planning; promotion and transfer; employees safety, welfare and working environment; motivational activities, and maintenance.

Manpower Audit: This involves both internal and external manpower controls forecasting. External audit deals with manpower supply forecasting mainly on various external sources of manpower supply for an organisation. The internal audit on its part determines both supply and manpower demand need of the organization. "It provides information not only about the number of employees but also on the available skills, the age composition of the workforce, past promotion patterns, wastages etcetera" (Ezeani; 2006). The data generated from this process is necessary since it specifies the age distribution of the workforce which is critical for taking decisions on recruitment, training and promotion. An ageing workforce may have the merits of maturity and experience but lacks innovation, productivity as well as lack of succession. On the other hand, a predominantly young workforce may not be experience driven for sustaining an organisation. An effective skill analysis assists organisation in observing a short fall in a particular skill.

Manpower implementation: Implementation starts when policies and programmes in the under listed areas are part into effect: (1) recruitment (the number and types of employee required over the period of the plan together with details of the potential supply problem) (2) training (the number and type of training required for both new recruits and existing employees) (3) employee development (the provides for projected promotion and transfers (4) Productivity (methods for maintaining and improving productivity, among others (Pratt and Bennett, 1979:36).

Diagrammatic Representation of Human Resource Planning Processes



Analysis: The above diagram shows that effective human resource planning is a systemic process within the wider organisational planning context. Within its environment exists organisation's objective, strategies, manpower inventory and audit. At the implementation level exist manpower recruitment, training, transfer, promotion, payoff, redundancies and human relations. At the management level is the conversion of inputs from human resource demand and supply into outputs i.e. policies and feedback mechanism. This feed back process transits bad policies back to the environment for management digest. The process recycles back plan that could not stand the test of time to the environment and to the top hierarchy of management in an unlimited dimension. The entire processes of manpower planning enables an organisation to determine the present level of its manpower and what it must do in future if other corporate objectives are to be achieved (Pratt and Bennett 1979:56).

Manpower Recruitment, Selection and Orientation

Careful and well-planned recruitment and selection of employees is absolutely necessary in order to ensure that only the right calibre of staff is employed in an organization. The process of recruitment and selection begins with the manpower plan, which indicates areas in the organisation where there are likely to be shortages of people, and the number of people to be recruited to meet anticipated employment needs.

Recruitment and Selection Defined

The terms, recruitment and selection, do not mean the same things. Recruitment according to Croft (1996:93) "refers to the analysis of a job and the features the organisation will look for in a potential employee and attracting candidates to apply to the organization, and the offering of various terms, and conditions of employment to a chosen potential employee".

A selection on the other hand, is a human resources management tools, which seeks to assess candidates in order to choose the most suitable person (Croft, 1996:93). The selection process, therefore, is a smaller part of the total process of recruitment. According to Osuji (1985:80);

The selection process involves the accumulation, evaluation and assimilation of a wide range of information about a candidate from any sources, matching the information against the present and future skill and manpower requirements of the organisation and arriving at a decision on the suitability of the candidate of hiring.

For recruitment and selection to be effective at any level, the following stages or processes should be followed:

- (i) Manpower planning: As we noted earlier in this paper, the process of recruitment and selection begin with the manpower plan, which indicates areas in the organisation where there are likely to be shortages of people, and the number of people to be recruited to meet anticipated employment needs;
- (ii) Job Analysis. This involves the examination of what the potential employee will be required to do in any particular job. The outcomes of job analysis are job description and man specification.

- (iii) Job Description outlines in general terms, the activities, tasks and responsibilities involved in a job. It is therefore, a written statement of job content.
- (iv) Man Specification. This is a statement of the minimum acceptable human qualities necessary to perform a job properly. It is therefore, a standard of personnel and designates the qualities required for acceptable performance.
- (v) Attracting candidates for a post(s). This can be done either through internal or external sources such as job posting, press, government or private employment agencies, educational institutions, et cetera. It is important that these sources give relevant details about the post so that high calibre candidates will apply.
- (vi) Selection of candidates. This is a two-way process involving the organisation on the one hand and the prospective employee on the other.

Sources of Recruitment

How does an organisation recruit? The method(s) and sources of recruitment depend on the type of job applicant desired. Sources of recruitment can be internal or external.

Internal Sources: These consist of the following:

- (i) Use of skills inventory to locate potential job applicants from among current employees as well as to ask present employees to encourage qualified friends to apply;
- (ii) Job posting is a method whereby vacancies are posted on bulletin, boards and in organisation publications. The title of a job; its required skills, knowledge, and abilities, as well as its salary and other pertinent information are given. Employees who are interested in the position can indicate their interest, and the best qualified applicant can be selected for the job (Bedeian, 1986:341-342).

The merit of job posting is that it not only shows an enterprise's commitment to internal promotion, but also helps employees identify career paths;

- (iii) Promotion. Here subordinates are promoted to fill the vacant post;
- (iv) Sideways appointment. This is a system whereby an employee of similar seniority is transferred to another department or area to fill a vacant position. Although this is sometimes frowned upon, it can help to develop and broaden the individual's experience, and is often used as part of a management development programme.

The internal sources have some advantages. First, it increases the morale of the workforce. Second, the internal appointee and the organisation are known "to each other (Ezeani, 2006).

Some of the disadvantages of the internal sources are:

- (1) The organisation may stagnate without 'new blood'.
- (2) Internal promotions may cause friction among existing staff.

External Sources

- i. Direct Advertising. This is usually the job of a specialist. Big personnel departments either employ their own experts or retain the services of an advertising agency. To achieve maximum effect, recruitment advertising must produce certain basic rules:
 - a. It should target an appropriate audience.
 - b. The advertisement should produce an adequate number of replies.
 - c. The contents should arouse interest and provide sufficient detail to prompt a response from the correct level of applicant.

The main types of media for recruitment advertising include national newspapers, specialist journals and local or regional newspapers.

- ii. Government Employment Agencies. These include job centres which serve those seeking work, as well as employers looking for staff. They can be useful contacts particularly in respect of local recruitment.
- iii. Private Employment Bureaux. These are particularly useful for clerical staff although there are several specialist and executive agencies in the large cities. These bureaux usually charge a commission for their services.
- iv. Education Institutions. Many organizations recruit direct from universities and other tertiary institutions to meet their demand for young trainees and graduates. This is usually achieved through direct arrangement with the careers department of the tertiary institution concerned.
- v. Search Firms (Head hunters). Recruitment can also be done through search firms which search out and induce a particular talent to change jobs. This searching out is also called headhunting. It is applicable where rare expertise is required. Although headhunting is considered unethical in some quarters, it may be the only option where a particular skill is required. Apart from the above sources, other external sources of recruitment include professional associations, introduction by existing staff and former employees et cetera.

Orientation of New Employees

Orientation has been defined as “the process that introduces new employees to their job, supervisors and peers” (Bedeian 1986:352). It serves the following main purposes:

- (1) It reduces start-up cost that invariably occurs when an employee is new.
- (2) It reduces the amount of anxiety new employees’ experience.
- (3) It stimulates employees’ interest in the job.
- (4) It saves time for supervisors and peers.

Orientation programmes may be formal or informal. Formal programmes usually include an address by the chief executive, a tour of facilities, and some sort of film presentation on the organisation’s history, services, and future prospects for continued success.

The Nexus between Human Resource Planning and Improved Productivity in Public Organization

The nexus between human resource planning and improved productivity cannot be overemphasized. This is because human resource planning captures the actual meaning of productivity, in that, it is people centered or oriented. Any effort at improving

the quality and growth of human resources can be seen as a means of sustainable development (Armstrong, 2010). This view was vividly captured by Omotade (1992:115) who argue that human resources constitute the ultimate dignity of a nation. After all, it is the interactions of people with natural resources that constitute development. Bearing in mind that organization is not the building or equipment, it is the personnel that make up the organization, therefore, there is need to plan for, and develop the right quality and quantity of personnel that will take an organization to its peak. "In essence, there is need to plan for and develop effective and efficient personnel that will handle both operating and managerial functions to achieve the objectives of the organization effectively and economically. Yet, for any organization to achieve a reasonable degree of success, it must not be plagued with excess or inadequate manpower. Here lies the importance of manpower planning" (Igboke & Ibeto, 2014).

The desire to achieve optimum productivity is a critical target of both private and public organisation the world over. Human resource planning is very essential for the achievement and attainment of this productivity (Armstrong, 1992:121). Training is an indispensable variable in human resource planning. Hence, training and re-training of organization's workforce is critical in enhancing productivity. The result of the study of Sultana *et al.*, (2012), conducted in telecom sector of Pakistan, shows that the variation in employee performance is brought by training programmes. They also maintained that training is good predictor of employee performance. As depicted by the work of Harrison (2000), learning through training influence the organisational performance by greater employee performance, and is said to be a key factor in the achievement of corporate goals. Swart *et al.*, (2005) avers that "bridging the performance gap refers to implementing a relevant training intervention for the sake of developing particular skills and abilities of the workers and enhancing employee performance".

Ubeku (1983) having observed its importance and significance of the linkage identified activities that enhance managerial effectiveness that engenders employee productivity as hereunder:

Acquisition of Best Human Resources: Human resource planning determines future human resource requirements in an organization. The main objective of human resource planning is to manage right person at right place at right time. Beyond this, it is concerned with job analysis, recruitment, selection, and socialization. Therefore, human resource planning is essential for employee productivity.

Focusing on Corporate Goal: Human resource planning is goal directed. It gives focus on corporate goal.. Human resource goals are linked to overall strategic goal of organization. Such linkage helps to promote better co-ordination, easy implementation, and effective control. Therefore, human resource planning is essential for productivity.

Optimal Utilization of Human Resources: Human resource planning help in proper utilization of human resource in an organization. It facilitates motivation, performance appraisal, and compensation management. It also identifies surplus or unutilized human resource. So, human resource planning is essential for productivity.

Human Resources development: Human resource planning determines the numbers and the qualification of employees, recruitment, selection, placement, and socialization. It also provides adequate time and place for seminar, workshop, training and development and other career development programs to the development of human resource for productivity.

Effective Reduction of Uncertainty: Environmental factors like economic, political, legal, social-cultural, and technological can create uncertainty. Human resource planning reduces such uncertainty by forecasting future human resource. It matches

demand and supply of human resource. It also develops recruitment, selection, placement, and socialization basis after studying and analyzing such environmental factors. This is very essential for productivity.

Reduction of Labour Cost: Human resource planning reduces labour cost, which minimizes cost of production and product price. Labour cost can be reduced by utilizing available labour force effectively. Reduction in labour cost promotes competition ability of organization.

Regularity of Production: Human resource planning ensures regularity in production. It determines right person at right job. It also facilitates to provide motivational incentives and development opportunities. This creates regular working environment. Therefore, human resource planning is essential for productivity.

Maintenance of Excellent Industrial Relation: Human resource planning maintains good labour relations. It is very important to achieve overall corporate objectives. It provides qualified, competent, and motivated personnel to promote labour or industrial relations in an organization. Thus, human resource planning is very essential for productivity.

Avid Records keeping: Human resource planning keeps records of human resources. Records are kept of all activities of human resource like recruitment, selection, placement, promotion, performance appraisal, compensation, benefits, rewards, punishment, and so on. Such records facilitate human resource management to take right decision about employees.

Effectual Human Resources Control: Human resource planning controls human resources. It determines the numbers and kinds of employees. It also controls unnecessary recruitment, selection and placement. There will be no room for nepotism and favourism. Therefore, human resource planning is important in human resource management.

In a related development, scholars have observed the interface and interlink between strategic planning, human resource planning and employee productivity in public organisation. Strategic planning is the process by which top management determines overall organizational purposes and objectives and how they are to be achieved. Mondy and Noe, (2006) uses the Strength-Weakness-Opportunity and Threat (SWOT) analysis approach to assess the opportunities and threats in external environment as well as the strengths and weaknesses in internal environment of public organisations. Human resource planning systematically reviews the human resource requirements of the organization to ensure that there is the right man at the right place, at the right time. This function is what made Heneman and Sal-Seitzer (1972) to opine that human resource planning plays an important role in achieving the organizations' strategic objective. This function therefore, is the nexus between strategic planning, human resource planning and productivity.

Thus, while strategic planning scans environment using different forecasting tools and identifies its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, Human resource planning manages qualified, experienced, competent and motivated employees to utilize those strengths and opportunities to overcome the weaknesses of and threats to the public organization. This is why Ogunniyi (1992) observes that there is close relationship between strategic planning and human resource planning. Hence strategic planning determines corporate strategic objectives and human resource planning provides required human resource to achieve these objectives. Hence, strategic planning and human resource planning are positively related.

Barriers to Human Resource Planning

One serious problem confronting public organizations human resource managers is how to adopt the most effective method of matching people with job. This is what spurred the assertion that Human resource planning is not an easy process. The following are some of the barriers of human resource planning in achieving employee productivity:

i. Absence of productivity-oriented working culture and mechanisms to encourage labour productivity. ii. High cost of skilled labour, and training. iii. The low level of computer literacy coupled with the unstable power supply in this era of computer-based organization structuring, hence, without strong information base, human resource planning becomes a tortuous assignment. iv. Lack of the willingness to recognize special talents of employees in the systems and to encourage their development in specialized environments.

Conclusion and recommendations

Planning is essential for productivity and organizational effectiveness and efficiency because it acquires best human resources, focuses on corporate goal, utilizes human resources, develops human resources, reduces uncertainty and labour cost, regularizes production, maintains good industrial relation, keeps records, and controls human resources (Anyadike, 2013). Human resource planning aims at not just ensuring that employees are in the right place of work, at the right time and in the right number, but that they are also ready to adapt fast to organisation strategic plan. This is because the major goal of human resource management is productivity as all the functions and activities of human resource management are directed towards achieving high productivity (Oguonu, 2007). We recommend that public organization should improve on the current human resource planning strategy and continue to update its development programme in line with the global best practices. This entails appreciating talents through reward systems, employee involvement, teamwork and excellent interpersonal relationship to secure high productivity in their various organizations.

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