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DETERMINANTS OF JOB PERFORMANCE OF ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF IN LADOKE AKINTOLA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, OGBOMOSO, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the determinants of job performance of administrative staff in Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho, Nigeria. The primary data was sourced from 127 respondents with the aid of structured questionnaire and key informant interview (KII) while secondary data was sourced from records of the Training and Development (T & D) section of the Registry. The result of data analysis showed that qualification, marital status, nature of job and number of training attended are the most important determinants of performance of administrative staff in LAUTECH, Ogbomosho, Nigeria.

KEYWORDS

Job performance determinants, Administrative staff.

INTRODUCTION

The internal structure of an organisation is made up of socio-technical arrangements, which are deliberately designed to achieve the objectives of the organisation; by doing the right thing at the right time and in the right measure. Training can be regarded as an age long concept, which performs the therapeutic functions of shaping skills, attitudes and knowledge that are required for the effective performance of duties and/or assignment (Oladosu and Laogun, 1998).

The role and importance of human resources development in the long term viability of any organisation whether profit or non-profit oriented, cannot be overemphasised. Truly other resources, such as finance, information, and material are also essential. Human resources may be said to remain virtually boundless in the potential impact of the organisation. Thus manpower, the basis of all resources, is the indispensable means of converting other resources to mankind's use and benefit. Manpower can be regarded as pivot in every institution, the need to maintain this all important resource has thus called for training and development and also to keep the staff abreast with the recent technological/other industrial developments. Moreover, staff training and development is essential to the existence and survival of organisations as it enables employees to acquire the relevant professional skills and knowledge for effective performance (Olowu, 1991).

Training in a work organisation is a learning process in which learning opportunities are purposefully structured by the managerial, human resource and training staff working in collaboration with one another, or by external agents acting on their behalf (Shaun, 2006). The aim of the process is to develop in the organisation's employees, the knowledge, skills and attitudes that have been identified as necessary for the effective performance of their work and hence for the achievement of the organisational aims and objectives using the most cost-effective means available.

Different organisations have peculiar programmes and policies for staff training and development. Educational institutions like the University system is among such systems where large numbers of employees are engaged and where staff development programmes are considered critical. The training unit, also referred to as human resource development unit, coordinates the training and development exercise in organisations. Strictly speaking, "the efficiency of any organisation depends directly on how well its members are trained" (Oladosu and Laogun, 1998). Newly hired employees usually need some training before they take up their work while older employees require training to keep abreast of demands of their work, and to prepare for transfers and promotions.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

- i) To examine the personal characteristics of the respondents and analyze their effect on job performance
- ii) To evaluate the effect of participation in training activities on administrative staff job performance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Do the personal characteristics of respondents have any effect on their job performance?
2. Does participation in training programmes have any effect on the performance of workers?

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study;

Ho₁ There is no significant relationship between personal characteristics of administrative staff and their performance.

Ho₂ There is no significant relationship between participation in training and development programmes and job performance of administrative staff in LAUTECH.

LITERATURE REVIEW

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Findings showed that age, gender, marital status and educational qualification have important effects on job performance as well as career commitment.

Kallenberg (1983) found out that old workers are more likely to be committed to their jobs than young workers.

Mathieu and Zajac (1990) also submitted that old person is more committed to duty than a young person who may change jobs as desired. Since he has just started work, he may change his job at any time but an older person who had been working for years will find it difficult to change his job.

Casey (1998) affirmed that the more training an individual has in his career the better for him and the system and as such the greater the performance. It is possible that an increase in the average age of the workforce will have positive, rather than negative impacts on the overall performance of staff in an organisation. This is because increase in average age has direct effects on performance and commitment of staff to an organisation.

Marital status also has direct effects on performance (Mathieu and Zajac 1990). A married person in the early part of the marriage always finds it difficult to be committed to his work because of pressure from children, home etc, but when a person becomes old in marriage or separated, he is always committed to his work. In fact, married people perform more actively than young people who have tendency to change their jobs anytime (Cary 1998).

CONCEPT OF TRAINING

Training relates to the acquisition of knowledge and skill for the purposes of an occupation or task. Its focus is much more narrowly based than education or development, and it is job or task-oriented. Training is a set of activities that provides the opportunity to acquire and improve job related skills (John et al 1998). It is also a planned organisation effort to help employees learn job related knowledge, skills and to remedy shortfalls in established standards of performance. In other words, training helps to bridge the gap between existing performance ability and desired performance standards.

Obi and Zakari (2007) defined training and development as any attempt to improve current or future employee performance by increasing, through learning, an employee's ability to perform, usually by increasing the employee's skills and knowledge, Conroy (1978) on his own looked at employee's training and development as a purposeful effort intended to strengthen the organisations' capability to fulfil its mission effectively and efficiently. He indicated that training and development implies changes that the technological, economic, legal, political and social environments bring upon the organisation. According to him, organisations need to prepare to handle and cope with such changes, if they are to remain competitive, maintain their social utility, survive, grow and expand. This in essence means that for an organisation to be able to cope with future changes, it must invest on its employees through provision of adequate training and development programmes.

Of all the factors of production with which management deals, employees are by far the most important. Olowu (1991) in particular underscored this by saying; "There is the assertion that human resources are the most important of all the resources that a manager utilises to achieve corporate objectives. All other inanimate resources will require the human resources to be activated and energized."

There are other factors such as materials and machines, but an employee with his ability to feel, to think, to conceive ideas and to plan is by far the most valuable and at the same time, the most difficult elements to inspire, train and develop. The success and failure of an organisation therefore depend largely on human elements.

THE NEED FOR TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Human Resource training and development is the process by which an organisation ensures that it has the right number of people, and the right kind of people in the right place at the right time, doing the right thing to serve the purpose of the organisation.

Training is one of the critical components of human resource development, and since resources for training are becoming scarce, it is more important to evaluate training programmes and training events in order to ensure that training is effective, that funds are being utilized well, and that further funding is justified, (Horton, et al 1993). Developing an effective and efficient employee through adequate training continues to be crucial notwithstanding the fact that presently we are in an employers' market. The environment is a dynamic one with a lot of changes emerging on daily basis most especially in the area of technology. The ability of an organisation to effectively achieve its goals therefore depends on the qualities of its employees as manifested by their skills, their knowledge, techniques and abilities. These characteristics must continually be reviewed and upgraded to enable the organisation cope with challenges created by dynamics in the environment.

Many organisations paid little or no attention to issue of training and developing adequate personnel for achieving organisational goal or objectives. Even in organisations where this is done, the exercise is often inappropriate, haphazard or premised on a faulty diagnose of organisation training needs. In other situation where training happens to occur, deployment of staff so trained may be without regard to the skill the staff acquired leading to frustration of personnel so trained and also general inefficiency in the system (Onah, 2003).

Trained and well-developed manpower is the essential ingredient for efficiency and effectiveness in any organisation. Untrained staff constitutes nuisance to his organisation. This is because they not only applied the wrong skill, but also impact such to others who are unfortunate to be under them. Therefore, an essential instrument for achieving organisational objective is the adequacy and effectiveness of available manpower. An organisation whether public or private can only boast of effective operation if it is blessed with trained and developed manpower.

TRAINING METHODS

The method by which job training is delivered often varies based on the need of the company, the trainee and task being performed. However, the factors that may affect the choice of a training method may include age, level of education, number of trainees involved and budget among other things.

Training methods can be discussed under two broad headings:

1. On the job training
2. Off the job training.

On the job Training

Training at the workplace otherwise known as on-the-job training can take a variety of forms. It may be identified with career development and the acquisition of required knowledge, skills and attitudes from the opportunities provided by the work itself. In recent times, there has been a noticeable tendency for some of the training activities that were formerly undertaken at the training centres are now being carried out at the workplace and this may be due to the ever-increasing emphasis on cost effectiveness. It includes the following:-

Delegation, Job rotation, Coaching, E-learning, Apprenticeship, Internship, Simulation, Vestibule training

Off the job training

This is when the training is conducted by full time staff of an organised body and occasionally assisted by lecturers and tutors of higher institution. This requires people to leave their places of work and affords the opportunity to mix with staff of other organisations thereby rubbing minds and sharing opinions as well as experiences together. Cynthia *et al* (2003) stated that conducting the training away from the workplace minimizes distractions and allows trainees to devote their full attention to the materials being taught. Methods commonly used are; Lectures, Discussions groups, supported by power point projections and other audio-visual aids. Case-studies, Role-playing, Management Games, Mentoring, Workshops.

PURPOSES OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of training and development depends on the policy and strategies put in place by different organisations. However the major purpose of training and development is to remove performance deficiencies, whether current or anticipated, which cause employees to perform at less than the desired level (Obi and Zakari 2007). Training and development therefore enables employees to be much more productive. Training for performance improvements is particularly important to organisations with stagnant or declining rate of productivity. They indicated the reasons why employees should be trained to include increasing the adaptability of its workforce by rapidly incorporating the new technology thereby removing obsolescence and to have employees that are productive. He further indicated that training is seen as a motivational device for improving performance and coping with additional responsibilities and that employee's training induces a positive commitment to job performance.

Another purpose of training and development that is especially relevant to organisations that are rapidly incorporating new technology is that of making the current workforce flexible and adaptable. It is along this view that Durowoju (2005) observed that specific occasions for training arise when employees are transferred or promoted or when job changed and new skills must be learned, perhaps because of change introduced by advancing technology and automation. As a result, staff development suggests methods designed to improve the overall effectiveness of employees in their present positions and to prepare them for greater responsibilities when they are promoted.

Obi and Zakari (2007), were of the opinion that the rapid pace of technological change in the work place calls for a "new, more dynamic corporate training strategy – one that anticipates new technologies far in advance and helps employees develop skills, not only for today's technology, but also for tomorrow's and day after".

THE CONCEPT OF PERFORMANCE

Performance is something that interests and concerns everybody, whether it is the performance of a car or individuals and teams in organisations. An employee who performs well is seen as one who achieves good results according to some pre-determined goals. However, a persons' ability, the quality of his tools and

materials, the nature of the work environment and job and efficient managerial coordination of the efforts of the work force all assist the effective performance of a job. Gupta (1980) believed that 'Performance should be defined as the outcomes of work because they provide the strongest linkage to the strategic goals of the organisation, customer satisfaction and economic contributions.'

Performance refers to output results and their outcomes obtained from processes, products and services that permit evaluation and comparison relative to goals, standards, past results, and other organisations (BPIR 2008). It therefore means that ability to perform effectively in any job requires that one has and understands a complete and up-to-date job description for the position, and that one understands the job performance requirements and standards that he is expected to meet.

A more comprehensive view of performance is achieved if it is defined as embracing both behaviour and outcomes as put by Brumbach in Armstrong (2005). 'Performance means both behaviours and results. Behaviours emanate from the performer and transform performance from abstraction to action. Not just the instruments for results, behaviours are also outcomes in their own right – the product of mental and physical efforts applied to tasks – and can be judged apart from results.'

METHODOLOGY

The research is a survey type which collected the opinions of staff through one hundred and twenty seven structured questionnaires. The data collected were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Descriptive Statistics used are frequency, percentages, and standard deviation, while Inferential Statistics used were Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Ordinary least square regression analysis. The study population consisted of one hundred and twenty seven staff selected from different units in the Registry Division of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Nigeria. Registry was chosen because it is at the centre of the university administration; it handles staff matters from recruitment to retirement stages and also handles the admission of students into the university as well as mobilisation for the National Youth Service.

I. THE REGRESSION MODEL

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4 + b_5X_5 + b_6X_6 + b_7X_7 + \mu$$

- Where Y = performance
- X₁ = Age
- X₂ = Educational qualification
- X₃ = Marital Status
- X₄ = Years of experience
- X₅ = Training and Development
- X₆ = Frequency of Training
- X₇ = Type of Training
- μ = error term

II. PEARSON CORRELATION MODEL

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient to test for the existence of significant relationship between two variables is given as

$$r = \frac{\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2}{\sqrt{(\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2)(\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2)}}$$

- Where x = training
- y = performance

DATA ANALYSIS

TABLE 1: ATTENDANCE OF TRAINING

Attendance	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	93	73.2
No	34	26.8
Total	127	100.0

Source: Field survey (2009)

Regarding the attendance of training Table 1. showed that 73.2 percent indicated that they have attended training programme at one time or the other while 26.8 percent have never attended any training programme, which may have negative impact on the performance of their duties. Given the fact that the majority have attended training programmes, it is expected to have positive impact on their efficiency in their duties to the institution.

TABLE 2: DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS BY NO. OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES ATTENDED

No. of Training attended	Frequency	Percentage
0	34	26.8
1	25	19.7
2	32	25.1
3	24	18.9
4	12	9.4
Total	127	100

Source: Field survey (2009)

The result of the analysis on the number of training attended showed that, 26.8 percent did not attend any training at all, 19.7 percent attended training once; 25.1 percent have attended twice; 18.9 percent thrice; while 9.4 percent attended training programmes four times. This shows that majority (63 percent) attended few training to have positive impact on their performance. By implication the number of times respondents attended training programmes appear lesser considering the number of years in service and the kind of job being done.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

Ho1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between personal characteristics of administrative staff and their performance. The result shows that qualification, marital status as well as gender has significant effect on the performance of respondents. Qualification is significant at 1%, Marital status at 5% while Gender is significant at 10%. Therefore the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between personal characteristics of administrative staff and their performance is rejected.

Ho2: Regression analysis was used and it showed that attendance of training by respondents have a positive relationship with their performance. More importantly the number of training attended by respondent have a coefficient of 0.906 and it is highly significant at 1%. This result is in line with theoretical

expectation since we expect performance of respondents to increase as more and more training that can be beneficial to their productivity are attended hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between participation in training and development programmes and job performance of administrative staff in LAUTECH is therefore rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

I. EFFECTS OF PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS ON JOB PERFORMANCE

The selected personal characteristics of the respondents include Gender, Age, Educational qualification and marital status.

The Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method was used in the analysis and the goodness of fit of the model was based upon the value of R², the F-ratio and the number of coefficients that are significant and follow a prior expectation.

The qualification of the respondents (X₂) has a positive and significant effect on the performance of the respondents. The coefficient is 1.009 and it is statistically significant at 1%. This result is in line with a prior expectation and it shows that a unit increase in the qualification of the respondents significantly increases the performance by 1.009 units.

Marital Status of the respondents(X₃) has a positive and significant relationship with their job performance. The coefficient is 2.382 and it is significant at 5%. It is generally believed that a married person has a strong tendency to be responsible.

Gender (X₄) has a positive and significant effect on the performance of respondents. The coefficient is 0.980 and it is significant at 10%. The result suggests that the male gender is more productive than the female. This however should be understood in relation to number of active days spent at work as the female gender has the tendency to be away from job easily. This could be due to physiological reasons or family responsibilities.

TABLE 3

Variable	Co-efficient	t-value
Constant	-9.629	3.270***
Age (X ₁)	-0.271	0.574
Qualification (X ₂)	1.009	3.465***
Marital status (X ₃)	2.382	2.303**
Gender (X ₄)	0.980	1.774*

Source: Data analysis, 2009

- NB *** indicates significant at 1%
- ** indicates significant at 5%
- * indicates significant at 10%

This finding is at variance with the work of Woodruff (1988) in its moderating effects of age, education and tenure (length of service) on the job performance. While maturity in terms of age, the level of education attained as well as tenure in office has helped the respondents tremendously in the discharge of their duties, Woodruff found no support for age, education level attained and tenure as moderators. On his own a small statistically significant relationship was found for these variables on job judgement.

II. EFFECT OF PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING ACTIVITIES ON ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PERFORMANCE ON THE JOB

The variables considered here are: the length of service, nature of job of respondents and the frequency of training attended by the respondents.

The coefficient to the length of years the respondents have put into the service of the university (X₅) has a coefficient of 0.241, although it is not statistically significant. The conformity of the sign of the coefficient to a prior expectation suggests that a unit increase in the length of years and in the service increases the performance by 0.241 unit. However, since the coefficient is not significant, we need to understand that length of years put into service is not the same as acquisition of active experience on the job. It is important that the respondents be taken through periodic assessment exercises. This will force them (as it were) to acquire productive experience on the job and not just be redundant on the same spot as it is usually the case in many public organizations.

The nature of job of respondents (X₆) has a positive and significant relationship with their performance. The coefficient is 0.163 and it is significant at 1%. The result suggests that there is a priority given to correct job allocation among the respondents. Definitely, if respondents are allocated to jobs they are either not trained for or have not acquire experience on, it will negatively affect their performance. It is therefore important that respondents be allocated to jobs by supervisory officers based on training and experience and not on prejudice or personal sentiments so that the collective organizational goals will not be sacrificed.

The frequency of training attended by the respondents (X₇) has a positive and significant effect on their performance. This is in line with theoretical expectation as it is expected that as respondents attend more training their performance has the tendency to increase significantly. Hence it is not just attendance at training that is expected as the result as shown, but the management of LAUTECH must provide necessary incentives for respondents to attend as many relevant training as possible, since it will have a positive feedback on the respondent's performance.

TABLE 4

Variable	Co-efficient	t-value
Constant	-9.629	3.270***
Length of service (X ₅)	0.241	0.798
Nature of job (X ₆)	0.163	3.284***
Attendance of Training (X ₇)	0.745	1.264
No of Training attended (X ₈)	0.906	3.389***
Content of Training (X ₉)	0.281	0.928

Source: Data analysis, 2009

- NB *** indicates significant at 1%

The frequency of training attended by respondent as shown in Table 4 has a positive and significant effect on their job performance. This is in line with theoretical expectation that as respondent attend more training their performance has the tendency to increase significantly.

This finding corroborate what Molina and Otega, 2003 say when they analysed the impact of training on the performance "it is found that higher levels of training are associated with significant benefits which can increase job performance and thus increase firms value"

CONCLUSION

This study established that training indeed is an important factor that must be harnessed into the work schedule of the administrative staff of LAUTECH if the desired performance will be realized.

It could be said that the types of training offered to the administrative staff was relevant to job needs. The implication of this is that such would enhance job performance, thus making it possible to achieve the overall organizational goal of the university setting.

Participation in training and development programme was discovered to have strong effect on job performance of the administrative staff in LAUTECH. This buttresses the fact that learning does not end, and that he is dead that refuses to gain further knowledge. It is therefore imperative to encourage participation in training development.

It is worthwhile to stress that funding of LAUTECH has tremendous effect on staff training. This is true when one considers the fact that human wants are insatiable and it is whatsoever comes in that goes out. The supposed percentage that is earmarked for training development can only be obtained if fund is adequately released from the top. Apart from this, it is how well funds are released that would determine whether or not there would be anything like training of any kind.

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