

Staff Development and Job Performance in Secondary Schools

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Abstract

Human resources are considered by many to be the most important asset of an organization, yet very few employers are able to harness the full potential from their employees. The need for staff development therefore, becomes imperative since it can be seen as training to develop the desired knowledge, skills and ability of the employees to perform well on the job. This paper looked at the concept of staff development and job performance, it suggested that staff development was a continuous process and it should be kept simple, ensure that there is feedback and there is practical application of training to work and job setting.

Keywords: Staff development, Job performance, Secondary school

Introduction

One of the most important components of the education system is the teacher. Development programmes for teachers are important aspects of education processes that deal with the art of acquiring skills in the teaching profession. These are essential exercises that enhance subject mastery, teaching methodology and classroom management. The most important human resources in the secondary school are teachers. Cole (2004) postulated that human resources was the most dynamic of all organizations' resources and therefore, needed considerable attention from organizations management, if they were to realize their full potential in their work. The teacher is one of the most important inputs in the educational system. He shapes the direction and influences, to a great extent, other educational inputs in the educational system. The extent to which this can be done depends on the quality and quantity of staff development received by the teachers.

In many countries, the role and function of schools as well as what is expected of teachers change. Teachers are expected to teach in an increasingly multi-cultural classrooms, to place greater emphasis on integrating students with special learning needs in the classroom and make more effective use of information and communication technologies for teaching. They are also expected to engage more in planning within evaluative and accountability frameworks. Also, due to the fast pace of global and technological developments, organizations now face new challenges. Technological advancement has moulded the need for capabilities and competencies required to perform a particular task. Thus, to cope with these challenges, more improved and

effective training programmes are required by all organizations. Effective training helps the workforce to cope with new challenges more easily, and on time (Odiike, 2021). Tai (2006) stated that when managers were involved in developing effective training programmes for their employees to equip them with desired knowledge, skills and abilities to achieve organizational goals, it helped to improve employees' performance. An employee will become more efficient and productive if he is well trained. Organizations can develop and enhance the quality of their current employees by providing comprehensive training. The training is essential not only to increase productivity but also to motivate and inspire workers by allowing them to know how important their jobs are and giving them all the information they need to perform these jobs.

Staff development, according to Udo in Ezeani and Oladele (2013), training is the development of specific skills and attitudes needed to perform a particular job or series of jobs to maximize the productivity of the individual and improve the overall organization's efficiency. Ohakwe in Ezeani and Oladele (2013) defined it as continuous assistance or coaching given to an employee in order to make him have current knowledge of the job content, scope and relationship within the organizations. Furthermore, effective training programmes may also affect employees' motivation and commitment. In order to prepare their workers to do their jobs as desired, organizations provide training so as to optimize their employees' potential. When employees recognize their organizations' interest in them by offering training programmes, they, in turn, apply their best effort to achieve organizational goals and show high performance on the job. Employees are often responsible for the great bulk of necessary work to be done. Without proper training, employees (both new and current) do not receive the information and develop the skill sets necessary for accomplishing their tasks at their maximum potential.

There was general resistance to investment in training in organizations until recently because of the presumption that employees hired under merit system were qualified and had been trained for the jobs (Okotoni & Erero, 2005). According to Cheramie, Sturman & Walsh (2007), the management of organizations mostly feel hesitant when investing in their human resources due to various reasons. Sometimes in spite of receiving effective and timely training programmes, employees are intended to do it for the sake of their market value and thus the organization's investment in training results in cost rather than profit. It was observed that due to resistance of organizations' resistance to training, individuals were propelled to invest in themselves for their career development and greater performance (Baruch, 2006). Investment in training can improve the employees' performance. Poor performance often results when employees don't know exactly what they are supposed to do, how to do their job or why they need to work in a certain way. Training can help solve the performance problem by explaining the details of the job. Efficiency and effectiveness are ingredients of performance and training for increasing individual employee's performance (Cooke 2001). According to Dessler (2008), even when employees are carefully selected, it does not still guarantee totally acceptable performance from them. Therefore, an employee may still not perform his job as desired if he does not go through staff development. This paper was discussed under the following subtopics

- Concept of Staff Development.
- Concept of Job Performance.
- Types of Staff Development.
- Benefits of Staff Development on Job Performances.
- Guidelines for Staff Development for Job Performance.
- Way Forward.

- Conclusion.
- Suggestions.

Concept of Staff Development

Staff development, according to Yemmy (2010), is a process engaged in to enhance the knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers. This implies the responsibility to create, preserve, evaluate and transmit knowledge through continuous learning. Training refers to a planned intervention aimed at enhancing the elements of individual job performance. It is also about improving on the skills that seem to be necessary for the achievement of organizational goals. Training programmes may also help to decrease the teacher's anxiety or frustration which originates from the work or job. The development of teachers beyond their initial training can serve a number of objectives that include:

- Updating individual knowledge of a subject in the light of recent advances in the area ;
- Updating individual skills, attitudes and approaches in the light of the development of new teaching techniques and objectives, new circumstances and new educational research;
- Enabling individuals to apply changes made to curricula or other aspects of teaching practice strategies;
- Enabling schools to develop and apply new strategies to the curriculum and other aspects of teaching practice;
- Exchanging information and expertise among teachers; and
- Helping weaker teachers to become more effective.

Rhernebergen and Hognum (2002) described core development as a process an organization deliberately undertook in order to develop its employees to meet future challenges. Management also uses this process to create proper human resources development programmes which ensures the employees are trained and their skills upgraded as they climb up the organizations' ladder to occupy positions of higher responsibilities.

Teachers' development may be deferred depending on the needs of the teacher, the school and the State. Training needs must be analysed. The purpose of analysing training needs is to specify what training is needed. In writing the objectives, the standards of performance that a trainee must achieve and the conditions under which the trainee must perform are specified. When the methods of measuring performance are defined, test and performance criteria can be set. In addition, training methods and materials that aid training can be selected. These steps are likely to require a large amount of a trainer's effort.

Concept of Job Performance

Job performance of employees remains an issue of great concern to many organizations, including the school. Performance may be described as an act of accomplishing or executing a given task (Rafiq, et al, 2021). It can also be described as the ability to combine skillfully the right behaviour towards the achievement of organizational goals and objectives (Kuncoro & Dardiri, 2017). Teacher's job performance can be described as the duties performed by a teacher at a particular period in the school system in achieving organizational goals. Also, it is the ability of teachers to combine relevant inputs for the enhancement of the teaching and learning process. According to Peretomode (2012), job performance is determined by the worker's level of participation in the day - to - day running of the organization. There are some factors which contribute to teachers' performance. Some of them are:

- Satisfying the learner through his teaching style and quality;
- Apart from teaching, performance of other assignments as assigned by the principal and the department;
- Management of class discipline, student motivation and improvement on their achievement;
- Performance of his duties in a regular way; and
- Interaction with students, parents, colleagues and high officials

Teachers' job performance acts as an avenue for monitoring and evaluation. Teacher performance assessment is done to make decisions for permanency or promotion of teachers. It is the collection of information about the strengths and weaknesses of teachers so as to improve their capacity and the conditions of education. Finally, it determines the standards an institution sets in order to meet future challenges.

Employees' performance is everything about the performance of employees in an organization. It involves all aspects which directly or indirectly affect and relate to the work of the employees. Performance is classified into five elements: planning, monitoring, developing, rating and rewarding. In the planning stage, planning means setting goals, developing strategies and outlining tasks and schedule to accomplish the goal. Monitoring is the phase in which the goals are looked at to see how well one does in meeting them. Monitoring means continuously measuring performance and providing feedback to employees and work groups on their progress in reaching their goals. On-going monitoring provides the opportunity to check how well employees meet predetermined standards and make changes in unrealistic or problematic standards. During the developing stage, an employee is supposed to improve any poor performance that was seen during the time frame one had worked in the organization. During planning and monitoring of work, deficiencies in performance become evident and can be addressed. The rating is to summarise an employee's performance. This can be beneficial to looking at and comparing performance over time or among various employees. Organizations need to know that their best performances are at the end of the cycle, that is, the rewarding stage. The rewarding stage is designed to reward and recognize outstanding behaviour such as that which is better than expected.

Armstrong (2003) stated that all organizations were concerned with what should be done to achieve a sustainable high level of performance through people. The aim is to develop motivation process and a work environment that will help ensure that individuals deliver results in accordance with the expectation of management. All jobs produce outcomes even if they are not quantified. It is therefore, often necessary to measure performance by reference to what outcome had been attained in comparison with what outcome was expected. Performance is measured in terms of an input-output relationship. It is the measure of the efficiency with which inputs or resources are utilized to create outputs. Performance is employees' productivity. Competency which facilitates performance may include a value, knowledge, skill, attribute or personality trait which a person possesses. Technical competencies are the knowledge or skills that relate to a particular job or position. Technical competencies differ from job to job. Personality competence refers to knowledge, skill, traits or attributes that relate to an individual's personality. It is usually required for success in one's job. Also, managerial competencies refer to the knowledge or skill in the key functions of management for decision making, organizing, communication, motivation and controlling. Outcomes are the employees' competencies that human resources seek to deliver to an organization through training and development.

Many organizations tend to spend huge sums of money on upgrading their plant and equipment yet little on upgrading their human capital. Teachers are an asset to the school. Without skill development, teachers' performance could be hampered. If the teachers do not receive on-going training, up to date equipment will not be used optimally. Employees who continuously upgrade their skill will also improve their productivity. The more skilled the workforce is, the easier it will be for the entire organization to adapt to changes that may arise in the organization.

Types of Staff Development

The following are the various types of staff development provided in organizations:

On -The-Job Training (Method)

On-the-job training focuses on the acquisition of skills within the work environment, generally under normal working conditions. On-the-job training is actually done when an employee gets the training while performing his or her assigned task (Rao, 2014 and Osamwonyi, 2016). The purpose of the on-the job training session is to provide employees with task-specific knowledge and skills in the work area. The knowledge and skills presented during on-the-job training are directly related to job requirements, job instruction and techniques. Job rotation, coaching and mentoring are the common forms of the on-the-job training method.

Coaching enables the teacher to observe instruction and then talk about the observation with a coach. Then it is more likely to be effective. Although this feature hinges on the expertise of the coach to do his work, if the coach is not an expert in teaching, then it is unlikely that coaching will be effective. The use of a video allows a coach to view teacher's practice and work on instructional improvement without the need for classroom observation.

Coaching involves working one-on-one with the learner to conduct a need assessment and set major goals to accomplish the plan. The learner drives these activities and the coach provides continuous feedback and support. The coaching method solves precise problems. On-the-job training is training through practice at work. Coaching is to enhance a person's competency in a specific skill area by providing a process of observation, reflection and action. On-the-job training is perfect for not only improving the skills of a teacher, but also his performance. It is also used to develop the employees' verbal and written instructions, demonstrations and observations through practice by imitation. A great deal of learning takes place on the job.

Another form of on-the job training is job rotation which helps to prevent burnout and boredom. It helps to make employees flexible, adaptable, innovative, eager to learn and able to communicate effectively. Job rotation also helps the employee to be multi-skilled and able to do any task in the work area.

Another is mentoring which is having a more experienced teacher provide help and support to a less experienced colleague to improve his job performance. Mentoring also promotes an individual's awareness and refinement of his own professional development by providing and recommending structured opportunities for reflection and observation. Mentoring is a confidential process through which an experienced professional provides another with information, support, feedback and assistance for the purpose of refining present skills, developing new ones and enhancing problem solving and decision making in a way that promotes professional development.

Off -The-Job Training (Method)

Off - the -job training (method) sometimes may be necessary to get away from the immediate work environment to a place where frustration and the hustle of work are eliminated.

This enables employees to be exposed to new and innovative ideas. It takes place in an area that has been specifically equipped for training. They include lectures, training by management, institutions, conferences, seminars and case studies. Vestibule training which takes place in an environment other than the actual workplace is called off-the-job-training. Off-the-job training is usually designed to meet the shared learning needs of a group rather than a particular individual's needs. Lectures, computer based training, game and simulations are the common forms of off-the-job training methods. Off-the-job training is a kind of training that is conducted outside the normal work situation whereby the trainee is trained to use or apply skills through simulations, classroom or video. It permits the individual to leave their primary place of work for a different location.

Off-the-job training includes techniques such as laboratory, t-group training and communication workshop. Changes derived from the training include a more favourable self-perception, reduced prejudiced, improved scores on interpersonal relations, and changes in interpersonal behaviour as perceived by others.

In addition, role play is a method of off-the-job training that allows employees to act out work scenarios. It involves the presentation of problems in an organization and proffered solutions. The trainees are provided with some information related to the description of the roles, concerns, objectives, responsibilities, emotions and general description of the situation and the problems they face. The trainees are, thereafter, required to act out their roles. This method is more effective when carried out under a stress-free or alternatively, a minimal-stress environment so as to facilitate easier learning. Vestibule training includes role playing, case studies and simulations. It ensures that costly mistakes are avoided and acquisition of knowledge is enhanced since the trainees practise with identical equipment and tools.

Benefits of Staff Development on Job Performance

There are many benefits of staff development on job performance. Chukwu (2009) asserted that the aims of staff development were to improve the quality of teaching and learning as well as the performance of those with teaching and management responsibilities. In a similar vein, Amadi (2013) opined that staff development contributed to teachers' job performance by increasing their knowledge, skills, technical rationality, work quality and waste reduction. The training helps to enhance a high level of productivity and efficiency by reinforcing desirable teaching, learning methods and procedures, contributing to curriculum innovations and technologies which ensure detailed and expert delivery of lesson objectives, and enriching teacher's academic focus and interest. When the quality of a job is improved and there is waste reduction, it encourages the realization and accomplishment of organizational goals and objectives. In addition, when the desirable teaching/learning methods and procedures are reinforced through training, the teachers become more responsible in their task analysis and procedures. These ensure detailed and expert delivery of lesson objectives and ultimately, affect the job performance of the teacher.

Guidelines for Staff Development for Job Performance

The following guidelines are suitable to assess an employee's performance to ensure the intervention of training;

- **Ability**
Evaluate the employee's ability to decide to what extent he can perform the job. In addition, evaluate the employee's present and past psychological state to decide if he has the mental ability to actually start or even continue the task.
- **Standards**
Evaluate how the employees perceive their jobs in terms of understanding their tasks and duties, smooth cooperation with their supervisors and awareness of time limits. Also, evaluate how goals and procedures are presented to employees in terms of clearance and availability (soft or hard copies).
- **Knowledge and skills**
Evaluate the employee's background knowledge and adaptness with compatible with tasks and duties. If they are not, check if there are trainings to narrow the knowledge and skill gaps.
- **Measurement**
Evaluate your employee by measuring performance in terms of task performance
- **Feedback**
Check if the employee receives regular feedback on his work performance or not.
- **Environment**
Check if the employee is surrounded by the necessary tools needed for task completion, if enough time is given for task completion or if the working environment is comfortable for task completion.
- **Motivation**
Check if there is any sort of incentive for good performance or punishment for bad performance. Additionally, check for any guard for effective employees if they are punished with extra tasks just because of their good performance.

When undertaking staff development, time factor is very important in training. Time should be controlled therefore, to get perfect results from the training. Training should be completed in minimum time. It also helps to minimize cost. To make staff development useful, it should be well planned and systematically implemented. Employees need to see training experiences as relevant to their current work.

Measurement is an important concept in performance management. It is the basis for providing and generating feedback. It identifies where things go well to provide the foundation for building further success and indicates where things do not go so well so that corrective actions can be taken. The fundamental purpose of measurers is to improve performance. There are several methods of assessing individuals' ability to perform a job effectively, and to identify the gap between effective and current performance for which a training solution will contribute to closing the gap. Muchel' Le (2007) stated that the manager could either question employees about their job, problems or perceived development needs or even observation could be used to investigate the work flow. Data from internal records can also be analysed to identify patterns and trends in the performance of an employee. But care should be taken not to compromise on the quality of work. Quality of work can be measured by several means, for example, the percentage of work to be redone or rejected. Also, the quality of work can be measured by the timelines and how fast work is accomplished. A good performance appraisal requires that all employees doing similar jobs be evaluated using the same standards. These appraisals are a

major performance measure. It should be noted that the degree of change in the external environment, for example technology legislation and so on can influence staff development.

Furthermore, Ivancevich (2010) asserted that interviews, surveys, review of records, observation, and discussion with management and subject matter experts were methods used to conduct training need identification or assessment. These provide the basis for what type of staff development would be needed. When a need analysis is done, an instruction design should be developed and the validation of testing with a small representative audience should be next. Implementation of the training should be followed by evaluation. Olaniyan and Ojo (2008) asserted that before training was organized, the training should be identified. After the training, the programme evaluation should be carried out. Positive transfer of the training to the job should be encouraged.

Way Forward

Employee development is something that most people imagine as intrusive all-day group training sessions. Unfortunately, this dreaded approach to employee development is just the opposite of how staff development should occur. Staff development can manifest itself in many forms of training, evaluation, educational programme and even feedback (Katcher and Synder, 2003). It is believed that employees who receive training in line with their individual or organizational goals will become more efficient in what they do. Organizations should look at the positive effects of training on employees' performance and consider employee development as a target investment in making the workers more efficient. More importantly, development plans that include train the trainer (development that trains employees to become trainers of skills) can provide exponential benefits to the organization.

Although there are innumerable reasons and benefits derivable from training, in most cases, training and development programmes fail. This is regardless of whether the courses were attended in the best universities or delivered by the most prominent trainer. According to Perry (2007) and Kleiman (2003), when training objectives are not in line with the training need, for instance, if the root problem of poor performance is related to factors such as reward system and job design, and if these are not related to the training, the training will be pointless. In the absence of objectives to provide direction and focus, training will certainly not succeed. Objectives offer important direction and focus for learning the final product which is change in job performance. In addition, training will be worthless if the participants regard the training programme as a mere event without any change in their behaviour. Generally, employees are not held accountable for the use of the contents of their training programme in the work place. Unless they are held accountable, no change will occur in their behaviour that can influence their job performance (Klelman, 2003). Furthermore, if the conditions for learning are not conducive, the training effort will be in vain. When there is also no support from managers and supervisors, the employees will resist implementing the new skills and knowledge acquired during the training course. All organizations which develop good training programmes according to the needs of the employees and the organization always get good results.

Swart et al (2005) asserted that bridging the performance gap referred to implementing a relevant training intervention for the sake of developing particular skills and abilities of the workers and enhancing employees' performance. Swart et al (2005) further elaborated by stating that the need for training facilitated organizations to recognize that their workers did

not performing well and thus, their knowledge, skills and attitude needed to be moulded according to the organizations' needs. There might be various reasons for the poor performance of the employees such as workers' lack of motivation to use their competencies, lack of confidence in their capabilities or the problem of work life conflicts. All the above mentioned aspects must be considered by the organization when selecting the most appropriate training interventions that will help to solve organizational problems and meet the organization's expectation of desired job performance. Therefore, the following should be done during staff development:

- Keep it simple: Identify and focus on a few instructional priorities, and what teachers need to learn, redefine or improve. Select these priorities with the input from the teachers themselves. The priorities and expectations should be clearly communicated to all the teachers affected.
- Organize all available support to help the teachers implement the instructional priorities. It is believed that if there is no proper follow-up support for the teachers, they may become confused and frustrated.
- The school administrator should make a deliberate effort to support teachers' implementation of instructional priorities through training events, coaching, principal observation, staff meetings and evaluation of the systems. The school environment should be such that gives room for collaborative and intellectual stimulation for teachers.
- Create a feedback loop to help teachers monitor implementations.
- Change takes time: The school administrator should ensure that teachers' development is a continuous process and that active learning opportunities, feedback and support are built right into the development programme.
- Ensure that the content of training programmes are directly relevant to work and job settings in the organization.
- Ensure that there is practical application of the training to the work and job setting by means of a systematic follow-up.

Conclusion

Staff development plays a vital role in building competencies of new as well as current employees to perform their job in an effective way. It also prepares employees to hold future positions in an organization with full capabilities and helps to overcome the deficiencies in any job related area. Staff development is considered as a sort of investment by the organization that not only brings high return on investment but also supports to achieve a competitive advantage. Effective training is considered to be a key factor for improved performance as it can enhance the level of employees and organizations' competency. Particularly, training develops skills, competencies and abilities which ultimately improve employees' performance and organizations' productivity. A training programme is the stimulant that workers require to improve their performance and capabilities which consequently, increases organizational productivity. Therefore, staff development should be organized on the basis of employees' specific needs and organizational goals and objectives. Efficient and effective training is the thoughtful intervention aimed at attaining the learning that is necessary for upgrading employees' performance.

Suggestions

The following suggestions were made:

- Positive reinforcement after training for transmission of acquired knowledge and skills should be made available.
- Working conditions in the organizations should be improved so that they become conducive for the transfer of skills and knowledge acquired from training.
- Provision of feedback to employees after training is recommended in order for employees to become aware of areas where they can improve their performance.
- The employees should have compulsory training programmes in order to improve their knowledge.
- Government, through the Ministry of Education should provide the teachers with opportunities to improve their foundational skills so as to enable them to cope with more complex situations
- Staff development should be connected to everyday practice of teaching. It should not be too generic but be related to the curriculum or the specific instructional problems teachers face.
- Staff development should be frequent and implemented.
- Training programmes should be planned to meet the needs and objectives of organizations. The learning required in terms of what skills and knowledge should be learnt and what attitudes need to be changed should be clearly defined from the beginning of the training programme.
- Staff development should be properly monitored and evaluated to ensure its effectiveness in producing desired learning outcomes.

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