Problems of Managing Human Resources in Nigerian Higher Institutions

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ABSTRACT

HumanResources are the life blood of an organization. They are endowed with discretionary decision-making power and thus have competitive advantages over other resources. This paper examined the problems of human resources management in Nigerian higher institutions. This study was necessitated by the need to ensure improved organizational performance and attainment of objectives as higher institutions of the 21st century. Both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized for the study. The findings from empirical studies revealed that they are many problems of managing human resources in Nigerian higher institutions such as inadequate financing, violent trade unionism among staff, ambiguity in policy interpretations poor productivity, poor quality of work life, poor health and safety at work e.t.c.The study concluded that the challenges of managing human resources in higher institutions should be addressed in order for Nigerian higher institutions to attain their objectives as institutions of the 21^{st}century.

Keywords:

 human resources; management; organizational performance

INTRODUCTION

Human resources are the life-blood of any enterprise or institution. They combine other resources in the right mix to formulate appropriate strategies for the accomplishment of the desired objectives of the enterprise. This important attribute of HR assist the enterprises to make rightful decisions and respond effectively to the threats and opportunities within the environment of the organization (Farant, 1982: Gerald, 1995; Hanif, 2002).Thus the enterprise depends highly on its HR for success and survival. This dependence continuously   increases the complex and turbulent nature of the business environment of this century (Anyimand Ikemoria2011).

According to Ogunsaju (2006),human resource management is the effective mobilization of human resources based upon appropriate recruitment, selection, training and placement of appointed staff in order to achieve the organizational set down goals and objectives. Human resources are useful tools employed in harmonizing the needs of the employees with goals and objectives of the organization on a continuous basis (Akintoye et al 2008).

The success of an organization is not only determined by the quality of personnel available but how well these human resources harnessed and coordinated

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towards, realizing the goals of the organization (Vance, and Paik, Y. 2006).

It is on this note that this paper reviews literature on human resources, problems of managing human resources, and solutions to the problems of managing humanresources in Nigeria higher institutions.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to

i.   review literature on human resources
ii.   examines problems of managing human resources in Nigeria higher institutions and;
iii.   recommend solutions to the problems of managing human resources in Nigeria higher institutions.

Literature Review

Nakpodia(2010) defined human resource as "part of management, which is concerned with people at work and with their relationship within the organization". London Institute of personal Management (1963) described human resource management as "the responsibility of those who manage people as well as descriptive specialists in management. This recognition acknowledged that human resource management is a distinction function of management in any public or private organization. The Personnel and Industrial Relations defined human resource management as "the process of developing, applying and evaluating policies, procedures, methods and programmes relating to the individual in an organization''.

Human resources are saddled with the responsibility of designing and implementing policies and programmes that will enhance human abilities and improve the organizations' overall effectiveness. The human resources practitioners play four critical rules in an organization or institution. They are to:

i.   create and implement policies of an organization
ii.   offer advice and counsel the employees on matter ordering on productivity, safety at work, career or management etc.
iii.   control of human resources programmes and laid down procedures
iv.   provision of services that assist line managers in performing their job or serving the organizational units.

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Anyimet al (2011) identified the following as major factors militating against effective human resource management in Nigerian higher institutions:

i)   Poor productivity of workers in Nigeria
ii)   Poor quality of work life
iii)   Insecurity and hazardous environment
iv)   Quota system in employment
v)   Labour dissatisfaction at work

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vi)   Changing role of government or state in industrial relations

vii)   Economic recession and;

viii)   Diversity of workforce

According to Owojori and Asaolu (2010), the problems of human resources in the polytechnics include inadequate financing, violent trade unionism among staff, disagreement on policy matters, lack of trust and ambiguity in policy interpretations.

They also pointed out some of the problems of human resources in Nigerian universities.

They are:

i)   Inadequate capital

ii)   Violent trade unionism among staff

iii)   Disagreement on policy matters

iv)   Lack trust

v)   Dictation from the political class

From the foregoing discussion on challenges of managing human resources in higher institutions, the problems of managing human resources are:

Inadequate finance: -Lack of finance could be responsible for inadequate facilities such as office furniture and fittings, instructional materials, delay in salary delay/non-payment of allowances etc. which could result in face-off taking a variety such as confrontation and strike.

Violent trade unionism among staff: - Misinformation, misinterpretation or lack of good communication network could cause tradeunions to be aggressive and get out of hand. This is one of the hindrances to human resource management in Nigeria higher institutions.

Lack of trust: - There is usually lack of trust between management and members of staff in higher institutions. This could result in poor communication or ambiguity in communication content and selection in our union.

Staff recruitment and selection: - According to Ogunruku(2010), the principle of recruiting the best staff into higher institutions have been compromised, this hasimpacted negatively into the human, resource management in Nigerian institutions.

Dictation from the political class: - There have been worries over time about this the type of people that are appointed to represent the external community on the governing councils of higher institutions in Nigeria. Often times, they are basically and prepondently politicians without cognate knowledge of the higher institution culture and ethos. This political class could dictate policies to the disinterest staff. This causes internal conflicts in higher institution community.

Disagreement on policy matters: Policy matters could be source or disagreement. Instances abound when discrepancy in salary/remuneration among staff of different unions (e.g. ASUU and NASU) have created problems for university management.

Methodology

A totalof 180 questionnaires were distributed tomembers of staff at ObafemiAwolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. All hand was on deck to ensure that are the accurate number of questionnaires distributed to respondents were collected accordingly.

The results of the findings from general profile of the members or staff and problems of managing human resources are illustrated in table 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: General Profile of the Member of staff

Characteristics	Frequency N=180	Percentage N=180
Age		
20-30	15	8.33
31-40	36	20
41-50	57	31.67
51-60	66	36.67
61-65	6	3.33
Educational Qualification		
Secondary	12	7
OND/NCE	15	8
First Degree/HND	33	18.33
Masters Degree	75	41.67
PhD	45	25
Union		
NASU	15	8.33
SANU	93	51.67
ASUU	63	35
NAAT	9	5

Source: Fieldwork, (2014)

Table 2: Problems of Managing Human Resource in Nigeria Higher Institutions

	Frequency N = 180		Percentages = 180	
Challenges	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**
Inadequate finance	165	15	91.67	8.33
Poor Productivity	144	36	80	20
Insecurity and hazardous environment	144	36	80	20
Violent trade unionism	162	18	90	10
Lack of trust	144	36	80	20
Dictation from the political class	165	15	91.67	8.33
Disagreement on policy matters	111	69	61.67	38.33
Politicization of staff recruitment and selection	114	66	63.33	36.67

Source: Fieldwork, (2014)

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The results of the findings from table 2 show that majority of the respondents attest to the fact that human resource management face serious challenges which include inadequate finance, violent trade unionism, lack of trust, politicization of staff recruitment, dictation from the political class, disagreement on policy matters, insecurity and hazardous environment.

Conclusion

The study examines the challenges facing human resources management in Nigerian higher institutions. It also reviews literatures on human resources and problems oof managing human resources in Nigeria higher institutions. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

The study concluded that the problems facing human resources in higher institution should be addressed in order for them to attain their stipulated objectives as institutions of the 21st century.

Recommendations

In the light of the crucial issues discussed, the paper recommends as follows:

i. The government should provide adequate funding to higher institutions for proper maintenance of equipment,facilities and other expenditures of emergent need.

ii. There should be democratization of administrativeprocesses in the Nigerian higher institutions.

iii. Nigerian higher institutions must employ ICT in order to provide

better human resource management service to their constituents and stakeholders.

iv. University autonomy on policy making matters should be encouraged and a consistent and effective communication network should actually be maintained.

v. Staff welfare should be given priority to enhance greater productivity and cooperation.

vi. Management of higher institutions must ensure that there is good rapport and human relation between heads of the various departments, sections, units and their staff.

vii. Higher institutions in Nigeria must look inward on ways of generating or improving on its internally generated revenue to complement government efforts.

viii. Regular trainings should be organized for head of the various faculties, directorates, units, institutes, departments and sections in the art of personnel management.

Finally, professional administrators should master their areas competently in order for higher institutions to have effective and efficient management of human resources.

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