

Personnel Management: Implications for the Effectiveness of the School System

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Abstract: - This paper takes a qualitative view of the administration of personnel management function and its implication for the school. In this paper, the meaning of personnel management, various personnel management functions of educational managers and their implication for the effectiveness of the school system were discussed. The paper concluded that personnel management is inevitable to the school system because it is as important as the establishment of the school itself. The need for personnel to be managed in the school, cannot be over-emphasized. Every educational manager should understand that the benefits of personnel management functions are dependent on the implementation of these functions during the staffing process. Therefore, efforts should be made to perform these functions discussed in this paper. If adhered to, it can lead any school to success in terms of goal attainment and increased productivity. It was recommended among several others that educational managers should set clear standards that specify what is acceptable in the organization as well as the guidelines for performing tasks. This will ensure that every worker understands what is expected of them.

Keywords: Administration; Personnel; Personnel Management; Personnel management functions; School system.

I. INTRODUCTION

Every educational organization whether formal or informal is characterized by the interplay of several variables that are often harnessed to achieve predetermined objectives. Among the variables include humans, materials, money, machines, school plants, time and other resources. All these resources mentioned herein, have a significant contribution that can make or limit the progress of the organization. Humans constitute part of the most important factors in school growth and development. It is the persons who are available in an organization that controls every other variable in the organization. Just like humans control other variables, they too, need proper management for improved productivity and work performance.

The role of the personnel department deals with procuring, hiring, training, placing, utilizing and maintaining an effective workforce that will aid in the accomplishment of school objectives. The responsibility for good personnel administration rests on every supervisor and manager in the organization. Personnel management is not a one-man responsibility nor can it ever be achieved by one individual. It is a cooperative endeavour that should stem from a common

feeling and concept and should progress in a unified coordinated manner (Vaghela, 2015).

II. MEANING OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Personnel management has been defined variously by different scholars who have attempted to explain the concept. According to Vaghela (2015), it is that phase of management which deals with the effective control and use of manpower as distinguished from other sources of power. It includes planning, organizing, directing and controlling various operative function of procuring, developing, maintaining and utilizing a labour force such that the objectives, for which the company is established are attained economically and effectively. Prachi (2018) sees personnel management as the systematic process of obtaining, using and maintaining a satisfied workforce. It is a significant part of management concerned with employees at work and with their relationship within the organization. Singh (2012), maintains that personnel management involves two categories of functions - planning, organizing, motivating and controlling which are common to all managers, including personnel managers and are performed by all of them.

It can be inferred from the definitions presented above that personnel management is a systematic process of ensuring that all human-related variables within an organization are properly recruited, selected, remunerated and given other such working conditions that can facilitate their work performance and goal attainment. It is concerned primarily with improving organizational productivity through the effective use of all humans within the organization. The rationale behind personnel management is to create a work-life balance amongst all workers. The process of personnel management has to be systematically planned by the school administrator.

Personnel management thus refers to the process by which the administrators or those saddled with the responsibility to control an organization, ensure that proper functions are performed in order to boost the morale of the workers and to promote the attainment of goals and objectives. For proper administration of personnel, the manager has to be conceptually and technically skillful in the discharge of his or her administrative duties.

III. FUNCTIONS OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

The followings are functions of personnel management:

1. *Personnel planning*

The organization is saddled with the responsibility of determining in advance, the required personnel necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school for the attainment of intended objectives. An organization without proper manpower planning, may to a great extent, not be able to employ the right type of personnel with the right skills necessary to function effectively. According to Akpan (2011), this function is commonly called manpower planning and starts with an assessment of current personnel (teaching and non-teaching personnel) in the school system. Forecasts are then made of the total future of personnel requirements of the school.

2. *Recruitment*

This is the process of searching for prospective employees and stimulating them to apply for job vacancies. Recruitment involves scouting round several places to seek for suitable candidates. Recruitment is the entering point of all staff of any establishment except for those who are appointed or elected. Bankole (2000), states that recruitment has to do with those policies, programmes, and activities that are connected with attracting applicants who have a high probability of success in their jobs.

However, there are certain general requirements and qualifications which are essentials for recruitment. These include Civil Status, Age, Sex, Domicile, Educational Status, Experience, Technical, and Personality Trait. Employment or procurement of employees is carried out in the stage of recruitment, selection, placement, and induction (Mbieli, 2006). The process of recruitment must be systematically done by knowledgeable persons. The requirements in terms of qualification, vacancies, and expectations from prospective applicants should also be clearly spelled out so that each applicant gets to know whether he or she is qualified in the first place for any vacant position and whether he or she meets other criteria for selection.

3. *Selection*

Selection means searching for the proverbial needle in the haystack, and a good selection technique may effectively remove the hay, but it is critical to be able to recognize the needle (Gareth, 2005). The purpose of selection is to choose from available candidates who have applied for a job based on certain indices such as level of education, competency, and experience on the job. The selection process in the school system however, function effectively only when enough qualified candidates have been identified either from the school system or the recruitment process. It can also be said that for effectiveness to be ensured in the organization, those in charge of selection must ensure that they stick to established standards. They must make sure that the people

who meet the established standards are selected and in their right proportion, and not the other way round. All forms of biases, bribery, and corruption must be avoided at this stage.

4. *Placement*

Placement refers to a situation where candidates considered to be qualified by the selection panel, are assigned jobs that suit their qualification, interest, and areas of specialization. Many organizations are unproductive and inefficient as a result of poor placement. When employees are recruited into the organization, they should be assigned duties based on competence and specialization. In other words, 'a square peg should not be put in a round hole.'

5. *Orientation*

Orientation is a means of strengthening the workforce of newly employed personnel to make them understand their job expectations and to adapt to the organization's norms, values, ethics, and conduct. Without proper orientation, many new employees face increased likelihood of making mistakes or engaging in activities that do not conform to the established standards of the school, which might promote wastage of resources as well as hinder the growth and productivity of the organization.

6. *Training and Development*

Personnel training involves the process of developing skills and learning concepts, rules, and attitudes in order to increase the effectiveness of workers and improve the standard of job performance. This training must be done and as when due so that newly recruited employees do not make any mistake that will cost the organization. Training should cover both general training and specific training for each individual based on his/her expected role in the organization. Employees should also be trained on how to operate and manipulate specialized machines and software programs if any, of the organization. Personnel development is the process of improving, moulding, changing and developing the skills, knowledge, creative ability, aptitude, attitudes and values commitment based on the present and future requirements of the job (Akpan, 2011). Development, when used in relation to personnel management, refers to the process of matching the employees to the changing demands of the organization as the world changes. It involves retraining, career planning, performance appraisal, and promotion.

7. *Compensation*

This involves the provision of equitable and fair pay to employees. It involves the administration of workers' salaries/wages and fringe benefits. This is a deliberate reciprocation from the management of the organization to the workers for their efforts and inputs to the organization. Compensation is one of the most important tools for organizational productivity. It has the ability to raise employee motivation levels putting them in the right state of mind to perform assigned duties with all amount of happiness.

8. Integration

All the personnel in the school organization must be adequately integrated. Integration refers to the unification of the various persons available in the various department of the organization. The manager must perform the function of coordination in this regard as he must ensure that everybody performs their duties individually and collectively to achieve stated aims.

9. Job Analysis

Job analysis is a primary tool in personnel management. In this method, a personnel manager tries to gather, synthesize and implement the information available regarding the workforce in the concern. A personnel manager has to undertake a job analysis so as to put the right man on the right job. There are two outcomes of job analysis:

- a. Job description: is an organized factual statement of job contents in the form of duties and responsibilities of a specific job. The preparation of a job description is very important before a vacancy is advertised. It tells, in brief, the nature and type of job. This type of document is descriptive in nature and it constitutes all those facts which are related to a job such as : Title/ Designation of job and location in the concern; The nature of duties and operations to be performed in that job; The nature of authority- responsibility relationships; Necessary qualifications that are required for job; Relationship of that job with other jobs in a concern and The provision of physical and working condition or the work environment required in performance of that job.
- b. Job specification is a statement which tells us minimum acceptable human qualities which helps to perform a job. Job specification translates the job description into human qualifications so that a job can be performed in a better manner. Job specification helps in hiring an appropriate person for an appropriate position. The contents are job title and designation; Educational qualifications for that title; Physical and other related attributes; Physique and mental health; Special attributes and abilities; Maturity and dependability; Relationship of that job with other jobs in a concern.

10. Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal is a careful analysis of all the employee as well as their duties to determine the extent to which every employee in the school has carried out his assigned duties and to determine the strengths, weaknesses, speed, and efficiency of employees in performing assigned duties. According to Prachi, (2018), performance appraisal is the systematic evaluation of the performance of employees and to understand the abilities of a person for further growth and development. Performance appraisal is generally done in systematic ways which are as follows: (a) the supervisors

measure the pay of employees and compare it with targets and plans; (b) the supervisor analyses the factors behind work performances of employees. The employers are in the position to guide the employees for better performance.

11. Job Evaluation

Job evaluation is closely related to performance appraisal. However, the difference is in the recipient (personnel or job). Thus, job evaluation is different from performance appraisal. In job evaluation, worth of a job is calculated while in performance appraisal, the worth of an employee is rated. Job evaluation is the process of determining the relative worth of a job. In other words, job evaluation is concerned with analysing all the available jobs within the organization to determine the complexity or simplicity of each job, as well understanding the type of personnel suitable to handle it, and the compensation accruable to whoever performs it.

12. Promotion

Promotion is simply increasing the ranks of an employee based on their level of commitment, qualifications obtained, and years of service. It is usually done in the duration of years which vary from one organization to another. "This is the upward reassignment of an employee in an organization hierarchy accompanied by increased responsibilities, enhanced status and usually with increased income though not always so." (Akpan, 2011. Pp. 42).

13. Personnel records management

Personnel records are documents that contain information which describe employees or that accounts for the activities of employees in an organization. Records must be kept in the school environment for the purpose of appraisal, evaluation, promotion as well as information. When records of personnel are kept, it can help those who are conducting research to know about the personnel strength of the school. Also, proper personnel record keeping helps in audit and decision making.

14. Personnel relations

Employee relations is one of the most vital activities in any organization. It refers to a system where one employee in an organization relates to another effectively or in a conflicting manner. Fajana (2000) cited by Akpan (2011), defines industrial relations as everything that affects the relationship between workers and employers, from the time employees joins the work organization until he leaves the job.

This implies that the manager should create an enabling work environment, establish a good communication link between himself/herself and the employees and ensure that there is a cordial relationship between them. There are different types of employee relations which include formal and informal relationship. Formal relationship refers to the relationship between one employee and another that conforms to the established formal rules and regulations, scalar chain,

the hierarchy of authority and communication flows, which are statutory for the realization of school goals. For instance, discussions on the way forward of an organization, issuing/answering queries, submitting results reports, staff evaluation etc. Informal relationship refers to activities that foster unity, promotes love, oneness, and sense of belonging amongst employees in the organization; but that is not important for the attainment of school goals. Employees relate informally within an organization through welfare meetings, engaging in thrift and other small groups gathering, and on the basis of personal attraction, or on an interesting basis.

15. Discipline

Discipline is a process of maintaining standards and bringing to book, any erring member of the organization that fails to meet the established standards. A disciplined employee will be organized and an organized employee will be disciplined always. Employee behaviour is the base of discipline in an organization. Discipline implies conforming to the code of conduct established by the organization. Discipline in an organization ensures productivity and efficiency. It encourages harmony and co-operation among employees as well as acts as a morale booster for the employees. In the absence of discipline, there will be chaos, confusion, corruption, and disobedience in an organization. In short, discipline implies obedience, orderliness, and maintenance of proper subordination among employees. Akpan (2011), prescribed two approaches which can be used to discipline personnel – Preventive discipline (Setting of standards and rules to guide employee behavior) and Corrective Discipline (the remedial discipline which is taken as an action against a defaulting or erring personnel).

16. Employee grievance

A grievance is a negative feeling held by an employee towards another or the organization. This feeling usually emanates from the dissatisfaction of a worker or through conflicts between workers. Grievance may also result from the following factors: (a) improper working conditions such as strict production standards, unsafe workplace, bad relation with managers, etc.; (b) Irrational management policies such as overtime, transfers, demotions, inappropriate salary structure, etc.; (c) violation of organizational rules and practices.

According to Prachi (2018), Grievance may be any genuine or imaginary feeling of dissatisfaction or injustice which an employee experiences about his job and its nature, about the management policies and procedures. It must be expressed by the employee and brought to the notice of the management and the organization. Grievances take the form of collective disputes when they are not resolved. Also, they will then lower the morale and efficiency of the employees. Unattended grievances result in frustration, dissatisfaction, low productivity, lack of interest in work, absenteeism, etc. In short, grievance arises when employees' expectations are not fulfilled from the organization as a result of which a feeling of

discontentment and dissatisfaction arises. This dissatisfaction must crop up from employment issues and not from personal issues.

17. Personnel health and safety management

Personnel health refers to the health conditions and safety levels of workers in an organization. All school managers must ensure that proper and conducive environment that will promote or maintain good health of the workers are provided. According to Akpan (2011), "the office personnel work in the offices provided. As far as practicable, the offices and the entire work environment must be kept clean and free from all bad odour and the offices should be well ventilated" (pp. 43). To ensure safety, precautions must be stated especially given the fact that accidents are undesirable.

IV. IMPLICATIONS OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT FOR THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

Having explored the critical aspect of personnel management and most importantly, the functions of personnel management in the school, it is necessary to state that administration of personnel management has a lot of functional implications to the school system.

- i. It offers the school manager an opportunity to plan in advance the people he needs to employ that will be able to carry out skilfully, the activities of the school to achieve set goals. When proper manpower planning is not done, anything goes, and the school as a consequence, will not be able to determine the number of teaching or non-teaching staff required, the qualification, and other skills needed. This will hinder the recruitment and selection process.
- ii. Recruitment and selection if done in an unbiased manner by the government or other private enterprises provides a platform for the right people with appropriate skills to be employed. However, a deviation from this will surely result in the employment of incompetent, unqualified and irrelevant teachers that will not be able to pilot the affairs of the school.
- iii. Employees need proper guidance if they must perform effectively. This means that it is not out of place for them to be orientated, trained, retrained as well as appraised. It is one thing to possess skills and another thing to implement and adapt the skills to given situations. Not giving proper orientation to newly recruited staff may limit their functionality, their skills notwithstanding. They may perform duties anyhow against the acceptable standards of the organization.
- iv. Employees need to be promoted, remunerated, evaluated, disciplined and provided with the right tools, as well as enabling and conducive environment for work performance if the organization must achieve its intended objectives. Most of these variables are motivational in nature and can be used

to raise, increase and boost employee morale and willingness to work.

- v. Discipline is vital for the school to shun unacceptable behaviour that does not conform to standards from employees. Discipline might also come alongside with punishment in some cases because the punishment is highly necessary for the manager to prevent unacceptable conduct from repeating again and to serve as a deterrent to other teachers in the school.

Generally, carrying out management of personnel functions in any school is very important and cannot be over-emphasized. It increases productivity, effectiveness, and efficiency in the organization. It helps the school to develop a healthy school climate where workers feel a sense of belonging, unity, and love. This will make workers put in their best in performing duties that are vital for reaching ends. However, not carrying out personnel management in the school, has a lot of drastic effects. The school will be boring for all workers, every worker will be acting according to their will, and might even resort to forming small cliques to fight against the policies and programmes of the school. When all these and many more negativities arise in the school, the organization will be limited, and the prospect of goal attainment will be short-lived.

V. CONCLUSION

Personnel management is inevitable because it is as important as the establishment of the organization itself. The need for personnel to be managed by the school, cannot be over-emphasized. Every educational manager should understand that the benefits of personnel management functions are dependent on the implementation of these functions during the staffing process. Therefore, efforts should be made to perform these functions discussed in this paper. If adhered to, it can lead any school/organization to success, goal attainment and increased productivity.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made:

- i. Every school manager should adopt proper strategies in recruiting, selecting and placing new employees into the organization in order to promote efficiency and effectiveness.
- ii. Employees within the school system should be properly trained and retrained from time-to-time to make sure that they adapt their skills to the global changes.
- iii. School managers should promote good healthy relationship in the organization by relating formally with all the staff of the school and making sure to promote staff welfare through motivation and through a healthy informal relationship like attending/supporting their events.
- iv. Managers should also set clear standards that specify what is acceptable in the organization as well as the guidelines for performing a task. This will ensure that every worker understands what is expected of him or her.
- v. The staff of every school should make efforts to maintain standards that have been set in the organization and follow all available guidelines properly for the performance of assigned duties.

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