

Effect of Staff Training and Development in Relation to Employee Productivity in Aba North Local Government Council of Abia State

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ABSTRACT

Human- resource constitutes the ultimate basis of wealth of a nation. It is the greatest assets of an organization while other assets are passive and will be put into active use by human resources. Therefore, effective utilization of human resources requires training, re-training and development to achieve the desired effect on employee productivity. The aim of this study is to examine the effect of staff training and development in relation to employee productivity in Aba North Local Government Council of Abia State. This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 532 staff of Aba North Local Government Council of Abia State The sample size of 328 was determined using Taro Yamane formula. The purposive sampling technique was used for the selection of the respondents. The data collected were presented and analyzed using frequency and percentage, while the hypotheses were tested with chi-square (χ^2) statistical analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that staff training and development has significant positive effect on the quality of service provided by the Aba North Local Government. It was discovered that management development has significant positive effect on the capacity building of the staff of Aba North Local Government of Abia State. It was concluded that to enhance and sustain effective and improved productivity, the Aba North Local Government and the Nigeria public sector organization in general must possess adequate caliber of workers. This requires contentious and continue training and development. Based on these findings and conclusion, the study recommended the need for modern facilities such as reliable ICT system, air-conditioned conference hall, conference slide tables and chairs, comprehensive course packs, qualified and experienced instructors to be made available for staff training and development. The study also recommended for adequate provision of funds for staff training and development.

Keywords: Staff Training, management Development, Employee Productivity, Service provided, Capacity Building,

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Department and Training Directors are becoming greatly aware that staff training and development are main contributory factors to the improvement of workers productivity in any organization but shy away from training because of the direct, indirect or hidden costs associated with it. Therefore, embarking on training and development, they fear it will lead to large monetary expenditure on organizations

To Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), high priority is placed on training and development mainly for efficiency and effectiveness of labour force in the bids to satisfy customers and maximize profit. On the other hand, in government services like Aba North and other parastatals, the main aim of training and development is not yet fully appreciated. The reason for this could be that employers do not care about the volume of outputs and quality of services provided it is at reduced operation costs.

Productivity is commonly defined as a ratio between the output volume and the volume of inputs. In other words, it measures how efficiently production inputs, such as labour and capital, are being used in an organization to produce a given level of output o quality of service. Ozoagu (2018) states that employee

productivity measures the labour output, that is, the goods and services the workers or employees were able to produce at a given period with the limited inputs available. Productivity is simply the volume of output an employee gets per unit of input. It is a way to compare and measure cost of something to its benefits. If you have an input of 5 and an output of 10, productivity is seen as the miles per gallon of gasoline in your car. It tells you how far you can go on a given amount of gasoline input.

The newly employed staff are placed on-the-job training to grasp the relevant skill through intuition. Apart from academic and professional qualifications of employees, it is still necessary to receive some level of training in relation to the ethics of organization, most especially as training gives a worker a sense of purpose and direction in the employment. Most often, trainers sense a feeling among management that the costs of training are not always commensurate with the return on investment and so ask; Does training pay off? Does it provide the results claimed? Other questions the study tends to answer include: Has training been really worthwhile in terms of facilities used? Are they updated or out-model? Are they adequate to cater for the present needs of the organization? Is the training environment structured to motivate trainees towards learning and becoming better workers? The research will also examine courses attended at the different levels especially on junior, senior and management staff. Finally, the research will evaluate the importance of training on the productivity of the staff generally.

Statement of the Problem

Many organizations see staff training and development as additional cost as well as liability to their operation hence, do not appropriately train and develop their staff. Where it is possible for some organizations the training and development is not matched with the training needs of the workers. These organizations concentrate more on resources such as materials, machines and money. Their effort is more on how to improve productivity with little or no consideration of the human capital.

The problem of incompetence in service delivery and lack of drive among a great number of workers in Nigeria local governments has been attributed to lack of regular staff training and development. The high level of staff redundancy in Nigeria local governments as a result of advancement in technology is an evident of lack of regular staff training and development to match their skills with technological improvement. According to Nwanga & Akabulo (2017) the idea of hiring consultants in most local governments even to the management level is a clear indication that Nigeria public sector has little or no regard for staff training and development. The hired consultant acquired the needed skill and expertise through training and development. It is expected that instead of hiring people to do these jobs which brings about staff redundancy, these staff should be exposed to the necessary training and development programmes.

It is very clear that without serious and sustained attention on staff training and development in Aba North Local Government of Abia State, employees' productivity may continue to deteriorate. The inadequacy of staff training and development practices such as job rotation, coaching, formal learning programmes, mentoring, guided discussion, collaboration with professionals, workshops, seminars and conferences among others spell doom to organizations including the Aba North Local Government. The choice of Aba North Local Government as the focus of the study is because the local government over the years ignored the importance of staff training and development to employees' productivity which manifested in the quality of services it provided to the clients. It is only in the recent years that the local government embraced staff training and development. It is against these problems and gap in knowledge that the current study intends to examine the effect of staff training and development in relation to employee productivity in Aba North Local Government of Abia State.

Objective of the Study

The broad objective of this research is to appraise the effect of staff training and development in relation to

employee productivity in Aba North Local Government of Abia State. The specific objectives are to:

1. Establish the effects of staff training and development on the quality of services provided by the Aba North Local Government.
2. Determine the effects of management development on the capacity building of the staff of Aba North Local Government of Abia State.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.

1. What are the effects of staff training and development on the quality of services provided by the Aba North Local Government?
2. What are the effects of management development on the capacity building of the staff of Aba North Local Government of Abia State?

Statement of Hypotheses

The study was guided by the following hypotheses

1. Staff training and development has no significant positive effect on the quality of services provided by the Aba North Local Government.
2. Management development has no significant positive effect on the capacity building of the staff of Aba North Local Government of Abia State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concepts of Staff Training and Development

Staff training is the organized procedure by which staff learns knowledge or skills for a definite purpose. Crook (2011) defines staff training as a learning activity directed towards the acquisition of specific knowledge and skills for the purpose of an occupation or task. Hartoyo & Efendy (2017) define training as the planned and systematic modification of behavior through learning events, activities and programs which results in the participants achieving the levels of knowledge, skills, competencies and abilities to carry out their work effectively. Grobler (2016) described training as the use of specific means to inculcate specific learning, using techniques that can be identified and described. These techniques and methods should be continually improved.

Ibekwe & Nwaeke (2017) assert that staff development deals with the activities undertaken to expose an employee to perform additional duties and assume positions of importance in the organizational hierarchy. Wong & Karin (2017) pointed out that staff development aimed at developing competencies; such as technical, human, conceptual and managerial for the furtherance of individual's and organization's growth. Nzuve & Bundi (2012) defines staff development as a means to develop the abilities of an individual employee and organization as a whole. In every organization the success is tremendously relayed on its employees. However, there are different other aspects that perform a major part; an organization need to ensure efficient employees in line with financially dominant and competitive in the market.

Both training and development involves improving the effectiveness of organizations and the individuals and teams within them. Training may be viewed as related to immediate changes in organizational effectiveness via organized instruction, while development is related to the progress of longer-term

organizational and employee goals. While training and development technically have differing definitions, the two are oftentimes used interchangeably and/or together.

Difference between Staff Training and Development

For clear knowledge and understanding of this study, the researcher will differentiate between staff training and management development for one particular reason. Both are similar in the used to affect learning but their time frames differ. Training is more common, it focuses on individuals' current jobs, enhancing those skills and abilities to immediately perform their job.

Staff or management is any learning activity undertaken by individuals, teams or organizations to improve their skills, knowledge and abilities particularly as they relate to the workplace and from which added value can be ascertained. Staff development generally focuses on future jobs in the organization. Thus, as employees' jobs progress, new skills and abilities will be required. Staff development is a process of helping the individual realize his full potential and also provide his organization with further supply of employee trained and prepared to assume higher responsibilities.

In the light of the above realities, Aba North Local Government Area has always tried to emphasize staff training and development to eliminate to a reasonable extent, the unnecessary bureaucratic bottlenecks and some uncoordinated attitude being exhibited at the local government level.

In line with this therefore, the local government training policy welcomes certificate course and seminar attendance, mentoring, collaboration, private study, experience, reflection and job rotation. Any good staff development programme should help managerial employees who perform non-routine jobs to improve their managerial, administrative and decision-making abilities and competence.

Management Development

Management Development according Ubeku (1975) is the process of developing managers' knowledge, skills and attitudes through instruction, demonstration, practice and planned experience to meet the present and future needs of the business. This involves transferring general management knowledge, policies and procedures to managers who would manage the business. It also involves broadening the minds of managers for higher responsibilities as well as improving the present performance for managers on their jobs.

Watson (1979) opined that very few people become first rate managers simply through experience in one or a variety of positions. However, for most, the development of material ability is a carefully guided process as it involves more than simply, attending training classes, manpower or promotion training or a process or evaluating employee performance, which would not make meaning without proper follow up on training and development for positive action.

Management Development can be referred to as any learning activity undertaken by individuals, teams or organizations to improve their skills, knowledge and abilities, particularly, as they relate to the workplace and from which added value can ascertained. Going by this meaning, management development is a dynamic and gradual process, not only achievable through formal provision of courses but also by other methods like mentoring, collaboration, private study, experience, reflection, conference, seminars, workshops, individual desires and commitment.

Management development is not and cannot be a means of altering employees' personalities; norms, values and beliefs but a means of effectively developing employees in various situations to enable them apply sound management practices in their jobs. It is a deliberate process and will flourish only in environment

where top management believes in it, accepts, supports and rewards it. One thing noteworthy is that businesses are not static, so also the techniques of managing them. Managers should therefore, keep abreast of what is happening in their spheres of operations so as to follow the trend of events.

Underpinning Theories

Since theories have higher explanatory power than others, it becomes pertinent to apply the most relevant in any research undertaken. The theories relevant to this study are two: Operant Condition Theory and Social Learning Theory

The key ideas in these theorems are that training and development are learning processes. In other words, the theorems have learning analogies.

Operant Conditioning Theory

This theory was propounded by B.F. Skinner. The theory is sometimes, referred to as behaviour modification. Skinner views learning as a behavioural change brought about by a function of its consequences. This theory shared the view that people learn to act in manner to achieve something they want or to avoid something they do not want. The tendency for an individual to repeat a behaviour is influenced by the reinforcement stemming from the consequences of behaviour. Reinforcement therefore, strengthens actions and increases the likelihood that individuals will repeat the behaviour. This theory focuses learning from external sources as opposed to learning that take place from within. Skinner concludes that there are basically three (3) ways of shaping behaviours;

1. **Positive Reinforcement:** This provides a pleasant response to an individual's actions. A raise, praise for a job well done or promotion would encourage the behaviour to continue.
2. **Negative Reinforcement:** This involves a reward that is unpleasant "writing-up" (characters) employees who fight on the job or who take extended launch-breaks would serve as disincentives not to engage in such behaviour as this ill-behaviours stop, the negative reinforcement attached to it will equally stop.
3. **Punishment:** This penalizes employees for specific undesirable behaviours: for example, firing an employee for coming to under the influence of a substance such as Indian hemp and alcohol.

These forms of behavioural shaping affect learning like staff training and development as positive reinforcement appears to have the greatest influence on permanent behavioural change.

Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory was propounded by Albert Bandura in 1977. This School of thought views learning as continuous interaction between individuals and their environments. This theory acknowledges that employees can learn by observing what happens to other people, been told about something or through direct experience. Since most of the management development is observational in nature, this theory appears to have considered application potential. Social learning theory can be viewed as an expansion of behaviour modification because it also recognizes the importance of consequences on behaviour. It focuses on what individuals observe, and the importance of their perceptions in learning. This means that individuals respond to situations with respect to how the perceive consequences affecting them, not necessarily the consequences themselves.

This school of thought found four (4) processes of determining the influence of a model on an individual: Attentive process, Retentive process, Motor reproductive process, and Reinforcement process. Attentive

process states that people only learn from model when they recognize and pay attention to critical features. This implies that only models that are attractive, repeatedly available, and important with similar behaviours tend to influence employees. Retentive Process states that a model's influence depends on how well the individual remembers the model's action even after it is no longer in place. Motor reproduction Process noted that after seeing a new behaviour by observing the models, the watching must be converted to doing as an indication that individuals can perform the model activities. While the Reinforcement Process states that employees will be motivated to exhibit the modeled behaviour of positive incentives or rewards are provided.

These theories when applied to the topic under discussion, that is; "staff training and development" offer us insight into what the topic's exercise should include precisely, in training and development of the staff (manpower)s, we should know that:

- A staff must want to learn. When there is this desire, the staff will exert a high level of effort to know what he does not know; when a learner is motivated, learning tends to increase;
- Learning requires feedback or knowledge of results to enable the learner correct past mistakes be made on the job. Feedback should be immediate and not delayed because as soon as there is a knowledge of what the trainee is performing, it would be easier to compare performance to goals and correct some mistakes;
- The principle of reinforcement tells us that trainee's behaviour that is positively rewarded would be encouraged and sustained while behaviour that is negatively rewarded is temporarily suppressed. Thus, feedback should be the means of conveying desired behaviours to trainees to encourage them to keep doing the right thing.
- When trainees practice what had been read or seen, they gain confidence and less likely to make mistakes of forget what they have learned, if the training took place off- the-job, the trainee should be allowed some opportunity to successfully transfer what has been learned to the job to make him the master of the job assigned to him.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. A descriptive survey design refers to a process of eliciting data from a target population through questionnaire instrument and subjecting such data to statistical analysis for the purpose of drawing conclusions. The use of descriptive survey design is necessary because it helped to ascertain the opinions of the respondents through the administration of questionnaire. This helped to seek answers to the issues raised in the research questions. The study was carried out in Aba North Local Government Council of Abia State.

The study was conducted with population of 532 (270 junior staff, 236 senior staff and 26 management staff of the Aba North Local Government). A sample size of 328 was determined using the Taro Yamane formula. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. The instrument used for the study was a structured questionnaire. The instrument was validated using pilot test and two validators who their corrections and suggestions were used to produce the final instrument. The instrument reliability was tested using test-retest method on 10 staff from the local government. The reliability coefficient was 0.86 using Cronbach Alpha formula. A total of 202 copies of the questionnaire were properly completed and returned for the study (80 junior staff, 96 senior staff and 26 management staff). The data generated from the study was presented in a tabular form of frequencies and percentages in the five-point Likert scale format. The hypotheses were tested using Chi-square (X^2) analysis at the significant level of 0.05, when the computed value of chi-square (X^2) is greater than ($>$) the table value of chi-square (X^2), the null hypothesis is rejected.

Data Presentation and Analysis

In this section, the results of data collected are presented and analysed according to the research questions posed for the study. The hypotheses were also tested using Chi-square (X^2) analysis at the significant level of 0.05 and the appropriate degree of freedom (DF).

Research Question One: What are the effects of staff training and development on the quality of services provided by the Aba North Local Government?

Table 1: Effects of staff training and development on the quality of services provided

Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	No idea	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Enhance consistency in service provision	109 54%	55 27%	8 4%	12 6%	18 9%	202 100%
Induce promptness in service provision	111 55%	61 30%	4 2%	12 6%	14 7%	202 100%
Boost employees sensitivity to the client's needs	121 60%	43 21%	9 5%	10 5%	19 9%	202 100%
Improve the reliability of services provided to clients	96 48%	72 36%	11 5%	13 6%	10 5%	202 100%
Improve the quality of services provided	17 8%	13 6%	88 44%	79 39%	5 3%	202 100%

Source: Survey Report, 2023

Table 1 shows that the frequencies of the respondents indicated strongly agree were above average in all the items. This pattern of responses indicates that the respondents accepted all the items as the effects of staff training on the quality of services provided by the Aba North Local Government. The items include: enhance consistency in service provision, induce promptness in service provision, boost employees sensitivity to the client's needs, improve the reliability of services provided to clients, and improve the quality of services provided.

Test of Hypothesis One: Staff training and development has no significant positive effect on the quality of services provided by the Aba North Local Government

Calculation of Degree of Freedom (DF)

$$DF = (R-1) (C-1)$$

Where R = Number of Row in the contingency table

C = Number of columns in the contingency table

$$DF = (3-1) (5-1)$$

$$= 2 \times 4$$

$$= 8$$

At 0.05 significant level and 8 degree of freedom the table value of chi-square = **15.51**

Table 4: Observed Frequency for hypothesis One

States in South-East	Strongly Agree	Agree	No idea	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Junior staff	3	1	2	41	33	80
Senior staff	6	13	6	48	23	96
Management staff	2	1	2	16	5	26
Total	11	15	10	105	61	202

Source: Survey Report, 2023

Table 5: Chi-Square (X^2) Contingency Table for Hypothesis One

Observed Frequency (o)	Expected Frequency(e)	(o-e)	(o-e) ²	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$
16	7.93	-0.93	0.8649	0.12
5	21.66	-16.66	277.5556	12.81
2	115.32	-114.32	13069.0624	11.33
2	3.56	-2.56	6.5536	1.84
1	9.74	-8.74	76.3876	7.84
41	53.70	-33.70	1135.69	1.15
33	1.06	11.94	142.5636	14.49
2	2.91	-0.91	0.8281	0.28
3	16.03	-12.03	144.7209	9.03
1	2.12	-0.12	0.0144	0.00
48	44.65	77.35	5983.0225	13.10
23	25.65	23.35	545.2225	2.27
6	15.74	1.26	1.5876	0.10
6	22.04	4.96	24.6016	1.12
13	11.22	-0.22	0.0484	0.00
				$X^2 = \frac{\sum (o-e)^2}{e} = 75.48$

Source: Survey Report, 2023

Decision

Since the computed value of chi-square of 75.48 is greater than (>) the table value of chi-square of 15.51, hypothesis one is rejected. The statistical analysis therefore indicated that staff training and development has significant positive effect on the quality of services provided by the Aba North Local Government.

Research Question Two: What are the effects of management development on the capacity building of the staff of Aba North Local Government Area of Abia State?

Table 6: Effects of management development on the capacity building of the staff

Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	No idea	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
helps staff overcome obsolescence	109 54%	55 27%	8 4%	12 6%	18 9%	202 100%
assists management in carry out its mission statement and strategic plans	111 55%	61 30%	4 2%	12 6%	14 7%	202 100%
assists in ensuring that all staff are well equipped to perform all aspects of their jobs effectively	121 60%	43 21%	9 5%	10 5%	19 9%	202 100%
enhances job satisfaction, personnel achievement and team commitment for all staff	96 48%	72 36%	11 5%	13 6%	10 5%	202 100%
broadens the professional perspective and experience of staff by facilitating opportunities to work in alternative environments	17 8%	13 6%	17 8%	13 6%	5 3%	202 100%

Source: Survey Report, 2023

Table 6 reveals the effects of management development on the capacity building of the staff of Aba North Local Government Area of Abia State. The presentation showed that the frequency of the respondents that indicated strongly agree and agree were above average in all the items. This is a strong indication that the respondents affirmed that all the items were among the effects of management development on the capacity building of the staff. The items include: help staff overcome obsolescence, assist management in carry out its mission statement and strategic plans, assist in ensuring that all staff are well equipped to perform all aspects of their jobs effectively, enhance job satisfaction, personnel achievement and team commitment for all staff, and broaden the professional perspective and experience of staff by facilitating opportunities to work in alternative environments.

Test of Hypothesis Two: Management development has no significant positive effect on the capacity building of the staff of Aba North Local Government Area of Abia State.

Table 7: Observed Frequency for hypothesis Two

Categories of Staff		Strongly Agree	Agree	No idea	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
	Junior staff	3	2	6	56	13	80
	Senior staff	6	5	11	51	23	96
	Management staff	0	2	1	21	2	26
	Total	9	9	18	128	38	202

Source: Survey Report, 2023

Table 8: Chi-Square () Contingency Table for Hypothesis Two

Observed Frequency (o)	Expected Frequency (e)	(o-e)	(o-e) ²	$\frac{(o-e)^2}{e}$
21	4.15	-0.15	0.0225	0.00
2	11.34	-6.34	40.1956	3.54
1	62.51	-59.51	3541.4401	56.65
0	4.47	-3.47	12.0409	2.69
2	12.21	-10.21	104.2441	8.54
56	67.32	-54.32	2950.6624	43.83
13	11.69	6.31	39.8161	3.41
6	1.89	2.11	2.4521	2.36
3	10.42	-6.42	41.2164	3.96
2	1.06	0.94	0.8836	0.83
51	42.91	35.09	1231.3081	28.70
23	66.03	17.97	322.9209	4.89
11	11.65	1.35	1.8225	0.16
6	4.51	15.49	239.9401	53.20
5	24.84	6.16	37.9456	1.53
				$\chi^2 = \frac{\sum(o-e)^2}{e} = 214.29$

Source: Survey Report, 2023

Decision

Since the computed value of chi-square of 214.29 is greater than (>) the table value of chi-square of 15.51, hypothesis two is rejected. The statistical analysis therefore indicated that management development has significant positive effect on the capacity building of the staff of Aba North Local Government Area of Abia State.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The result in hypothesis one revealed that training and development has significant positive effect on the quality of services provided by the Aba North Local Government. The descriptive statistics in revealed that training and development enhance consistency in service provision, induce promptness in service provision, boost employees sensitivity to the client’s needs, improve the reliability of services provided to clients, and

improve the quality of services provided. This result is line with the idea of Operant Conditioning Theory of Skinner that the tendency for an individual to repeat behaviour is influenced by the reinforcement stemming from the consequences of behaviour. Reinforcement therefore, strengthens actions and increases the likelihood that individuals will repeat the behaviour. Staff training and development therefore, reinforces consistency in service provision, induce promptness in service provision, and boost employees' sensitivity to the client's needs. Staff training and development as positive reinforcement have the greatest influence on permanent behavioural change.

The result in hypothesis two discovered that management development has significant positive effect on the capacity building of the staff of Aba North Local Government of Abia State. The descriptive statistical analysis revealed that management development help staff overcome obsolescence, assist management in carry out its mission statement and strategic plans, assist in ensuring that all staff are well equipped to perform all aspects of their jobs effectively, enhance job satisfaction, personnel achievement and team commitment for all staff, and broaden the professional perspective and experience of staff by facilitating opportunities to work in alternative environments. This result is in line with the Social Learning Theory since most of the management development is observational in nature; by placing a potential management staff with an experienced management staff. This theory appears to have considered application potential in this result.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The human element constitutes the most vital factor of production in any organization. Therefore, organizations that want success be it public or private must be able to see to the training and development of its workforce. This study has therefore indicated that proper and quality investment in staff training and development improves productivity especially as regards quality of service provided. To enhance and sustain effective and improved productivity, the Aba North Local Government of Abia State and the Nigeria public sector organization in general must possess adequate caliber of workers. This requires contentious and continue training and development. Based on the result of this study, the following recommendations were offered.

1. Modern facilities such as reliable ICT system, air-conditioned conference hall, conference slide tables and chairs, comprehensive course packs, qualified and experienced instructors should be made available for staff training and development in Aba North Local Government of Abia State.
2. There should be proper identification of training and development needs, and adequate sensitivity to the training and development needs of workers. There should not only be adequate provision of funds for staff training and development, but also the percentage of the total expenditure accorded to staff training and development in Nigeria public service.
3. Human resource management should be based on established standard in Aba North Local Government of Abia State. Performance appraisal results should be used to determine who go for training and development and for what course. This is an established merit system and objective method of staff selection for training and development, and it goes further to boost employee morale.
4. Political interference and direction over local governments should be reduced or totally eliminated from the management of local government employees. This will help to eliminate the favouritism and godfatherism in the issue of human resource management in local governments.

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