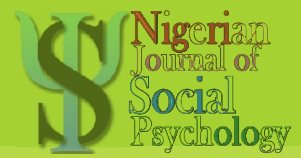


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## Challenges of Developing Appropriate Manpower Plans in the Nigerian Local Government System: A Conceptual Review

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### Abstract

*Most public organizations today are facing problems because they did not at the beginning plan their workforce; neither do they have any functional systematic human resources (HR) planning or program that considers the organizational objectives. This study therefore sought to examine challenges of developing appropriate manpower plans in the Nigerian local government system: The specific objective amongst others is to determine the relationship between manpower planning and the calibers of workers in the Nigerian local government system. The study adopted contingency and trend model of manpower planning as its model of analysis. The study revealed amongst others that there is a positive relationship between manpower planning and the calibers of workers employed in the Nigerian local government system. That conflicting role of various institutions in the affairs of local government affects manpower planning.*

**Keywords:** *manpower planning, organizations, local government*

### Introduction

Every organization needs three main resources to survive. These are financial, material and human resources. An organization needs money to pay its staff and to buy the essential materials and equipments for operation. The kind of materials needed is determined by the nature of the organization. Of course, there is no organization without human resources. Even if organization has got all the money and the materials it needs, it must still find capable people to put them into effective use. It is therefore safe to say that human resources are about the most important of the three resources of an organization. It is equally true to say that human resources are the highest assets of any organization, because no matter the amount of capital invested in an organization, its success or failure depends on the quality of people who plan and execute its programme Nwankwo (2015).

Man power planning is concerned with the budgeting for the most effective use of an organization labour resources. It is the process by which an organization ensures that it has the right number of people and the right type of people in the right place and the right time doing the right thing to serve the purpose of the organization. ( Chandler and plan 1920) in Onah,( 2000).

It is also an attempt to forecast how many and what kind of employees will be required in the future and to what extent this demand will be met. Similarly Bowey cited in udoikah (2021) describe the concept as the activities of management which is aimed at coordinating the

requirement from, and the availability, of different types of employee. This involves ensuring that the firm has enough of the right kind of labour at such time as it is needed. It is also the adjustment of these requirement to the available supply. Every organization plan its manpower needs just as it budget the amount of money it needs to spend either on a short term or long term basis.

The major objective of manpower planning is to obtain and retain the quality and quantity of manpower need for effective use; to ensure the optimal use of human resources currently employed through training and career planning; to avoid waste by reducing redundancy; to provide for the future manpower needs of the organization in term of needed skills, experience, location, number, ages and sexes; to establish and recognize future job requirement ; to be better prepared to cope with the human problem associated with the increase or decrease in manpower and to enable an organization to identify areas where a shortage or excesses of manpower will likely occur in the future and to take advantage of the impending situation Nwankwo,(2015).

The changes in the number and quality of employees in an organization at any time depend on the organizations objective with regard to promotion, and recruitment. Whenever an organization want to expand or contract its services or maintain them at current level is important in determining its manpower. These decisions may be based on the objectives of the organization, and or on some of the external factors. If an organization is a business concern, the primary objective of making profits determines when and in what direction it will expand or contract. In each case, an expansion or contraction involves an increase or decrease in manpower.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Quality manpower planning is the bedrock for every successfully organizations throughout the world, it is the quality of manpower planning that determines whether there will be quality service, optimal productivity, sustainability in organizational life, efficient service delivery and competent advantage over other organizations, even acceptability of organizational products (goods and services) in the labour market wholly depends on the quality manpower base of a given organization.

Manpower planning enables organization to have accurate estimate of numbers of employees to accomplish set goals, reduce waste in output, reduce uncertainties about current personnel status and ensure effective utilization of its human resources. Manpower planning is belief to ensure that the right numbers of people are at the right place and at the right time doing the right work for proper accomplishment of goals.

However, it appears the Nigerian local government system lacked adequate planning on how to procure, motivate, develop and sustained their manpower needs. The failure of planning on the part of the local government system seems to have resulted in dearth of skilled manpower in the employed of the system. Again the little available staff seems to lack the necessary skills as a result of lack of proper planning for staff training and retraining. The consequences of plan failure seems to be evident in the employment of personnel with poor educational background, poor remuneration of staff, which consequently resulted into low morale and moral decadent of some of the staff, poor attitudes to work and lack of sense of responsibility which inadvertently affect the achievement and growth of our local government system.

In view of the above problem, this study seeks to address this research question.

## Research Question

1 .What is the relationship between manpower planning and the calibers of workers employed by the Nigerian local government system.

## Conceptual review

### Manpower Planning

Obojo (2016) conceived manpower planning as the process by which an organization ensure that it has the right number of people and the right kind of people at the right place, and at the right time, doing things for which they are economically most useful. Manpower planning could be seen as capacity building by which in its context implies developing a sustainable manpower planning to meet the future personnel requirement of an organization, World Bank (2016). Walker (1980) defines manpower planning as analyzing organizational human resource needs under changing conditions and developing activities necessary to satisfy these needs. Velter (1967) defines manpower planning as the process by which management determines how organizations move from current position of manpower to its desired state or place. In related terms, Ogunsaju (2006) defines manpower planning as 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.

Mathis and Jackson (2015) defines manpower planning as the basic human resources planning which involve processing analyzing and identifying the needs for the availability of human resources so that the organization can meet its objectives. In another related term, Griffin (2015) defines manpower planning as something that involves assessing trends, forecasting the supply and demand and then developing appropriate strategies for addressing these differences.

Baker (2021) manpower planning as the strategic alignment of an organization people's resources with current and future organizational needs. Similarly, manpower planning in the words of monsieur (2021) is a strategic management tools for a aligning workforce capabilities with mission and vision regular and systematic assessment of our ability to match workforce capabilities with the organizational needs thereby integrate it with strategic planning in tandem with management priorities such as budget process, diversity goals human capital plans and ultimately union agreement

### Factors to consider in making quantitative analysis of manpower planning

**Workload:** Every organization exists to accomplish a specific objective or objectives. This determined the nature and the amount of work to be done from which the number of people needed to accomplish the work can b e determine. This may be true of road labourers, the number to handle tax returns, or to sort out mails or to distributes some product to customers.

**Standard of performance:** The standard of performance is a factor where there is non physical workload to accumulate.

**Comparism:** The number of people needed in one department may be determine by comparison with other department which are comparable In size and structure as well as the budget for performing the activity.

**Cost factor:** The cost of maintaining the workforce combined with the ability to pay is a major factor in deciding to increase or decrease the work force. Through a cost benefit analysis, the organization discovers whether it needs more or less manpower in order to improve its services or make more profits.

**Government policy:** This is another major factor to consider when planning to increase the quality of quantity of workforce. Government budgetary proposals can be relied upon in planning an increase or decrease of the workforce. Every organization reacts to government laws that affect labour, management relations, corporate tax contributions and tax incentives, wage for employment etc

### **Manpower Attraction**

The labour market is very competitive; therefore every organization makes effort to attract the best qualified candidates they can get for their operations. Those organizations that act as if the supply of manpower is infinitely elastic end up attracting second best or less competent ones. Unlike the private sector, the public sector has come to realize that in spite of the sheer attraction of government service and establishment of the merit system, the best qualified people have to be brought and should not be expected to turn up as an applicant when a vacancy occurs, hence the necessity for positive recruitment and for systematic planning to assure supply of competent employees. It is often believed that, if political favoritism is removed, men and women of ability would somehow find their ways into the public service. Government organizations have come to realize that the merit system only assures the elimination of incompetent people from applying but to ensure the best qualified present their qualifications.

### **Developing appropriate manpower plan in an organization**

Manpower planning as stated earlier is concerned with the acquisition and retention of the right mix of right numbers of workers at the right time. This exercise is mediated by the strategic objectives of the organization. Usually, the personnel department provides information to top management in an organization about the human resources. Such information includes: the manpower requirement in the next couple of years through promotion etc; the cost involved in funding and hiring a labour force with rare skills or higher but relevant qualifications; the long term implications of government labour law etc. On the other hand, top management conveys decision on such issues as the desirability of contracting out revenue collection, engaging the services of a computer business centre instead of its own computer facilities etc. All this information is the starting point of manpower planning.

### **MANPOWER PLANNING PROCESS**

Manpower planning determines the human resources requirement by an organization to achieve its strategic goals. Armstrong (2005) and Billa and Scoth (1994), quoted in Agalamanyi (2019) sees it as the process for ensuring that the human resources requirement of an organization are identified and plans are made for satisfying those requirements. Manpower planning is based on the belief that people are an organization's most important strategic resources. It is generally concerned with matching resources to business need in the longer term, although it will sometimes address shorter time requirements. Armstrong (2004) posits that it addresses human resources needs both in quantitative and qualitative terms, which means answering two basic questions first, how many people and second, what sort of people?. It equally looks at broader issues relating to the ways to which people are employed and developed in order to improve organization effectiveness.

Manpower planning addresses the following issues:

- The recruitment of sufficient and suitable staff
- Their retention in the organization
- The optimum utilization of staff
- The improvement of staff performance and,
- The disengagement of staff, as necessary.

Cole (2019) outlined four categories of staff that are important in human resources planning

- Existing staff
- New recruits
- Potential staff
- Leavers

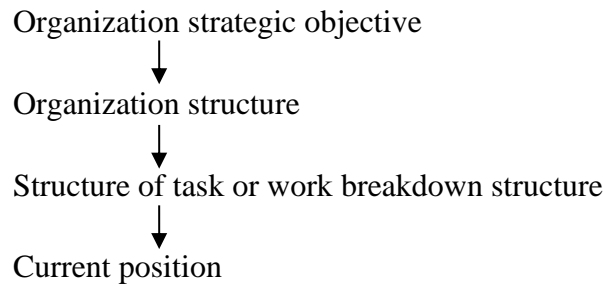
Every category of staff listed above according to Cole requires different decisions to be taken by the manager concerned. Among the decision that may be taken include:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Decision required</b>
Existing staff	Performance appraisal Productivity Deployment Equal opportunity Training Remuneration Promotion/career development
New recruits	Recruitment method Selection procedure Induction Training Term of contract
Potential staff	Recruitment method Public relations Wage/salary level Employee benefit
Leavers	Dismissal for poor performance Retirement Redundancy procedure Labour turnover

Source: Onah, 2015

### **Organization strategic objective and organization standard**

The strategic objectives of an organization determined the organization structure, this is because as the organization diversifies its activities, its structure continue to change to accommodate increased responsibilities. The immediate fallout of a bloated organization structure is a work breakdown structure or simply, structure of task. It is this structure of tasks that leads to an immediate estimate of manpower requirement or what is known as current position. This can be represented diagrammatically below



**Manpower inventory**

It is always good if the number of and types of employee with specific and needed skills can match current manpower requirement. At times, an organization may have so many people with a particular skill and have too few with another desired skill. Under this circumstance, the organization maintains a master file of its employees and their skills in comparison with its need- a manpower inventory indicate every position filled, the name of the incumbent and the level of the skills possessed by the incumbent.

**Impact of Manpower inventory in determining the future Manpower Requirement in an Organization**

The current manpower inventory of an organization is significant in determining the future manpower needs of an organization. For instance, in the planning approach, the current manpower inventories prepares for at least a five year plan, then plan for manpower requirement over each of the years, and then find the net change year by year. The net change is achieved by hiring employees, attrition, productivity factor and constraints.

Job class	2023	2024	2025
Director of personnel and head of service			
Director of personnel management			
Treasurer			
Engineer			
Planners			
Community development officers			
Social workers			
Executive officers			
Information officers			
Clerical officers			

**Plan showing demand by type of position over three years**

The estimate of manpower by class of workers is very useful in planning for:

- Training of staff, benefit of staff etc
- Payroll cost over time
- Equipment and machineries required
- Office space and accommodation

Attrition affect net change in manpower through:

- Resignation for greener pastures or personal reasons

- Termination of appointment by the organization
- Layoff of the employee
- Incapacitation(disabled or too ill to work)
- Death

Productive factors which affect net change in organization manpower supply include:

- Best management, work planning, automation and increased investment in equipment and machinery for workers
- Improved leadership and motivation
- Production initiatives etc

**Forecasting manpower requirement**

As a result of certain variables that affect manpower requirement in an organization, it become imperative to forecast manpower requirement so as not to be caught napping. Forecasting represent an estimate of the future manpower needs of an organization. In manpower forecast, it does not follow a logical chain of the organization’s action but it uses models or techniques that jump from past data to the future Onah (2004). Forecasting method ranges from simple projection to sophisticated models. Forecasting is most useful for making aggregate estimate of human resources.

**Forecasting techniques and models include:**

**Trend projection:** here the number of employees in the organization is plotted against time, and a straight line or stitched curve is drawn as a projection into the future. This may be accurate enough because such a trend projection may be revised annually to give a good short term estimates and rough long term estimates.

**Regression Method:** this is based on the assumption or fact that there is a causal relationship between number of employees and the product of the organization

**Composite departmental demand:** under this model, each department is asked to estimate the number of employees it would required on a specified future date. These estimates are then combined into a composite demand figure for the forecast of total requirement

**Fractional flow model:** this involves a table showing the fraction of the people in one type of occupation and stating time period that they may move to another occupation in the next time period.

To From	Retire/leave	Clerical officer	Personnel officer	Director of personnel management
Clerical officer	01	90	02	02
DPM	05	10	0	25

**Fractional flow model**

From the above model, the line shows that one percent of clerical officers quit or retires; 90% percent remain as clerical officers; 2% become personnel officers; and 1% becomes directors of personnel management (DPM) during the next time period.



**Contingency approach:** a forecast of manpower requirement may depend on factors outside the control of the organization. In such cases, a contingency forecasting may be used.

Manpower planning is very useful in an organization because it:

- Provides inputs to recruitment
- Provide input to future labour estimate
- Provides input to training needs and
- Provide inputs to performance capacity forecast as well as capital investment plan

### **Local Government System and Manpower Development Plan: Distorted Role Relationship**

The application of theoretical discussion on manpower development plan in the local government system appears problematic. This is precisely because the role relationship in and responsibilities for developing manpower plans in local government system are diffused and revolved around many institutions and department both within and outside the system. More importantly, the relationships between and among the institutions and departments are not clear cut and streamed line as they vary from state to state and from one local government to another. The picture present a galaxy of discreet institution such as the ministry of local government and chieftaincy affairs, Local Government Service Commission, Local Government Council Chairmen, the Heads of Service, the heads of Personnel and Directors of personnel's as the case may be.

The general policies on the condition of service of the local government employees are made by the office of the Vice President of the federation, through the inputs of State Civil Service Commission. The interpretation and implementation of these condition of service are left to the various local government Service Commissions, the directors of local government and the heads of service in the various local government where they exist. The relationship between the various bureaus for local government and ministries of local government on the one hand, and the local government service commission and the directors of local government and the head of personnel and the head of service on the other hand are clearly spelt out.

Moreover, the relationship between the executive chairmen of local government and the personnel department in their local government, as regard senior cadre of local government employees are anything but obvious. Even in the case of junior cadres, the exact role relationships between the executive and top members of the personnel department of the local government are not clear cut.

### **The Local Government System and Manpower Planning: Exercise in Muddling Through**

Going by the distorted role relationship between and among the various institutions, organizations, and department involved in personnel matter, it is pertinent to sketch the existing pattern and practice of manpower planning in the local government system, no matter how uncoordinated, haphazard and piecemeal. It is important to stress that most of the logical steps identified in the theoretical exposition of manpower planning are observed in the breach in the local government system. Hence the key concept of organizational strategic objectives, emergent structures, work breakdown structure and structure of tasks are hardly applicable in the local government system. However, for the purpose of this article, we shall limit our discussion to the role of the local government service commission, the executive chairman, and the head of personnel management in manpower planning at the local government system.

### **Local Government Service Commission**

The local government service commission is charged with the responsibility of for personnel matters in the local government system. It decides on the general trend in manpower planning and development based on feedback from the various local governments. Its responsibility covers both senior and junior staff. It decides on recruitment, training, development, and general staff development. In the exercise of these functions, it engages in both short-term and long term assessment of staff requirement and supply.

Unfortunately, it cannot decide on the critical determinant of staff development strategies which revolve around finance. The commission lack the much needed funds to follow logically and conclusively manpower development plans. The results is that, in most cases some local governments may need staff in certain cadre, yet the commission may be unable to assist because of shortage of funds.

### **Chairmen of the local government council**

The chairmen of the local government council exercise delegated powers of the local government service commission in respect of officers on grade level 01 to 06. In the present political dispensation, the local government chairmen, primarily to score political points, sometimes to the detriment of the local government administration, exercise the delegated authority with unmitigated relish and incredible enthusiasm. Local government service becomes a dumping ground for political associate, thugs, friends, and relations of the chairman. Under this circumstance, manpower planning becomes an irritating encumbrance, which must be eliminated. Consequently, whether or not vacancies or need exist for more staff, the chairman still proceed to recruit.

**Directors/heads of service:** theoretically, personnel matter, including manpower planning at the local government level fall within the purview of the director or head of personnel of the local government. It is his/her duty to send information on staff requirements to the local government service commission based on return from the director of personnel management. These returns are in turn complied from submissions and request from the various heads of department. As the chairman of the senior staff management committee responsible for all personnel activities affecting the local government staff on grade level 07 and above, the director of local government is centrally positioned in the development of manpower planning for the local government.

Unfortunately, in practice, he/she is emasculated by the overbearing political manipulation of the local government chairman, local political party officials, thugs, political office holders at all levels of government, and the administrative inertia of the local government service commission. The result is that neither the director nor the head of service, as he/she watches helplessly while his /her office is inundated with staff of all categories. Most of whom are not only redundant but constitute themselves into a cog in the administrative machinery of the local government.

### **Problems of Manpower/Human Resources Planning in Public Organization in Nigeria**

Nigerian manpower planning process is bedeviled by so many problems. Among these, three are very outstanding; they include

1. Adhoc approach to manpower planning
2. Inconsistency in personnel policy and implementation
3. Federal character system/parochialism

An adhoc arrangement is one which is unplanned and which takes place only because a situation has made it necessary. Most recruitment in Nigeria organization are done in piecemeal especially at the local government level. Most organization have no staff establishment for their various department, sections, unit etc. people are recruited and posted to sections and units at the whims and caprices of the organizations head. Any organization that has no record of its staff establishment cadre by cadre for each of its department/sections or unit has in the real sense of it no manpower/ human resources plan. This neglect can lead to chaotic situation where organization executives bring in all sort of special assistant/aids and adviser rather than relying on the bureaucrats in the organization. The implication is that the bureaucracy is unnecessary bloated. The originally trained bureaucrats are made redundant and cost of running the government became unnecessarily too high because of duplication of functions and effort. Thus, the system becomes ineffective and inefficient.

Another problem is the habit of policy discontinuity in Nigeria at every point of regime change. This affect in no small measure the personnel policy in the Nigerian public sector.. Whatever economic reform in Nigeria has always had public sector employees as the first casualties. Starting from Murtala/Obasanjo purge of the public service in 1975, Buhari/Idiagbon mass sack of 1984, the casualties of structural adjustment programme of Babangida in 1986, the mass purge of the public sector under president Obasanjo's public sector reform programme till the present governments reform policies, the manpower plan of the country has been fatally wounded.

Others are:

1. **Changes in the technological landscape:** there are many of changes taking place every day as a result of management techniques, marketing patten, production of technologies the effect of these changes has seriously affected the condition of many jobs in Nigeria including its description. This at times brings about redundancies and creates some problems regarding the retainment and redeployment of labour. To overcome these hurdles, call for effective systematic and intensive manpower planning. Stewart 2016, cited in Amah and Chibuike.
2. Organizational changes in view of tough times and turbulent environment every organization find itself in, full of mutations that virtually occur on the daily basis as well as discontinuities. The stride of these changes as well as structures surrounding them will definitely affect an organization's human resource requirements and strategic considerations must be made as a result.
3. **Changes in demographics:** the visibility of the workforce in Nigeria is constantly facing serious changes such as; sex, age, technical skills, social background and levels of literacy. All these usually have an serious implication for workforce in the country and also for an organization as well as the human resource department in this case now, human resource unit of an organization should be able to respond positively and effectively through its manpower planning.
4. **Shortages of skilled manpower:** these are factors evidencing the availability of educated unemployed persons, however, it does not mean that the labour market is a good one for the patronizers (buyers). The growing complexity nature of organization today indices shows that they are still in dire need of many specialist (skilled employee) such employee should be recruited and retained on the grounds that it may be difficult to be replaced whenever they exit.
5. **Governmental influences:** whenever, there is any form of change in government legislation and governmental control in regard to affirmative action for various deemed disadvantaged sections of the society or workforce will definitely have effect on the

organization. Again, legislation can enormous effect if it affect the hours of work and work conditions embargo on employment on certain category of workers such as children, women, contract labour, casual workers and limitation on certain acceptable for employment in a given time, so, for any organization to surmount these difficulties, organizations need to deal with systematic manpower planning Stewart (2016) cited in Okpara 2019.

## Conclusion

Manpower planning in an organization is not an easy task. People are the most volatile resources available to an organization and they are recruited, employed and rewarded against a complex background of economic and social forces. These economic and social forces do make organization decisions problematic for human resources planning. However, organizations which adopt a rational approach to manpower planning will be better able to maintain and renew a viable workforce capable of ensuring the success and sustainability of the enterprise than the one which do not take their organization manpower serious

Cole (2000) summarized that the possible benefit from a planned approach to the acquisition, use, deployment of people through the organization as:

- Appropriate skilled and flexible workforce
- Ability to respond to change
- Stability in core of the workforce
- Reduced need to recruit externally
- Improved moral and employee relations
- Improvement in quality of product and services
- Higher productivity.

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