

Role of Industrial Training Fund (Itf) in the Development of Human Resource in a Reformed Public Sector Organization

Fodio Garba, Ph.D¹ and Amina Abdullahi, Mrs²

¹Department of Public Administration UsmanuDanFodiyo University, Sokoto,

²Department of Business Administration UsmanuDanFodiyo University, Sokoto,

Submitted: 05-12-2021

Revised: 17-12-2021

Accepted: 20-12-2021

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study is to examine the role of Industrial Training Fund (ITF) in the development of human resource in public sector organization in Nigeria. The research is descriptive and was based on qualitative data obtained from the existing literature and official gazette of ITF obtained from their Abuja head office. The paper found out that ITF has made significant contribution toward human resource development in the country most especially in reducing problems associated with shortage of indigenous trained manpower required to meet the needs of the nation. Besides, the study recommends that more is still expected from ITF in terms of provision of infrastructural facilities that could enhance capacity building and thus reduce incidence of low productivity and man power obsolescence.

Keywords: Human Resource Development, Training and Development, Man power, on the job training and off the job training.

I. INTRODUCTION

The main thrust of every organization is to ensure that its set objectives are pursued rigorously towards the realization of its set goals. Thus, training is seen as a medium through which employee's capabilities can be enhanced to keep in tune with new methods and techniques of accomplishing tasks. To enhance human capacity building in Nigeria, the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) was established by Decree No. 47 of 8th October, 1971, with the aim of promoting and encouraging the acquisition of skills in industry and commerce with a view to generating a pool of indigenous manpower sufficient to meet the needs of the economy (ITF, 2012). The Law encourages greater involvement of employees, particularly middle range and senior cadre of employees in the organization and development of training

programmes and facilities including the establishment of group training scheme and centres in certain areas of governmental activities.

However, despite its efforts in ensuring and promoting the acquisition of skills in sufficient quantity and quality to meet the needs of the economy, the fund has been bedevilled by number of factors which hindered its effective performance. Among the factors are: lack of accurate and reliable data on industries, lack of awareness of its programmes and policies, inadequate resource allocation from the government as well as inability of employers to remit their mandatory training levy as stipulated by the decree establishing the fund. Regardless of these aforementioned problems, the ITF provides varieties of training to enhance capacity building aim at enhancing employee's proficiency.

This paper is an attempt at appraising the role of industrial training fund in the development of human resources in a reformed public sector organization.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Training and Development a Conceptual clarification

The ultimate aim of any training programme is to add value and once a training programme cannot add value, it should be reworked or altogether cancelled. Without training, it will be very difficult to acquire skills and without skills organization will not achieve its objectives through people.

Arnoff (1971) argues that training and development foster the initiative and creativity of employee and help to prevent manpower obsolescence, which may be due to age, attitude or the inability of a person to adapt him or herself to technological changes. Obisi (2001) posited that training is a process through which the skill, talent

and knowledge of employees are enhanced and increased. He argues that training should take place only when the need and objectives for such training have been identified. Scott, Clothier & Spriegel (1977) consent that training is the corner-stone of sound management, for it makes employee more effective and productive. They argue that training is actively and intimately connected with all the personnel and managerial activities. It would be difficult for a new employee to grow on the job and become a manager without training and development.

According to Mamoria (1995) training is a practical and vital necessity as it enables employees to develop and rise within the organization and increase their market value, earning power and job security. He further explains that training helps to mould employees' attitudes and help them to contribute meaningfully to the organization. The organization benefits because of enhanced performance of employees. He again noted that a well trained employee would make a better and economic use of materials and equipment which would go a long way to minimize wastages. According to Obisi (2011) training and development are interchangeably been used. However, they can be differentiated from one other. Training is for specific job purpose while development goes beyond specifics. Development covers not only those activities which improve job performance, but also those which bring about growth of personality. In training, you use one stone to kill one bird while in development you use one stone to kill two birds (Mamoria, 1995).

Lawrence (1996) notes that training is short-term process, utilizing a systematic and organized procedure by which non managerial personnel learn technical knowledge and skill for a definite purpose. Development on the other hand is a long term educational process utilizing a systematic and organized procedure by which management personnel learn conceptual and theoretical knowledge for general purpose.

Cambell (1971) posits that training refers only to instruction in technical and mechanical operations while development refers to philosophical and theoretical educational concept. Training is designed for non-managers while development involves managerial personnel. Training courses are typically designed for a short term, stated purpose, such as the operation of some piece (s) of machinery while development involves a broader education for long-term purpose. Training is for specific job relation purpose while development is for purpose.

Types of Training and Development

There are different types of training an organization can adopt, but Alo (1999) identifies two major types of training as thus, on the job training and off the-job training.

i. On the Job Training: is normally handled by colleagues, supervisors, managers, mentors, to help employees adjust to their work and to equip them with appropriate job related skills. Armstrong (2012) argues that on-the-job training covers teaching or coaching by more experienced people or trainers at the desk or at the bench. It may also consist of individual, or group assignment and projects and the use of team leader and managers. According to Armstrong (2009) on-the-job training is the way to develop and practice the specific managerial, team leading, technical, selling, manual and administrative skills needed by the organization and has the advantages of actuality and immediacy as the individual worker learns and develop expertise at the same time. Disadvantages of on-the-job training according to Armstrong (2012) are that the effectiveness of the learning is strongly influenced by the quality of the guidance and coaching provided on the job. Many managers and team leaders are unskilled at training and disinclined to carry it out or to encourage it. In addition, relying on fellow employees in sit by me training has obvious disadvantages as instruction may be inadequate and training may perpetuate bad habits. Again the learner may be distracted by the same environment and find it difficult to acquire basic skills quickly. To resolve these disadvantages, training the trainers programme should be regularly embarked upon to sharpen the skills of supervisor and in-house trainers.

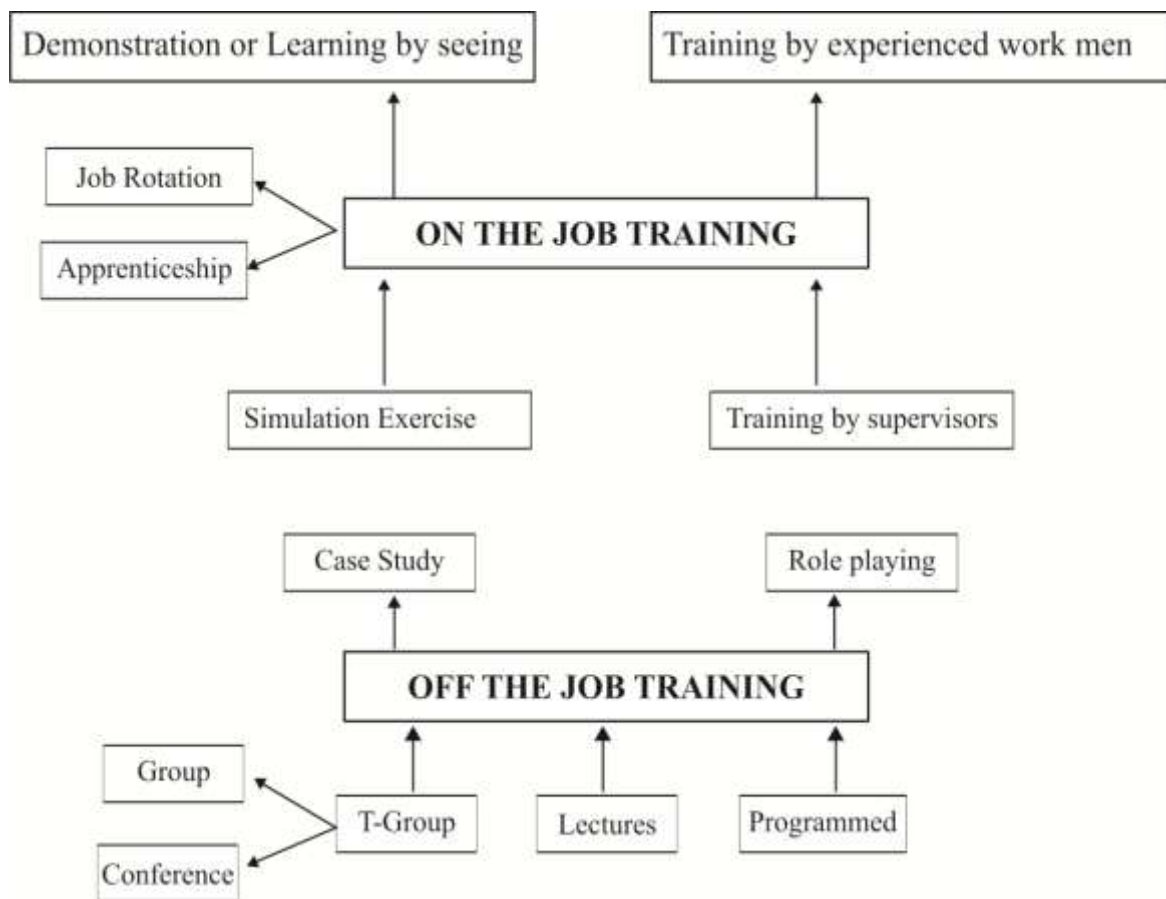
Similarly, according to Fajana (2004), on-the-job training is particularly for all levels of employees being employed to achieve certain specified organizational goals. The authors maintain that the individual employee becomes accustomed to the machinery and materials that he will use in his subsequent work and to learn in the same physical and social environment. The point of view of these authors tend to suggest that on-the-job training is a specific form of job instruction geared towards imparting and acquiring those skills and attitudes needed by the workers to perform particular function effectively.

ii. Off-The-Job Training: Off the job training occur in a location removed from production of a revenue earning environment. Thus, workers training outside the working place

tend to acquire skills for proficiency and effectiveness on job (Olaniyi (2006). According to Ejiogu (2000) off the-job training would include lecture, vestibule training, role playing, case study, discussion and simulation; Armstrong (2006) listed group exercises, team building, distance learning, outdoors and workshop as part of off the-job training. He further explains that off the job training may be provided by members of the training department, external education, training establishments, training providers, training

consultants or guest speakers. He encourages first line managers to be closely involved to bring reality into the classroom, to ease the transfer of learning, and monitored and to ensure that those involved in off the-job training are carefully selected, briefed and monitored so as to ensure that the right things are done as that will ensure the attainment of organizational objectives.

The diagrams below show other methods of training and development associated with on the job training and off the job training.



Source: Nwachukwu, (1988)

Relevance of Training in the Attainment of Organizational Objectives

Training is an important concern that organizations should look critically at all times, if they really want to improve the effectiveness of their employees. Any training programme that is not relevant should not be undertaken. Training should be designed to solve problems and fill gaps in employee performance. Training should make things happen and bring about changes that would enhance organizations effectiveness (Obisi, 2001).

Additionally, Armstrong (2010) argues that for any training to be relevant, it must satisfy, identified and appropriate the following organizational needs, these needs are:

- i. Improved employee performance:** The employee who receives the necessary training is more able to perform in their job. The training will give the employee a greater understanding of their responsibilities within their role, and in turn build their confidence. This confidence will enhance their overall

performance and can benefit the organization. Employees who are competent and on top of changing organization standards help your business hold a position as a leader and strong competitor within the industry.

ii. Improved employee satisfaction and morale:

The investment in training that an organization makes shows employees that they are valued. The training creates a supportive workplace. Employees may gain access to training they wouldn't have otherwise known about or sought out themselves. Employees who feel appreciated and challenged through training opportunities may feel more satisfied toward their jobs.

iii. Addressing weaknesses: Most employees will have some weaknesses in their workplace skills. A training program allows you to strengthen those skills that each worker needs to improve. A development program brings all employees to a higher level so they all have similar skills and knowledge. This helps reduce any weak links within the organization that rely heavily on others to complete basic work tasks. Given necessary training creates an overall knowledgeable staff with workforce who can take over from one another as needed, work on teams or work independently without constant help and supervision from others.

iv. Consistency: A healthy training and development program ensures that employees have a consistent experience and background knowledge. The consistency is particularly relevant for the organization's basic policies and procedure. All employees need to be aware of the expectations and procedures within the organization.

Objective of Training and Development

Training is a continuous activity that put employees in good shape so as to be able to perform organizational assigned tasks efficiently and effectively. Objectives of training are what employees would achieve and gain after undergoing the training programme (Obisi, 2001). Before employees embark on any training programme, it is assumed that they are handicaps. If the handicaps are overcome after undergoing the training programme it means that the objectives have been achieved (Obisi, 2011). Objectives connote what we can learn and do after a training programme. Some organizations send their employees on a training programme without identifying objectives and without knowing what the trainees would achieve by the time they come back from the training programme. For instance, if

a worker is unable to operate a machine or is unable to operate windows 98 or windows 2000. If he is able to do so at the end of a training programme one could say that the objectives have been realized.

Based on these, Obisi, (2011) identify the following objectives of training and development:

- i. To enhance high performance of the employees
- ii. To impact knowledge, skills and capabilities to new and old employees
- iii. To broaden and equip employees to carry out future expected role.
- iv. To bring about team spirit and high morale in the organization.
- v. To encourage employees to go for the good in order to enhance their career to meet organizational objectives.
- vi. To help in adapting to changing work environment and technology.

Human Resource Development Programme and the Role of the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) in Nigeria

Over time, people's demands for services from either government or private sector have increased. In order to respond to such demands the public sectors must depend on the quality of its human resources. It is important therefore to improve and upgrade the caliber of human resource in both the public and private sector organizations as it will determine the character and effectiveness of an administrative system (UN, 1995). The concept of human resource and manpower development could be used interchangeably depending on how one prefer it, it is important to accentuate that the concept manpower development could be defined as the existence of unskilled and/or skilled humans that need training or re-training to perform specific task in an organization (Armstrong, 2010). Thus manpower development could be seen as organization specific. This is because it is largely a function of organizational manpower needed or job specification. That could be viewed as the adaption of human resource available in the country to the needs, objectives and orientation of a given organization. In economic terms, human resource development is described as the accumulation of human capital and its effective utilization or the development of the economy (Gary, 2010). In this broad sense, the concept of HRD extends over several issues including population, education, nutrition, employment, sanitation, sports, culture, housing, communication, health safety etc (Rao, 2009). Conversely, the

concept development of manpower could be viewed as a concept which is generic in nature because it focuses on turning out human resource that is needed for the development of the state (Drucker, 1999).

Omole (2004) affirms that human resource development is concerned with providing learning and development opportunities and developing effective training programmes aim at achieving organizational goal and objectives. He further discloses that the overall aim of manpower development programmes is to see that the organization has the quality of workforce its needs to attain its goals for improved performance and growth. Ahanor (1990) argues that the objective of manpower development programmes in any organization is achieved by ensuring as far as possible, that everyone in the organization has the knowledge and skills and reaches the level of competence required to carry out their work effectively. Similarly, Oyasterman (1995) posits that the performance of workers and teams in work organization is subject to continuous improvement in their skills and employee should be developed in way that maximizes their potentials.

Beach (1998) argues that human assets grow and increase in value; maintaining and upgrading employees' skills not only tend to increase productivity; but also increase commitment and motivation. The author asserts further that the approach to manpower development within the firm will vary according to the technology, traditional policies and the value of management.

However, in relation to the study the paper reveals that there is a positive relationship between training and employees' proficiency in public organizations. The study further reveals that the ITF performance in Nigeria is undermined by inadequate infrastructural facilities in there area offices across the country. It was discovered that employers of labour hardly pay their compulsory training levy to the ITF. Also, inadequate funding of ITF programmes and projects is discovered to have a resultant effect on the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in public sector organization.

III. CONCLUSIONS

The study examines ITF programme and the extent to which these programme have had a positive impact in the operation of public sector organization bearing in mind the mandate of the ITF.

The ITF has contributed towards human resource development in the country and also on

the right path in proffering solution to the problems associated with shortages of indigenous trained manpower required to meet the needs of the nation. The conclusion was drawn from the study conducted by Faith (2019) were the respondents endorsed that the ITF has on the whole contributed to the development of human resources development in the country. They also expressed satisfaction with the services rendered by the ITF despite the financial and infrastructural problem affecting the organization. Besides, the study reveals that more is still expected from ITF in terms of provision of infrastructural facilities that could enhance capacity building and thus reduce incidence of low productivity and manpower obsolescence. This corroborates with Beach (1998) that human assets grow and increase in value, maintaining and upgrading employees' skills not tend to increase productivity, but also increase commitment and motivation.

The study also reveals that inadequate funding of ITF programmes and activities can to a large extent undermine the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in public organization in the country. This revelation is in recognition of the crucial role the ITF has played in the development of human resources in both public and private sector in the country.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, and bearing in mind the dynamism of public sector organization, it is recommended that:

1. Human resources development programme should be given priority by both industrial training fund (ITF) a federal Government establishment, state Government and local Government in the country in order to enhance employees' proficiency.
2. That training needs of the organization as well as that of workers must be identified before embarking on training. This will possibly foster specialization and encourage technical driven training in work organizations.
3. The ITF should endeavour to provide infrastructural facilities in the state by setting up skills acquisition centres so as to accommodate all categories of workers especially those that needed technical skills.
4. To facilitate the payment of the compulsory contribution (levy) by employers of labour, the ITF should embark on a complete systematic rebirth predicated on strong institution and an increased effort in creating awareness of its programmes and policies.

5. There should be a strong collaboration between the ITF, the state and local government in financing human development needs of public organizations so as to curtail tendencies of manpower obsolescence and low productivity associated with public organizations.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Ahanor, M.B.U (1990) Manpower Development in the Banking Industry. Central Bank Bullion, 5(4) 35-43.
- [2]. Akintoyo, D.I. (2005) Influence of Human Resource Development Programmes on perceived Workers Productivity in Work Organizations in Nigeria. Journal of Educational Administration, Vol. 9(2), 45-56.
- [3]. Alo, O. (1999) Human Resource Management in Nigeria, Business Science Books, Lagos, Nigeria.
- [4]. Armstrong, M., (2006), 'A Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice, Great Britain, Cambridge.
- [5]. Armstrong, M., (2009), 'Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice, United Kingdom, Kogan Page.
- [6]. Armstrong, M., (2010) Essential of Human Resource Management Practice, London, Kogan Page.
- [7]. Armstrong, M., (2012), 'Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice,' London, Kogan Page.
- [8]. Arnoff, J. (1971) A Handbook on Personnel Management Practices, Kogan Page Ltd, London.
- [9]. Beach, S.D. (1990) Personnel: The Management of People at Work, New York Macmillan Publishers.
- [10]. Cambell, J. (1971) Personnel Training and Development, Annual review of Psychology.
- [11]. Deborah, L. (2003) Evaluation of Capacity Building; Lessons From the field, Washington DC, USA.
- [12]. Drucker, P.F. (1999) Management Challenges for the 21st Century, Harper Business, New York USA.
- [13]. Ejiogu, A. (2000) Human Resources Management towards Greater Production. Generation Press Ltd Lagos, Nigeria.
- [14]. Fajana, S. (2002). Human Resource Management: An Introduction, Macmillan Publishers Nigeria.
- [15]. Gary, D., (2010), 'Personnel Management', New Jersey Prentice Hall International.
- [16]. Hamblin, A.C. (1974). Evaluation and control of Training, McGraw-Hill Maidenhead USA.
- [17]. Mamoria, C.B. (1995). Personal Management, Himalaya Publishing House New Delhi, India.
- [18]. Nwachukwu, C.C. (1987) Management Theory and Practice, Africa-Feb Publishers Ltd. Onitsha, Nigeria.
- [19]. Obisi, C. (1996) Personnel Management, Freeman Publications Ibadan, Nigeria.
- [20]. Obisi, C. (2001) Employee Development, Issues and Dimensions, Unical Journal of Public Administrator Sept Vol.1.
- [21]. Obisi, C. (2011) Employee Training and Development in Nigerian Organizations: Some Observations and Agenda for Research. Australian Journal of Business and Management Research Vol. 1No.9 (82-91)
- [22]. Olaniyi A.A. (2006) Manpower Development and Training in Work Organization: A case study. Journal of Energy Trends in Economics and Management sciences (JTEMS) 1(1): 6-12.
- [23]. Omole, M.A.L. (2004) Training and Re-training; A Variable of Technological Development of Industrial Education, 14(2) 76-85.
- [24]. Oysterman, P. (1995) Skill Training and Work Organization in American Establishment: Industrial Relations, 34(2), 125-146.
- [25]. Personnel Effectiveness Workshop Manual (2010) For New Accountants; Industrial Training Fund Abuja, Nigeria.
- [26]. Rao, P.S., (2009), 'Essentials of Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations', Himalaya Publication House.
- [27]. Scott, Clothier. & Spriegel (1977) Personnel Management: Principles, Practices and Point of View. Tata McGraw- Hill Publishing Company Ltd. New Delhi, India.