

A Critical Assessment of Personnel Perceptions on Training and its Impacts on Job Performance in Nigerian Organizations: The Way Forward

Lawretta, Adaobi Onyekwere, PhD^{1*}, Ruby Otomama Douglas²

^{1,2}Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Rivers State University, Nkpolu, Oronworukwo, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

*Corresponding Author

Lawretta, Adaobi Onyekwere

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Abstract: This study examines personnel perception on the training and development programmes obtainable in organizations. Personnel are always in need of training and development programmes to help develop their skills to attain organizational set goals and organizations invest money and time in these programmes, and also ensure that training programmes are organized at regular intervals in order to achieve higher job productivity from personnel who have undergone these training and programmes. But today, personnel perception of the training and development (T&D) process is appalling as management has unsystematically and unethically neglected the selection processes. As a result, personnel most often than not lament how ethnicity, nepotism and monetary bribery and corruption have disrupted the smooth functioning systematic processes of selecting personnel for training against laid down principles globally. It is in this vein that this study critically assesses personnel perceptions on training and its impacts on job performance in Nigerian organizations with the view of recommending the way forward. To achieve the purpose of this study, three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The questionnaire was one the instruments used for data collection. The second instrument: Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was also employed to complement the questionnaire method. The multi-stage sampling technique was employed to select samples in stages in Obio Akpor local government area in the metropolis of Port Harcourt, one of the major centers of economic activities in Rivers State. Three hundred respondents were selected as samples for the study. Chi square (X^2) was adopted to test the hypotheses @ 05 level of significance. The results rejected the null hypotheses, and accepted the alternate hypotheses. The summary of the rejection of the hypotheses revealed that training and development (T&D) processes have been systematically neglected on the basis of ethnicity, nepotism and monetary bribery and corruption have disrupted the smooth functioning systematic processes of selecting personnel for training in Nigerian organizations against laid down principles globally. In addition, the effect of these factors brings with it some negative implications and consequences of low job productivity, high rate of personnel turnover and high cost. Based on these, the study concluded that an unsystematic approach of selecting personnel for training and development programmes affects training delivery styles, personnel as well as organizational productivity. As a result, the study recommends that the process and procedure of selecting personnel for training must be reviewed and management should rethink investing in their personnel and also repose some level of trust in them as this level of confidence will deter them from absconding on graduating from the recommended training and development programmes. Finally, management of organizations should give training and development of employees a priority in order to get the best out of the workforce as well as improving the organization's productivity.

Keywords: Personnel perception; Training and development, Job performance; Bias method of selecting personnel.

1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the fallout of the COVID 19 pandemic that affected the global economy beyond man's imagination, organizations have become increasingly aware of the essence to train and educate their personnel with strategies and systems to enhance their career opportunities and advancement as well as improve their job performance. Agreeing to this, Onyekwere (2021) asserts that personnel training have intrinsic worth; amongst the virtues, it produces a high degree of discipline and exemplary behaviour in the performance of assigned responsibilities, as well as assist personnel to learn more on the job since personnel training is a selective and rigorous effort to enhance performance. Fundamentally, training and development (T&D) has become very imperative in today's Nigeria following the

deterioration of the economy. Sequel to this, the swift adjustment and technological improvement in organizations has made it necessary for personnel to be trained and developed to meet new challenges even though personnel perception of training and development process has methodically been abandoned (Ferreira & Leite, 2018).

Admittedly, training is a process of learning sequence of programmed behaviour which involves a combination of skills development, and knowledge transfer (Jayakumar and Sulthan, 2014) and it is important to assert that this sustained attitudinal change creates awareness of the rules and procedures which guide job performance and also prepare them for an intended job. With this development, Jones, George and Hill (2000) declare that organizational goals are effectively pursued to enable personnel perform and take on new tasks in order to adapt to the changing conditions in organizations. Put differently, training improves quality, satisfies clients, and increases job performance, which ultimately helps to attain organizational set-goals. In other words, training is central to having improved performance and productivity, promoting competitiveness, decreasing absenteeism and turnover, as well as improving client satisfaction (Ferreira & Leite, 2018). Nevertheless, organizations fall short to realize that the increase in the need for training takes time to manifest in the effectiveness in job performance. Basically, the effectiveness of training and development in reality manifests in the transfer of what personnel learned in the course of the training and development activities. In other words, when the acquired knowledge during training is transferred, it improves the performance and productivity of the personnel. Conclusively, when the needs of the personnel, the organization and tasks are met as identified by needs analysis, training is effective (Jayakumar & Sulthan, 2014).

Basically, it was during the beginning part of the twentieth century and specifically after World War II, that training was recognized as the engine block of organizations. According to available records, it was only a few organizations such as General Electric, Westinghouse, and International Harvester that had industrial institutions for training personnel to acquire technical skills to improve their performance. Supporting this declaration, Meister (1997) observed that forty percent of the Fortune 500 organizations had established industrial institutions in America to groom their personnel for higher productivity by the end of 1990.

In Nigeria, particularly during the colonial era, positions of responsibilities were occupied by expatriates in all organizations, but on attaining independence, they exited thereby creating a big vacuum which needed to be taken. Thus, in the attempt to ensure seamless transition to occupying these enviable positions thereby building a new capable indigenous human capital, the recommendations of the Ashby Commissions were adopted. As a result, the Federal Government, according to Olalere and Adesoji (2013), established Manpower Board in 1962 which birthed complimentary institutions like the Centre for Management Development (CMD), Administrative Staff College of Nigeria, Industrial Training Fund (ITF), and Federal Training Centre to train and retrain personnel for the purposes of obtaining new knowledge to increase performance. Interestingly, organizations have started gaining competitive advantage as they were prior to the exit of the expatriates. Different organizations have been applauded by scholars for providing training and development programmes to aid their personnel improve their skills and abilities. Aside from this, it plays a distinct role in improving both the overall efficiency and effectiveness of personnel, including the overall performance and profitability of organizations (Santos & Stuart, 2003; Khan, Khan & Khan, 2011).

From the foregoing, it is clear that the accomplishment of organizations in every ramification is immensely connected to the training and development of personnel. Therefore, to sustain this valuable human resource, organizations are becoming mindful about job satisfaction and retention of personnel through training to achieve organizational goals, regardless of the perceptions that most personnel are keen on only financial profits from their jobs. Fortunately, scores of personnel still place much emphasis on the inherent benefits of their jobs rather than on financial profits. Explaining this school of thought much easier, Goldstein and Ford (2002) contend that learning and development expand personnel efficiencies by equipping them with new abilities and skills for their growth, and also for the attainment of organizational goals. As a result, organizations are striving to train their personnel to be able to swiftly adjust in a continuously fluctuating business environment. Nowadays, most of the organizations are investing a lot of money on the training and development of personnel in order to remain competitive and successful.

It is generally agreed that a lot of personnel are recruited into organizations fully prepared with the knowledge and skills to perform their assigned responsibilities, but to argue that these personnel by virtue of being qualified at recruitment cannot embark on refresher courses or training explicitly designed at civilizing their skills to perform better than ever is a fallacy. At some points, Chrudden & Sherman (1984) argued that personnel require training and development to take on their employment more professionally. Supporting this assertion, Ganesh & Indradevi (2015) maintain that training and development improves original qualifications, knowledge, skills, capability, for which they were hired for higher performance and productivity. From the foregoing, we can conveniently agree with Edralin (2015) that training and development have become essential and deliberate investment in human resource capital. Since human resources have become a very fundamental resource in organizations, it can also be posited that personnel have also turned out to be one of the most significant assets that represent the future of organizations' success. In this vein, it is

necessary to emphasize that to effectively manage personnel; value should be placed on the need for continuous training and development (Chen *et al.*, 2004). Substantiating, Edralin (2015) explains training as a set of activities aimed at facilitating the learning of knowledge, attitude and skills among personnel in organizations to develop their present job performance and contribution to the attainment of organizational goals. He further clarifies that training is different from development as it involves long-term planned efforts to enhance the total growth of human resources leading to the accomplishment of personal and organizational goals.

In a related development, Murty and Faiza (2013) view development as “a process of active learning from experience, leading toward systematic and purposeful development of the whole person: body, mind and spirit”. Essentially, they defined development as activities geared towards the attainment of new knowledge of skill for purposes of personal growth. Juxtapose training and development, Aguinis & Kraiger (2009) defined them as the planned process by an organization to train and develop its employees through activities toward acquiring new knowledge or skill to improve personal growth of its personnel and the improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of organizations. Basically, the constructive impact of training and development is most likely to lessen the possibility of failure and boost performance, skill base as well as expand the level of competence in personnel (Michael and Combs, 2008). Collaborating, Fawad (2012) opined that training and development not only shows improvement in organizations but initiates the steps to shape the attitude of personnel. Going by this, motivation of personnel in any acceptable manner will result in satisfaction in career development, and increase job performance and satisfaction.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The critical assessment of the perception of personnel training and its impacts on job performance in organizations has a greater impact on the success of any organization. Unfortunately, the procedure and process usually adopted by some Human Resource Departments in the identification of those personnel that require training are worrisome. This is because most times, the Human Resources Department (HRD) does not conduct training needs assessment. Besides, the selection criteria are not systematic and free from bias; evidence has shown that a lay down procedure to choose the right personnel for training in order to have a positive effect on organizational performance are neglected. More often than not, unqualified personnel are usually selected for training for reasons not unconnected with nepotism, bribery and corruption. Secondly, some top management staff prefer playing the ethnic card and selecting personnel whose training will be of no relevance to realizing the goals of the organizations. Besides, there is the fear of training some personnel who on graduation rather than remain with the organizations that sponsored the training, abandon the organizations for another.

In spite of the role training and development play in helping personnel to achieve organizational goals and even expanding in its horizons, it is still being opposed by a cross section of the management team that training and development is inconsequential to their growth as long as they remain in Nigeria. Sequel to this, it is therefore the contention of this study to critically assess personnel perceptions on training and its impacts on job performance in organizations with the view of suggesting the way forward to yield confidence, commitment, loyalty, sacrifice as well as increase higher productivity.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to investigate the perception of personnel training and its impacts on job performance in organizations with focus on recommending the way forward such as the processes and procedures of identifying skill gaps, training design and delivery style and personnel perception towards training and achieving organizational goals. The objectives of this study are three pronged, and they include:

- a) To find the relationship between personnel perception of training and job performance
- b) To ascertain the extent of the reluctance to invest in personnel training and expecting increase in job performance
- c) To appraise the extent to which selection procedure of personnel for training affects organizational performance.

1.4.1 Research questions

Towards achieving these objectives, the research questions were generated in line with the objectives as follows:

1. What is the relationship between personnel perception of training and job performance?
2. To what extent does the reluctance to invest in personnel training affect job performance?
3. To what extent does the selection procedure of personnel for training affect organizational performance?

1.4.2 Research hypotheses

To achieve the objectives of this study, the following three hypotheses were formulated for testing.

1. H_0 : There is no significant relationship between personnel perception of training and job performance
2. H_0 : There is no significant relationship between the reluctance to invest in personnel training and job performance
3. H_0 : There is no significant relationship between the selection procedure of personnel and job performance

The entire work is divided into 6 sections. After this introduction and the hypotheses of the study, section examines two examines the related literature review on personnel perception on training and its impacts on job performance from different perspectives. Sections 3 and 4 examine the methodology and data Analysis and section 5 and 6 conclude the work and makes policy recommendations

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 What is training?

The term training has been explained differently by Management experts. From all perspectives, they unanimously consented to training as being the mechanism that allows personnel to grow in knowledge regarding the best way to use emerging and new technologies to increase job performance. In the same vein, it gives personal insight on ways to excel effectively in ground-breaking work designs, especially in virtual groups, and being able to communicate with customers and other stakeholders from various backgrounds for efficient services (Noe, 2008). Substantiating, Goldstein & Ford, 2002) in Khawaja & Nadeem (2013) see training as a systematic approach of learning and development that improves personnel and organizations. Put simply, an organized way in which organizations provide development and enhance the quality of new and existing employees. Writing earlier, Tharenou, Saks and Moore (2007) explained training as the systematic art of gaining and improving knowledge, skills, and behaviours imperative for personnel to perform their job responsibilities. The essence of it, according to Nnanna (2020) is avoid the economic challenges and crisis in organizations that have resulted in low-level productivity of personnel. Several organizations have incurred losses informed of wastage arising from mistakes made by personnel who lack the specific skills needed to perform their jobs effectively.

From the foregoing, it is certain that the main goal of training is simply to change attitude through learning in order to attain improved performance in a specific task or variety of tasks (Beardwell and Holden, 2001). Improving personnel competences and equipping them to meet the current and future needs of organizations is the main objective of training. Aligning to this, Noe (2008) asserts that steady prosperity of any business venture is principally dogged by the level of personnel' quality and their performance improvement via training and continuous learning. In this vein, Human Resources experts agree that organization strengths lie in the best of its personnel indicating the significance of training being in agreement with personnel training needs. What is more, Bratton and Gold (2000) corroborate that effective corporate leaders appreciate that their spirited edge in the present day's market environment is their workforce.

Basically, it is commonly acknowledged that training is a series of activities embarked upon by organizations for the purposes of enabling personnel acquire knowledge and skills in order to achieve organizational goals efficiently. Put differently, training serves as an act of interfering to improve the technical skills of personnel to improve organizations' services and goods for a higher patronage. Based on this, we could contend that personnel training is a key determinant of organizational performance and competitiveness, and economic growth. This explains why personnel training increasingly enhances career opportunities and advancement as well as getting better compensation, and better job duration.

2.2. Training and Development

There are many definitions of training and development, despite the two terms being used interchangeably; they can still be distinguished as meaning different things. It is this vein that Noe (2013) says training is a deliberate effort designed by an organization to equip personnel to learn job-related competencies, knowledge, skills and behaviours that can be applied to their daily activities. On the other hand, development is "formal education, job experiences, relationships, skills and abilities that help personnel prepare for potential jobs or positions". Considering the special role both play in organizations, Mpofu and Hlatywayo (2015) hold that the success and efficiency of any organization in the present global economy, which involves the use of innovative technology and increased reaction to customer needs is dependent on training and development. Earlier, development, according to Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) are "activities that lead up to gaining new knowledge or skills for purposes of personal growth while training is applying a systematic and organized method to learning aimed at developing and improving the effectiveness of not just the individual but also the team and the organization as a whole". Explaining further, Edralin (2015) explains training as "pertaining to a set of activities aimed at facilitating the learning of knowledge, attitude and skills among employees in an organization to improve their current job performance and contribution to the achievement of organizational goals", and argues that it is different from development which involves "long-term planned efforts to enhance the total growth of human resources that will lead to the fulfillment of personal and organizational goals". According to Kashi (2014), training and development is aimed at enhancing the competence and capability of employees by providing individuals and teams with necessary skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to increase an organization's productivity, efficiency, skills improvement, and learning and reduce waste, accidents, and employees' absenteeism. It also improves manpower development and ensures the survival and growth of the organization.

While many organizations provide training and development to their personnel, the awareness of the personnel invariably play a central role in the effectiveness of training and developmental efforts. The result of training programmes is mostly affected by the perception personnel have prior to training and in the activities that lead to training transfer (Santos & Stuart, 2003). The availability of training and development as a psychological contract between the organization and personnel normally influence participation in training and training transfer (Kuvaas, 2008). At the personnel level, the perception of short-term benefits like new knowledge, and new skills to assist execute tasks better and obtain incentives like increased salary and promotion are perceived to have a relationship with the personnel perception of training and development (Rahman & Rahman, 2013). Thus, most human resource management practices assume that resources and opportunities offered to personnel throughout training and after affect high performance, but the perception of personnel have varied. Put differently, personnel may not always see an organization's objective of training and development and as a result, can influence the result of their interest in realizing training transfer (Murty & Faiza, 2013).

In spite of the role personnel play in ensuring the success of training and development process, a gap still exists in the study of the perception of personnel as opposed to personal view of training and development process (Ferreira and Leite, 2013). Aligning to this declaration, Nikandrou, Brinia & Bereri (2009) said earlier research has shown that the motivation of personnel to learn, opportunities to apply new skills learned, the perception of the employee regarding their career goals through training and organizational commitment are some of the characteristics that affect training transfer of personnel. What is more, Ford et al., 2006; Warr et al.,(1999) averred that research have exhibited that the pre-training perception of personnel, training process and the opportunity the personnel obtains to accomplish excellently well and beyond in training transfer may be directly influenced by the perception of personnel.

2.3 Personnel Training on Organizational Performance

While training has been identified as a key determinant to organizational performance, competitiveness, and economic growth, it is rather surprising, according to Okotoni and Erero (2005), that there has been a wide-ranging opposition to investment in training because of the presumption that personnel recruited were eminently qualified and needed no more training for the jobs. Contributing, Stahl (1956) said if that was not the case then it meant that initial selection of personnel was faulty. in the present day, this supposition no longer holds as the need for training has become evident in all sectors (Okotoni and Erero, 2005) since training helps to ensure that organizational members possess the knowledge and skills they need to perform their jobs effectively, take on new responsibilities, and adapt to changing conditions (Jones, George and Hill, 2000). Similarly, training helps develop and improve skills, quality, customer satisfaction, productivity, morale, management succession, business development, profitability and enhance organizational performance and productivity. Concurring, Hamid (2011) submitted that the effectiveness with which organizations manage, develop, motivate, involve and engage the willing contribution of those who work in them is a key determinant of how well these organizations perform.

Sequel to this, training has become more obvious given the growing complexity of the work environment, the rapid change in organizations and technological advancement which further necessitates the need for training and development of employees to meet the challenges. However, prior to training programmes, concerted attempts are made to identify the training needs in line with organizational goals and then select personnel who will achieve the agreed goals (Olaniyan & Ojo, 2008). Thereafter, an evaluation is carried out to determine the usefulness of the training programme in line with the earlier identified needs of organizations. The fundamental nature of appraisal is to identify the extent to which the training has optimistically affected the personnel productivity since organizational development follows the development of personnel who shape the organization. According to Ibenu (2016), knowledge and skills increase innovation, productivity, profitability and sustainability which will result in the organization gaining competitive advantage. Thus, training is viewed as an important factor in personnel performance since it plays a distinct role in improving both the overall efficiency and effectiveness as well as improves the overall performance and profitability of an organization (Santos & Stuart, 2003; Khan; Khan & Khan, 2011). In a nutshell, it therefore follows that no organization becomes effective and efficient until the chosen personnel have attained the essential skills and knowledge which will yield higher productivity.

2.4 Types of Training

In organizations worldwide, the type of training most excellent for personnel with higher productivity is not explicit. This is because the required training is solely dependent on a number of factors which among others include current ability of personnel, and skills already possessed, given job descriptions, and other obstacles which are likely to scare the personnel from carrying out the assigned responsibilities/jobs. In as much as it is accepted that training is a motivation for personnel to learn, and apply new skills acquired to increase productivity, the awareness of what the personnel stand to gain via-à-vis improving their career goals and organizational commitment serve as push to realizing organizational goals. In addition, the pre-training observation of personnel, the procedure and the prospect to achieve over and beyond in order to realize organizational goals is worthily considered (Ford et al., 2006; Warr *et al.*, 1999).

With this, it is clear that the efficiency and achievement of an organization lies on the personnel who constitute the bulk of the organizations. From the following, it is obvious that for personnel to be able to execute their assigned tasks and make meaningful contributions to the success of the organizational goals, they need to acquire the relevant skills and knowledge (Ospina and Watad, 1999). The on-the job and off-the job are the two types of training generally known, notwithstanding that some of the training techniques cut across (Kempton, 1995).

2.4.1 On-the-Job training

On-the-job training (OTJ): This is a form of training that provides training to personnel in their normal/routine working environment. The goal is to allow personnel familiarize with their normal working circumstances, i.e. during the training period; personnel would get acquainted with the processes, machinery, and equipment that will be used consistently. Explaining the essence of on-the-job training (OTJ), Adamu (2008) states that it is designed to impart knowledge of the job by working under an experienced member of staff. Additionally, it provides personnel with first-hand knowledge on how to undertake difficult situations that may arise during the performance of a given assignment. It is also important to state that personnel trainees learn by observing the superior performing a specific job. To perform the same job, personnel trainees are guided by the instructions of the supervisors. This system is very common amongst organizations training personnel currently working at the organization. However, the procedure is more often than not methodological and most times, it is purely through deductive reasoning. It is in this light that Baum and Devine (2007) hold that it is better for the organizations to invest in their personnel on off-the-job training and ensure that they grasp the fundamentals that prompted the training as it is cost effective and time saving. Besides, it helps personnel be trained in a practical way. Examples of the on-the-job trainings are discussed below

2.4.1.1 Apprenticeship

Explaining apprenticeship, Nnanna (2020) says it is a training system universally used for the new generation of personnel of a specific trade or profession. It ranges from craft occupations to regulated professions that require obtaining a professional license. This system of training provides personnel, Ezeigbo (2011) declares, with the essential understanding and expertise for a craft or a variety of related jobs. In Nigeria and elsewhere, organizations apprenticeship training involves working for an employer of labour who teaches the trainees the art and science of the trade or profession, in exchange for their services over a fixed period after they have adjudged skilled.

2.4.1.2 Induction/Orientation

Induction/Orientation training is exclusively given to fresh personnel to introduce them into the organization's processes, policies, goals and regulations. of an organization (Olaniyan and Ojo, 2008). New personnel are launched to their new job responsibilities which usually occur during the first day/ week of commencement (Nnanna, 2020).

2.4.1.3 Internship

Internship training is a kind of on-the-job training commonly used for formal jobs/professional careers. Admittedly, Internships and apprenticeships are related, but in reality, they can be distinguishable; internships are for professional careers and apprenticeships for trade/vocational jobs. Internships are fashionable amongst under-graduate scholars as well as post-graduate students for they are majorly those who undergo internship training. For the most part, internships provide beneficiaries opportunities to expand their knowledge and gain invaluable on-the-job experience.

2.4.1.4 Job Rotation

Job Rotation occurs when personnel trainees are given different job roles and responsibilities in different departments over a period of time. The essence is to expose all the effective strategies that are employed to develop personnel for management roles as they are changed from one duty post to another thereby making them conversant with the entire chain of operations in the organization. A well-structured job rotation programme in an organization yields positive impact on job performance and enthusiasm to take on new challenges within the organization. During this process, personnel are given job enhancement, enthusiasm to carry out new challenges in their career development and finally being built into strong leaders.

2.4.2 Off-the-Job training

Writing on off-the job training as a process of acquiring skill and knowledge from different organizations other than the personnel organizations, Kempton(1995) says group discussion, personnel tutorials, lectures, reading, training courses and workshops from professionals in different disciplines are involved . By extension, personnel on off-the job training are allowed to leave their key place of employment for different locations. The ability to concentrate, analyze past deeds and mirror on what will be achieved and what will not be, according to (Okanya(2008), are the advantages trainee personnel derive from off-the job training. The trainees are provided with educational material, which covers the theory aspect. During this type of training, trainees feel more inclined to express their views and feelings. They can also explore new and pioneering impressions using case studies, conferences, seminars, audio-visuals, lectures, simulations and role-play. This is an expensive training method with expenses including the place of training, facilities used in

training the employees, and hiring experts to add value to the training. Essentially, off-the job training presents opportunities to pass on knowledge and skills in a safe and conducive atmosphere for higher output. In a nutshell, training conducted in an organized and systematic way help to develop new attitudes and experiences that contribute to the success of the organization, develop personnel morale that assist to yield greater productivity (Kempton, 1995).

2.5 Personnel Training and Productivity

Increasing productivity of organizations requires an update training to improve personnel imaginatively, as well as present them with the chance to practically become skilled, and carry out their functions more knowledgeably. Supporting this assertion, Kate Hutchings, Cherrie J.Zhu, Brain K, Cooper, Yiming Zhang & Sijun Shao (2009) affirm that training is the most effective way of motivating and retaining high quality personnel within an organization. In their contribution, Ekaterini & Constantinos-Vasilios (2009) maintain that training is one of the most omnipresent techniques that enhances personnel job productivity and at the same time, inculcates organizational goals into them. Concurring with Ekaterini *et al.*, (2012), Rohan & Madhumita (2012) stated that investing in training personnel on decision making, teamwork, problem-solving and interpersonal relations has valuable impact on the organizations' level of growth, as well as impacting on personnel job productivity. What is more, training affects personnel perception including their working skills thereby improving job output as well as positive changes (Satterfield & Hughes, 2007).

Writing earlier, Lowry, Simon & Kimberley (2002) argued that training enhances commitment as well as maximizes personnel potentials. Since generating high revenue and maximizing profit is a vital tool to realize an efficient and effective workforce, it is therefore only it that can appropriate training and development to provide productivity. It is in this light that Konings & Vanormelingen (2009), Colombo & Stanca (2008) and Sepulveda (2005) contended that training is an instrument that fundamentally affects the successful accomplishment of organizations' goals and objectives. In a nutshell, successful organizations consider the growth of their workforce and if deficient, invest in the training of personnel to be up-to-date in their skills acquisition and aptitude to improve morale and job productivity (Sheeba, 2011). This is because training advances opportunities to reduce absenteeism, and increase personnel commitment and satisfaction that helps reduce turnover (Atif *et al.*, 2010).

2.6 The usefulness and achievement of organizational goals

The usefulness and achievement of organizational goals lies in personnel who work inside the organization with appropriate skills and knowledge and also personnel who are able to perform their tasks thereby contributing meaningfully to realization of organizational goals (Ospina and Watad, 1999). Since Smith (2010) opines that training motivates personnel and makes them more productive and innovative, it is therefore imperative for organizations to ascertain the training and development needs of its personnel through training need analysis and support such needs to the organizational overall needs and objectives in order to actualize the organizational vision and mission. Further, Smith asserts that well trained personnel are more capable and enthusiastic to assume more control over their jobs; they need less supervision, with free management for other tasks; personnel are more capable to answer questions from customers which enhance customer loyalty are reasons why training is important. Furthermore, personnel who identify with their tasks complain less, are more satisfied and more motivated and thus improve management-personnel relationships (Smith, 2010). Concurring, Heathfield maintains that the opportunity to grow and develop through training and development is one of the most important factors in personnel motivation (Heathfield, About.com Guide).

2.7 Components of Training and Development Programme

In personnel training for higher productivity, there is generally no accepted technique. However, there are some methods that could be employed to measure personnel job productivity, and one of such is a training and development programme that encompasses knowledge, career development and goal setting. Such a perfect personnel training and development programme will benefit personnel and organizations. At the moment, organizations are extensively using the Information Technology systems for their learning programmes and are speedily in the lead and organizations that jettison the new innovative system cannot compete with those that are up to date with the new technology. It is appropriate for personnel to be taught a new training programme to boost their knowledge, skills and abilities, and increase their required level of efficiency and job productivity. Interestingly, personnel obviously need required skills and knowledge to improve their productivity without any delay thereby achieving organizational goals.

Since the basic reason for career planning is to support personnel attain organizational goals, management is, therefore, ever willing to finance their career development. However, in as much as management assists personnel to manage various characteristics of their lives and a clear promotion track; guarantee from management on job security is rarely gotten. This is after providing them opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills. (Moses 1999). Career development of personnel ought to be established on a brilliant vocation path which personnel can easily recognize and give it worth (Nunn 2000). To achieve this purpose, personnel must organize their job, job priorities and existing skills to do their job efficiently. In doing so, personnel can easily identify jobs that would require a new set of skills to manage tomorrow (Moses 2000). From the foregoing, personnel should improve their understanding to work effectively, enhance

accountability for career growth and strategize to attain organizational forthcoming goals. Regrettably, when these are not observable in organizations, scores of personnel leave the organization and look around for certain job vacancies outside the organization (O'Herron and Simonsen 1995).

3 MATERIALS AND METHODS

3.1 Study area

The study was conducted in Obio-Akpor local government area in the metropolis of Port Harcourt, one of the major centers of economic activities in Rivers State, Nigeria. The population of the area is put at 464,789, made up mostly of Christians (Census, 2006). Obio-Akpor has its headquarters at Rumuodomaya. It is located between latitudes 4°45'N and 4°60'N and longitudes 6°50'E and 8°00'E. She is bounded by Port Harcourt local government area to the south, Oyigbo and Eleme to the east, Ikwerre and Etche to the north, and Emohua to the west. Obio-Akpor is undoubtedly one of the major hubs for organizations in Rivers State as there are many interesting features in the area. Among them are Radio Rivers 99.1 (located in Elelenwo), the first government-owned FM radio station in the state, and the second FM radio station to launch in Nigeria. Also headquartered in the neighbourhood is Rivers State Television whose signal is received in parts of nine states. The area boasts seven colleges and universities within its boundaries and some of these include Catholic Institute of West Africa, Eastern Polytechnic Rumuokwursi, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumeni, Rivers State College of Health Science and Technology, and so on. Further, Obio-Akpor has about 24 public and private schools for both elementary and secondary education in the area. Amongst them are: Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls' School, Elelenwo, Ash Merlyn International School, Elelenwo, CITA International School, Rumuogba, DeWorld International Secondary School, Emilio Piazza Memorial School, Rumuigbo, Government Secondary School, Eneka, Jephthah Comprehensive Secondary School, La Pierre Angulaire High School, Liora Schools, Elelenwo School, Loretto School of Childhood, Rumuigbo, Marygold International School, Elelenwo amongst others. The choice of Obio-Akpor for this study was due to the increasing number of both big and small formal organizations.

3.2 Study Design

Survey research design was employed in this study. The reason for this research design is that it has the ability to collect large samples from the population, describes, and interprets the relationships that exist between the variables under study. Substantiating, Denga and Ali (1998) uphold that survey research design describe, and interpret the relationships that exist between the variables under study. Data for this study was gathered through the primary and secondary methods of data collection. In employing the primary method, a well structured questionnaire was used to elicit responses from respondents for the sole purpose of the study. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, namely section A and section B. Section A was made up of questions covering the personal data of the respondents, while section B was structured to address issues in the hypotheses and to satisfy the objectives of the study. Furthermore, the study made use of a secondary source of data collection. In using this method books, journals, newspapers and the internet were consulted. Sampling is used here to denote the collection of information and drawing of inference about an entire population. The study adopted the multi-stage sampling technique which was chosen as both the probability and the non-probability sampling techniques in the selection of the sample elements. By the application of stratified sampling technique, the population was categorized into five groups, namely, tertiary institutions, secondary schools, media houses, Clinic and other related establishments and privately owned formal organizations (hospitality industry, and business enterprises). Thereafter, from each of the stratified groups, the quota sampling technique was adopted to choose 20 respondents as sample elements for the study. In essence, four hundred respondents (400) were selected for the study. But with the use of the simple random sampling (pick without replacement), fifty respondents (50) were selected from each of the six stratified named formal organizations. From this exercise, three hundred respondents were chosen as sample elements for the study. By this, the target population in the study consisted of 200(66.67%) respondents as females, while 100(33.33%) respondents were male.

The second instrument employed in gathering data for the study was the Focus Group Discussion (FGDs). Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is primarily a qualitative method of administering open-ended questions in a non-directive interviewing manner. In employing the Focus Group Discussion (FGD), the greatest advantage was the generation of group information which was overlooked in the questionnaire method. Here, some of the respondents earlier employed were utilized as a group of discussants up to 6-8 discussants. Succinctly put, the purpose of FGD in this study was to obtain in-depth information on beliefs, opinions, attitudes, concepts, perceptions and ideas of a group of participants on the subject matter. Since the group was larger, everyone was allowed to make meaningful contributions to avoid fragmented contributions. The discussion did not exceed thirty to forty minutes. This was done to avoid the discussions becoming boring and leading to disinterest.

The survey research design was chosen over other designs due to its ability to collect large samples from the population, describe and establish relationships existing among variables in order to examine the current conditions of the variable under study. This ensured a more effective plan for improvement, as well as allowed only a part of the population to be studied and findings generalized to reflect the entire population.

The formula for chi-square (X^2) is computed using the formula,

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

Fo = observed frequencies

FE = Expected Frequencies

DF = Degree of Freedom

R = Row

C = Column

3.2.1 Test of hypothesis

3.2.1.1 Hypothesis one

H₀ There is no significant relationship between personnel perception of training and job productivity

H₁: There is a significant relationship between personnel perception of training and job productivity

1. The Chi square (X^2) statistical analysis for hypothesis 1 was computed showing the relationship between personnel perception of training and job productivity

Table 1: The Chi square (X^2) statistical analysis for hypothesis 1 is computed showing the relationship between personnel perception of training and job productivity

O	E	O - E	(O - E) ²
20	73.33	-53.33	2844.09
80	26.67	-53.33	2844.09
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	
100	73.33	-53.33	2844.09
0	26.67	26.67	711.29
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
100	73.33	26.67	711.29
0	26.67	-26.67	711.29
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
300	10666.14		

Degree of freedom, 6; significant level, 0.05; table value, 12.592; calculated, $\chi^2 = 35.55$

RESULT

The result in the data analysis as presented Table 1 showed that @ 0.05 significant level with 6 degrees of freedom, the calculated value of 35.55, was greater than the table value of 12.592. In effect, there was a significant relationship between personnel perception of training and job productivity. Therefore, we accept the alternate hypothesis.

3.2.1.2 Hypothesis two

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the reluctance to invest in personnel training and job performance

H₁: There is a significant relationship between the reluctance to invest in personnel training and job performance

2. The Chi square (X^2) statistical analysis for hypothesis 2 was computed showing the relationship between the reluctance to invest in personnel training and job performance

Table 2: The Chi square (X^2) statistical analysis for hypothesis 2 was computed showing the relationship between the reluctance to invest in personnel training and job performance

O	E	O - E	(O - E) ²
25	61	-36	1296
75	39	36	1296
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
68	61	7	49
32	39	-7	49
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
90	61	29	841
10	39	-29	841
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
300	4372		

Degree of freedom, 6; significant level, 0.05; table value = 12.592; calculated $y^2 = 14.57$

The result in Table 2 showed that at 0.05 significant levels with 6 degree of freedom, the calculated chi square value of was greater than the table value of 12.592.

RESULT

The result in the data analysis as presented Table 2 showed that @0.05 significant level with 6 degrees of freedom, the calculated value of 14.57 was greater than the table value of 12.592. In effect, there was a significant relationship between the reluctance to invest in personnel training and job productivity

3.2.1.3 Hypothesis three

H₀: There is no significant relationship between the selection procedure of personnel and job productivity

H₁: There is a significant relationship between the selection procedure of personnel and job productivity

3. The Chi square (X^2) statistical analysis for hypothesis 3 was computed showing the relationship between the selection procedure of personnel and job performance

Table 3: The Chi square (X^2) statistical analysis for hypothesis 3 was computed showing the relationship between the selection procedure of personnel and job performance

O	E	O - E	(O - E) ²
24	64.67	-40.67	1654.05
76	35.33	40.67	1654.05
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
72	64.67	7.33	53.73
28	35.33	-7.33	53.73
0	13.33	-13.33	177.69
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
98	64.67	33.33	1110.89
2	35.33	-33.33	1110.89
0	0	0	0
300	5637.34		

Degree of freedom, 6; significance level, 0.05; table value =12.592; calculated, $y^2 = 18.79$

The result in Table 3 showed that @ 0.05 significant level with 6 degrees of freedom, the calculated chi-square value of 18.79 is greater than the table value at 12.592. Therefore, we invalidate the null hypothesis and validate the alternate hypothesis which stated that there was a significant relationship between the selection procedure of personnel and job productivity. In effect, there was a significant relationship between the selection procedure of personnel and job performance. Therefore, we accept the alternate hypothesis.

O	E	O - E	(O - E) ²
20	73.33	-53.33	2844.09
80	26.67	-53.33	2844.09
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	
100	73.33	-53.33	2844.09
0	26.67	26.67	711.29
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
100	73.33	26.67	711.29
0	26.67	-26.67	711.29
0	0	0	0
0	0	0	0
300	10666.14		

4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the results of hypothesis one, there was a relationship between personnel perception of training and job performance. The perception of personnel on training has a greater impact on the job productivity of organizations. Put simply, if personnel are content with the training policies of organizations, the reflection would be on higher job productivity and the expansion of organizational goals. According to Ferreira & Leite (2012), the perception or attitude of personnel can either be positive or negative towards personnel job productivity and satisfaction. According to the discussants in the Focus Discussion Group (FGDs), training enhances personnel inventiveness and value of work and also makes them to be more committed to achieving the organizational goals and objectives and in turn enhancing personnel usefulness within the organization. Essentially, training has an impact on work performance behaviour as reflected by the responses and evidenced through personnel output hence affecting performance. Although findings indicate that there is great improvement in providing short training programmes, performance has remained hampered, suggesting that there are underlying factors that affect performance. However, training can only lead to better job productivity when complementary inputs/resources are also provided along with training. In organizations, training and development programmes without clear policies to guarantee personnel satisfaction and job productivity is prone to implementation setbacks. The absence of clear policy puts matters to chance and the organizational goal towards productivity may be derailed as miracles cannot be expected. Basically, with change in attitudes, training, knowledge, skills can impart and enhance confidence, competence and commitment to higher job productivity. When there are no changes in attitudes of personnel, skills and knowledge, commitment, the most important of all factors may likely affect job productivity. Besides, it is argued that personnel level of job productivity is jointly influenced by ability and training; training influences productivity through ability factor and plays only a partial role in determining the overall level of personnel job productivity. While training is essential to develop and maintain internal competence of organizations, it is important to recognize that the supply of training input in itself may not secure improved personnel job productivity unless other factors that need to complement training are addressed.

From hypothesis two, the results revealed a significant relationship between the reluctance to invest in personnel training and job productivity. Supporting this assessment, Jones, George and Hill (2000) contended that training helps to ensure that personnel possess the knowledge and skills needed to carry out their jobs effectively, take on new tasks, and adapt to changing conditions in organizations. Likewise, training assists to improve quality, customer satisfaction, productivity, morale, management succession, business development, profitability and organizational performance when there is a huge investment in training and development of personnel. But arguing against this position, some personnel (discussants) in the Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) alleged that most organizations see training and development as a waste of time and resources that would have been employed in the production of goods and services that will yield profit to the organization. They also submitted that the fear of personnel leaving organizations after being trained and developed has been the major reason why some organizations are reluctant to invest in their development. In this circumstance, the discussants averred that some management staff prefers to invest in their children and on graduating, on- the- job training programmes are organized for other personnel and most often, the training and development programmes earmarked are not unplanned and unsystematic. To them, Training and development ultimately promote not only the productivity of personnel but also of the organization. Discussants unanimously submitted that since personnel training and development is the key to organizational sustainable development, investing hugely in personnel will help in quickly adapting to an ever-changing organizational global market. They further contended that organizations needed to invest seriously in personnel training and development in order to advance their image, productivity and sustainability. Besides, they concluded that with the rate at which globalization is ravaging the global world, only organizations that invest in their personnel can stand the test of time, particularly in this 21st century. While the argument rages on, Jones, et.al, (2000) further affirmed that training, particularly, off-the- job training and

development has an impact on work performance behaviour as reflected by the responses and evidenced through personnel output hence affecting job productivity. Training may lead to better performance if employees are provided with complementary inputs/resources. However, any programme not guided by clear policy is prone to implementation setbacks.

In hypothesis three, a positive result was obtained which meant there was a significant relationship between the selection procedure of personnel for training and development programmes and job productivity. Unfortunately, the procedure and process usually adopted by some Human Resource Departments in the identification of those personnel that require training are worrisome. This is because most times, the Human Resources Department (HRD) does not conduct training needs assessment. Discussants submitted that personnel training selection criteria is not systematic and free from bias, evidence has shown that it does not follow a lay down procedure to ensure that the right personnel are selected for training for positive effect on organizational performance. More often than not, unqualified personnel are usually selected for training for reasons not unconnected with ethnicity, nepotism, bribery and corruption which include collecting monetary incentives from ill-equipped personnel and recommending same for training when it obvious the so chosen personnel is not the ideal candidate to fill the skill gap which needs to be filled through training the right candidate. In another submission, the discussants argue that the present techniques and criteria adopted in the selection of personnel for training should be reviewed. As far as they are concerned, organizations should document staff performance overtime for which appropriate training could be recommended, and selection of trainees should not be nepotistically induced, or anything unethical but rather on performance requirements. Besides, it should be balanced across age spectrum, disciplines, functions and levels depending on need. Organizational demands must however be matched with and balanced against personnel aspirations and preferences. Above all, they contended that performance appraisal should be used to identify training needs; otherwise if wrong personnel are elected as trainees, these personnel could attain and not learn anything. To avoid this pitfall, the nominating officer should brief the nominee about the benefits as failure may be interpreted in a number of ways and the trainee personnel interpret the nomination will probably determine their objectives for the training programmes and motivation to become skilled at the end of the training. The argument here is that the training criteria for selecting personnel for further training ought to be systematic and free from bias; the selection process must lay down procedures to ensure that the right candidates are selected for training for positive effect on organizational performance. Discussants submitted that until personnel are trained efficiently to required skills and knowledge, organizations cannot compete favourably in the present day Nigerian market, not to mention the global market. But they argued that unless organized efforts are made to examine and identify the training needs of organizations, and evaluation carried out to ascertain the value of the programme in line with the need, which had been identified, it will be an attempt to reach the sun!

5. CONCLUSION

It is very clear from the foregoing that the assessment of personnel perceptions on training and its impacts on job performance in Nigerian organizations is timely and more relevant today than ever. It is also an incontrovertible fact that personnel who have participated in training and development programmes in recent times showed a significant difference in perception towards helping to achieve organizational goals than those who never. Also it is evident that personnel tend to become absolute, and therefore making the need to adapt to the continuous learning and updating of the skill and knowledge invaluable, as a result of the organizational, technological and social dynamics. Thus, in order for organizations to achieve optimum returns from their investment, there is an imperative need to effectively manage training and development programmes. However, the most vital asset of every organization under stiff and dynamic competition is its human capital. Training and development is an instrument that aids human capital in exploring their dexterity. Therefore training and development is vital to the productivity of an organization's workforce. Going by this, there was a positive relationship in the differences between those who attended training and development programmes, and this can also be supported by the findings of the increase in job productivity. Discussants pointed out personnel who attended training programmes are much more motivated to increase their output because of the feeling that the organization places value on them. Thus, the implication of this is that organizations should make an effort in making sure training activities are offered on a continuous basis for its personnel. Equally, the discussants in the focus group discussion affirm that the more regular training and development programmes are organized, the more the increase in job productivity and realization of organizational goals. They unanimously agreed the need for organizations to ensure continuous training and development programmes to guarantee job productivity and by extension, satisfaction and motivation of personnel. Summarily, it is important to observe that all the null hypotheses were rejected and this goes to show that there is a relationship between the components above. This is the same for the relationship between the reluctance to invest in personnel training and job productivity, as well as the relationship between the selection procedure of personnel and job productivity. In other words, organizations that try to improve job productivity invest in training and development of personnel and also ensure the right personnel are selected through due process with the mindset of achieving organizational goals

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings and conclusion of the study the following recommendations are made, which if adopted would make the critical assessment of personnel perceptions on training and its impacts on job performance in Nigerian organizations timely.

1. The study advocates that a systematic training procedure of identifying and selecting personnel for training be adopted to ensure a significant improvement on the organizational performance. Organizations can become more productive and remain in business, especially in this era of increased global competitiveness and growing complexity of the work environment when adequate training needs assessments are conducted by the Human Resource (HR) department before sending employees on training.
2. The present techniques and criteria adopted in the selection of personnel for training should be reviewed. In this vein, organizations should document staff performance overtime for which appropriate training could be recommended. Most importantly, selection of trainees should be not nepotistically induced, or anything unethical but rather be based on performance requirements. Besides, it should be balanced across age spectrum, disciplines, functions and levels depending on need. Organizational demands must however be matched with and balanced against personnel aspirations and preferences.
3. Furthermore, training opportunities should not be seen as opportunities to fraternize with loyalists. Personnel training and development programmes in the form of seminars and workshops must be organized strictly by the Human Resource department that places the goals of the organizations above other parochial interests.
4. There should be a mechanism created by the Human Resource (HR) department for proper assessment and evaluation of personnel performance after training to find out if there will increase job output. In addition, the HR department should ensure that adequate training design, rich in content, is used for personnel training. The content should be able to include all the identified skill gaps, while making sure that a trainer who is knowledgeable and experienced in that area is contracted for the training delivery.

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