Training and Development process, element of Organisational Social Capital Building: A review of Nigeria medium enterprises human resource practitioners.

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Abstract

This paper similar to the study of recruitment and selection process, element of organisation social capital building, the paper focused attention on one function of human resource as it relates to organisational social capital building, the paper is widening the gap in knowledge on how to influence other human resources function such as training and development. This paper opens discussion on how training and development relates to organisational social capital building using Nigeria medium enterprises human resource perception. Business today operates in an environment, where every organisation focus on attaining increased productivity and performance from the staff they recruit. Human resource practitioners are expected to, not just, recruit staffs; they are saddled with the responsibility of training and developing employees they recruit in order to the achieve objectives of their firm. Hence, the use of training and development programmes and policies to build social capital for firms requires attention, that too, in a contextual manner. This paper studied the view of medium enterprises human resource practitioners as regards using training and development programmes to build organisation social capital.

Quantitative approach was used as the sole research method, 500 questionnaires were sent out to human resource practitioners in Nigeria medium enterprises, 451 were retrieved back. The paper uses a Likert-scale questionnaire as instrument and descriptive, bivariate and multiple regression analysis to investigate if human resource practitioners in Nigeria medium enterprises understand the need to use their training and development programmes to build organisation social capital for their firms and what influences this perception generates. The study reveal that Nigeria medium enterprises human resource practitioners focus on the social nature of work than on efficient process of work whilst design training and development programmes and in assessment of training needs of the organisation implying they are in support of the use of training and development function to build organisation social capital. Education background and qualification of human resource practitioners is found to the only factor responsible this positive perception.

Keywords: Social Capital, Organisational Social Capital, Human Resources Management, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, Training and Development, human resource practitioners.

Introduction

In past literatures (Barney, 2001; Kase & Zupan, 2007; Sparrow, 2009) emphasis has been made on training and development function of human resource management with less attention on how these function develop the organisational social capital building. Employer on many occasions are also keen to make decisions on how to employee staff and sees this function as the duties of human resource unit. The human resource unit on their own side find it very difficult to exercise their function and duties such as training and development of staff employed by the unit. This was because many organisations sometimes occupy their staff with lot of work that they do not have time off work for training. These have been the problems over a long period of time, which have led the human resource personnel to relent on what their key functions are in the organisation they are meant to serve. The human resource practitioners, especially those operating in medium enterprises , tend to focus solely on recruitment, leaving training and development aspect of their duties to suffer, largely due to lack or insufficient provision of funds for training activities by Nigeria SMEs (Fajana et al. 2011 & Ojokuku, 2012). No wonder many organisations today have failed to understand how to develop or build there social capital within their business.

An approach which has led staff to limited relationship within each other, most staff have no social life and do not even discuss any past of their business line with other colleagues as a way of sharing knowledge or developing each other through integration of ideal duties or even social events. Although Kale et al., (2000) defined Social capital as the aggregate values in human relationships (official and social) that make organisations work effectively. Human interactions in organisations are characterised by the trust, close relationships, respect, and mutual understanding developed in the structure and content of social relations and affinity (Adler & Kwon, 2002). However these interactions have a direct influence on training and development function of human resource management, which in turn supports social capital building.

Training and Development element of organisation social capital building

Lately, just as traditional sources of competitive success have been waning, the significance of human resource as determinant of competitive success has increased. Businesses now consider human resources as both a tangible and intangible part of organisations resources, with the potential to ensure continuous organisational success (Tzafrir, 2005). In recent times Armstrong (2010) posits that the debates on the competitive advantage of nations and companies have focused increasingly on human resource development as well as on human resource management issues. This focus has led to the development of resource-based and knowledge-based theories that examine the relationship that exists among core resource, capabilities, and sustainable competitive advantage and above average performance (Diugwu, 2011). Given that competitive advantage emanates from sources such as cost structure, quality of products or services, innovation, convenience, distribution network, as well as level of customer support, it is fundamental for organisations to ensure the aggregate of its employees are empowered through learning, training and development to reduce costs, produce quality products, provide quality services, and develop new product and ideas. And to liaise and communicate effectively

with relevant stakeholders to ensure their products and services get to the end user at appropriate time and reduce cost. Thus, competitive advantage can emanate from intangible sources that ensure adequate utilisation of the knowledge or intellectual capital of an organisation (Diugwu, 2011) through appropriate training and development at the right time.

Training which is about changing behaviour (Hardingham, 2003) and a sub-set of human capital development for organisations provide values to employers by enabling them to do things they could not do without it and help achieve existing business objectives (Ingham, 2009), as well as getting it right the first time in other to promote quality improvement and sustainability of the business (Adetunji 2014). Likewise, Mojeed-Sanni (2015) expressed that the right sort of human capital development initiatives, that is, training and development, can help an organisation set new and more challenging business goals. What organisations and individuals should be looking for from training activities is a demonstrable change in behaviour. Examples would be faster typing, active listening to subordinates (whereas before there had been only telling and interrupting); collaboration with stakeholders and work colleagues (whereas before there had been only silo working, conflicts of interests and ideas, and independent achievement). Improving communication and motivation with co-workers (whereas before there had been only misinformation, knowledge hoarding and secrecy), consultation of people who were not consulted before, and stammer-free delivery in presentations. Differentiating training (behaviour moulding activities) from educating (Knowledge creation activities), Hardingham (2003) posited that it is often enough for education to 'broaden the mind', to increase knowledge and understanding without any necessary or immediate evidence of behaviour change. Ingham (2009) acknowledged that since the point of virtually all organisational outcomes, not the least that of performance is a team, not the individual, it is social capital rather than human capital, which is the greatest enabler for competitive success. Ingham (2009)'s listing of the role of training as a cursor for social capital building in an organisation includes: developing a culture of innovation and encouraging people to be more innovative through conversations with other people. Ingham (2009) opines that the role of training also involves managing the tacit knowledge residing in the head of individual employees by ensuring employees are capable of connecting with each other through effective conversations. In other words, explore the gains of social capital by using training to share and build on the knowledge that exists in the organisation.

Although much of the academic and practitioner literature on training focus on human capital development, there are some references to social capital. Whilst looking at implications of social capital on salespersons' performance, Cron et al. (2005) argue that the nature of the sales position has changed and that customers expect organisations to respond faster and provide value-added solutions to meet their needs. They contend that in order to accomplish this, organisations' employees need to be trained to develop longer-term, closer relationships with their customers than they had in the past. Justifying the shift in attention of organisations from product/market focused to people/customer focused. They contends that sales people no longer just sell products and services; instead they are expected to deliver enterprise-wide solutions, train customers on the products that they sell, manage customer projects, and maintain strong relationships with customers. This, no doubt, emphasizes the importance of

training sales people so that they will be encouraged to stay with the company and maintain close relationships with the customers who have grown to trust them and depend on them. Rollag et al. (2005) suggest that managers should provide new hires with job assignments that require frequent interaction with co-workers so that they can quickly build social capital within the company. They also suggested that new hires be assigned to work on cross-functional teams so that they can build their networks throughout the organization. Cron et al. (2005) suggest that managers frequently review who new employees have interacted with so that they can monitor the development of the new hires' networks.

The importance of training and development function in organisation social capital building has been explained by the view of Menguc and Barker (2005), when they contend that managers should put greater emphasis on training sales representatives to develop collaborative relationships within their organizations to improve their effectiveness. Organisations are responsible for ensuring employees possess the skills required to ensure there are collaborative relationships within the organisation and between employees, which is what Wilson, (1997) referred to as inter-personal and group skills that are useful for community building. From Organisation perspective, these set of interpersonal and group process skills are what constitute intangible resources necessary for attaining competitive advantage in knowledge economies. Where intellectual capital resident in people is of paramount importance, such that the way human resources exploit organisational knowledge can be vital to organisational advantage (Coakes et al., 2004). These skills include but not limited to; Communication Skills, especially active listening; Relationship skills, such as building mutual respect, understanding, trust and empathy; Group process skills, such as conflict resolution, group facilitation, participatory problem-solving and decision-making, team-building, celebration, ritual and appreciation; Networking skills, that is, creating linkages and networks within and outside the company, both virtual and actual; Leadership skills, focusing on leader as coach, catalyst and change agent, leaders as articulator of participants' hopes and desires, leader as builder of shared vision, leader as servant, leader as reformer, leader as 'empowerer' of others, and co-operative leadership.

The above enumerated skills are sometimes called 'people skills' that are acquirable in organisations through training and development. If training as defined by CIPD is an instructor-led and content based intervention which leads to desired changes in behaviour (CIPD Factsheet 2008), and provides employees with knowledge and skills to perform their job effectively (Blanchard and Thacker, 2007), it therefore implies that organisation can use training extensively to help employees acquire essential soft skills as highlighted above, and which make up the intellectual, emotional and social capital of the organisation (Sarwar, 2011)

To be effective, the specialist professional manager of training and development operations must be able to establish, manage and evaluate a cost-effective, value adding function appropriate to the needs of a particular organisation. She/he must ensure a good 'fit' between the vision and strategy of training and development and organisational vision and goals. This 'fit' is more important than any form of idealised 'best practice' (CIPD Professional standard, 2015)

Methodology

The major difference between human resources practice in micro and small enterprises and medium enterprises lies in the composition and characteristics of the firms. Most micro and small firms are characterised by one-man business, sole proprietorship and self-employed (Aremu & Adeyemi, 2011), where there is neither proper human resources unit nor dedicated human resources professional; on the other hand, medium-sized firms tends to operate on a higher pedestal in terms of structure and size and resources. Medium-sized firms strives to meet societal expectation in terms of their human resources practice through institutional 'mimetic isomorphism' (Boon et al., 2009), where they 'tend to model themselves after similar organisations in their field, such as imitations of human resource management strategies and practices of competitors' (Boon et al. 2009, pg.494) which often include large corporations and multinationals in the same line of business.

451 respondents were randomly selected from four dominant subsectors of Nigeria medium-sized enterprises sector (that is Education, Manufacturing, Financial Intermediation, Hotels and Restaurants, Health and Social Work, Transport Storage and Communication, and Wholesale and Retail Trading), and sourced through members directory of four human resource professional bodies in Nigeria, namely; Chartered institute of personnel management of Nigeria, Nigeria Institute of Training and Development, Institute of Strategic Management, Nigeria and Chartered Institute of Human Capital Development of Nigeria) using stratified sampling technique, albeit, on unequal allocation between the sectors chosen. Medium-sized enterprises is purposely chosen for this study in line with the view that human resource phenomenon ought to be look at it with respect to the size and dynamics of the organisation and their immediate operating environment - which are often distinctive, dynamic, turbulent and with some elements of similarity, depending on the nature of business. Considering the conclusions of Wan Hooi (2006) that large firms, compared to smaller ones, do implement more sophisticated human resource management practices; that there is recent upsurge of interest among SMEs in implementing human resource management practices in their organizations; and that there is significant difference between small, medium and large firms in terms of their human resource management practices. Wan Hooi (2006), thereby established that there is a relationship between the size of a firm and the extent of adopting human resource practices. Also, the major difference between human resource practice in micro and small enterprises and medium enterprises lies in the composition and characteristics of the firms. Most micro and small firms are characterised by one-man business, sole proprietorship and self-employed (Aremu & Adeyemi, 2011), where there is neither proper human resource unit nor dedicated human resource professional; on the other hand, medium-sized firms tends to operate on a higher pedestal in terms of structure and size and resources. Medium-sized firms strives to meet societal expectation in terms of their human resource practice through institutional 'mimetic isomorphism' (Boon, et al, 2009), where they 'tend to model themselves after similar organisations in their field, such as imitations of human resource management strategies and practices of competitors' (Boon et al. 2009, pg.494) which often include large corporations and multinationals in the same line of business. Respondents for this study were sourced from the membership directory of four human resource professional associations in Nigeria. Resultant data collated were analysed descriptively using bivariate (cross-tabulation) and multivariate (regression) analysis.

Analysis and Results

Nigeria medium enterprises human resource Practitioners' Response to Use of human resource Training and development function to build Organisational Social Capital

Concerning the attitude of respondents on the use of training and development function of human resource building organisational social capital for their firms, respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement that 'the training and development of employees in an organisation should focus more on the social nature of work than on efficient process of work'. Table 1 below depicts responses of the participants. Thirty-two (32) respondents, representing 7.1% of the total participants, strongly disagreed with the statement that training and development of employees in an organisation should focus more on the social nature of work than on efficient process of work. On the same wavelength of opinion with a lesser degree, one hundred and three (103) respondents, representing 22.8% of total participants surveyed, opposed the idea. On the opposite spectrum of opinion, fifty-one (51) respondents, representing 11.3% of total participants, agreed with the notion that the training and development of employees in an organisation should focus more on the social nature of work than on the efficient process of work, while one hundred and fifty (150) respondents representing 33.3% of total participants not only agreed with the notion but did so in strong terms.

Table 1 Response on how to use Training and Development Function of human resource to Build SC for Firms

Should the training and development of employees in an organisation should focus more on the social nature of work than on efficient process of work.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Responses	Strongly Disagree	32	7.1	7.1	7.1
	Disagree	103	22.8	22.8	29.9
	Indifference	115	25.5	25.5	55.4
	Agree	51	11.3	11.3	66.7
	Strongly Agree	150	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	451	100.0	100.0	

Source: Author, from research SPSS data

Significantly one hundred and fifteen (115) respondents, representing 25.5% of the total practitioners surveyed, were indifferent to the statement. That is, they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement that should the training and development of employees in an organisation focus more on the social nature of work than on efficient process of work. In all, there is a large percentage of respondents, according to this study (25.5%), who were indifferent to the use of training and development function

develop SC for their organisation, in addition to 29.9% of those that outright did not accept that the use of training and development function to produce SC for their firms. Majority of respondents (44.6%) who took part in the survey were apparently in support of the use of training and development function to build organisation social capital, through focus on the social nature of work than on efficient process of work in the design of training and development programme and in assessment of training needs of the organisation.

In relation to determining respondent's attitude to building organisation social capital through their primary function of training and development, the correlation coefficient in the regression model summary suggests that attitude of human resource practitioners to building organisation social capital through their primary function of training and development and changes in the socio-demographic characteristics of the practitioners have a slightly strong linear relationship. Also, the correlation determination of .105 indicates that the differences in attitude of respondents were explained by 10.5% of combinations of socio-demographic characteristics of the participants.

Furthermore, attitude of respondents to building organisation social capital through their primary function of training and development changes significantly with respect to changes in any of or combination of the socio-demographic characteristics of the practitioners. According to this study, educational background of the practitioners is the only significant factor in determining the attitude of respondents to building organisation social capital for their firm, through their primary function of training and development. Again, educational background has a very high and positive correlation of determination of .735 and statistical significance value of .000 in the coefficient of determination in table 2. Also, given that majority of respondents believed that training and development programme in an organisation should focus on the social nature of work rather than on the efficient process of work. Moreover, acknowledging further findings in the same manner, suggests that majority of respondents are highly educated, given a corroborated view. No wonder, Cardon and Stevens (2004); Ojokuku (2012) considered human resource practitioners' educational qualification as being a major factor in reaching managerial position in Nigeria. It is not surprising to find that the educational qualification of human resource practitioners is the only socio-demographic attribute that determines the attitude of practitioners in Nigeria medium enterprises to the use of their primary human resource function of training/development to build organisation social capital for their firm. The positive correlation found in this paper between this variables only further justify the position of Chartered Institute of Personnel Management, Nigeria, that organisations in Nigeria should only engage the services of professional human resource practitioners to manage their human resource department and responsibilities (Nnodim, 2012).

Table 2. *Survey findings on determinants of respondent's attitude to building organisation social capital through training and development*

coefficients [a]							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	5.114	.718		7.127	.000	3.704	6.524
Position in Organisation	-.223	.171	-.084	-1.301	.194	-.559	.114
Number of Employees Under Control	-.204	.127	-.102	-1.598	.111	-.454	.047
Organisational Specialization (Sector)	.054	.042	.060	1.272	.204	-.029	.136
Gender	-.064	.184	-.017	-.350	.727	-.426	.297
Religion	-.049	.122	-.020	-.404	.687	-.288	.190
Marital Status	-.089	.114	-.045	-.780	.436	-.314	.135
Age Group	-.110	.096	-.088	-1.145	.253	-.300	.079
Years of Practice as human resource Manager	-.151	.152	-.070	-.996	.320	-.449	.147
Educational Background	**.735**	**.131**	**.353**	**5.592**	**.000**	.476	.993
a. Dependent Variable: **Building Organisational Social Capital Through Training and Development Function**							

R-Square .105   Correlation coefficient (R) .323 Source: Author, from SPSS research data.

Correlations

Table 1.3

		Position in Organisation	Number of Employees Under Control	Organisational Specialosation (Sector)	Gender	Religion	Marital Status	Age Group	Years of Practice as human resource Manager	Educational Background
Pearson Correlation	Position in Organisation	1.000								
	Number of Employees Under Control	-.539	1.000							
	Organisational Specialosation (Sector)	.006	-.145	1.000						
	Gender	-.047	.000	.059	1.000					
	Religion	.075	-.101	-.087	.243	1.000				
	Marital Status	-.264	.271	-.033	.294	.290	1.000			
	Age Group	-.602	.665	-.134	.080	.028	.482	1.000		
	Years of Practice as human resource Manager	-.598	.490	-.013	.129	.148	.452	.644	1.000	
	Educational Background	-.558	.401	.089	.143	.054	.338	.553	.632	1.000

Position in Organisation	.	.000	.453	.163	.057	.000	.000	.000	.000
Number of Employees Under Control	.000	.	.001	.499	.017	.000	.000	.000	.000
Organisational Specialosation (Sector)	.453	.001	.	.109	.034	.242	.002	.390	.030
Gender	.163	.499	.109	.	.000	.000	.046	.003	.001
Religion	.057	.017	.034	.000	.	.000	.282	.001	.127
Marital Status	.000	.000	.242	.000	.000	.	.000	.000	.000
Age Group	.000	.000	.002	.046	.282	.000	.	.000	.000
Years of Practice as human resource Manager	.000	.000	.390	.003	.001	.000	.000	.	.000
Educational Background	.000	.000	.030	.001	.127	.000	.000	.000	.

(Row label in left margin: Sig. (1-tailed))

Findings and Conclusion

As regards the use of human resource functions and practices to influence and create organisation social capital for an organisation, in a similar study conducted by this authors it was found that a slight majority human resource practitioners in Nigeria medium enterprises consented that social interaction capabilities and potential should form one of the criteria for recruitment and selection; put side-by side the findings in this paper that some practitioners were unsure of the need to train or develop candidates for effective social interaction skills that could build social capital, it can be concluded that their only exists partial acceptance and use of both human resource functions (recruitment/selection and Training/development) for building social capital for medium enterprises firms in Nigeria. Furthermore, from amongst the potential influencing socio-demographic attributes of practitioners shaping their understanding and perception, nature of the organisation they work for (that is, industry specialization), the number of employees under their control, number of years of practice as human resource manager, the position they occupy in the organisation and their marital status and age plays virtually no role in shaping their thoughts and perception. This finding in, a way, is at variance with human resource 'institutionalism' theorist; such as, Choudhury (2011); Boselie, et al., (2003); Brewster, et al. (2011); Hassi and Storti, (2011) and many others view that work context and relevant contingent factors (e.g. size of the organization, branch of industry, capital intensity, technology used) and workforce characteristics matter a great deal in shaping organizational behaviour; that organizations and human resource practitioners should consider the complexity of diverse work context and cultural differences while managing employees.

However, Educational background and qualifications are found to be highly influential in tilting human resource practitioners' perception of need to use of training and development programmes and policies for building organisation social capital building. The impact of high educational qualification, especially professional qualifications on positive inclination of practitioners towards contemporary human resource issues has been well documented. Long and Wan Ismail (2008); Abdullah et al (2011) posit that

human resource practitioners' mastery and competence usually gathered, possibly, through years of study and training play a critical role in the effective discharge of their responsibilities as they confer some level of exposure and knowledge to contemporary issues and phenomenon on the holders of the qualification. This particular finding supports the agitation of Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria (CIPMN) that human resource manager in medium enterprises should be professionally qualified. In practice, a well-educated and professional qualified human resource manager would view organisation social capital building as a critical human resource function, knowing that   human resource practitioners/managers are saddled with resource management responsibilities - structuring a firm's resource portfolio, bundling the resources to build capabilities and leveraging those capabilities with the purpose of creating and maintaining value Sirmon et al., (2007) and Yang, (2012).

Recommendations and Suggestion for Future Research

The findings from this paper suggested that training and development should be taking very serious by the human resource unit of any organisation that wants to build organisational social capital. This is because staff get to met each other during training and development exercise. During this period, line of authority that are set as barrier to communication down the line of authority are sometimes broken, which encourage social interaction between staff. Organising training and development will foster smooth relationship and creates room for development within the organisation. This is because during training and development, practical knowledge and experiences are shared which will increase and encourage common practice within the organisation.   Training and development programmes in medium enterprises in Nigeria should be strategically designed towards developing OSC for firms. Training programmes should focus on building the Meta knowledge, skills and ability of existing employees and new recruits; they should be trained so that they would be encouraged to stay with the firm and maintain close relationships and interactions with co-workers and customers. As it is a key factor to building OSC and ultimately enhancing organisational outcomes due to possible improvement in interpersonal skills, sales skills, management skills and technical skills of employees. However this paper cannot claim to have seen it all or cover all areas of human resource function that can develop organisational social capital building. Therefore there is still opportunity to further study other function of human resource management as they relates or can be used to develop organisational social capital building. Likewise there is need to be careful when applying or translating the study to other sector or environment where this study did not cover such as agriculture, health, educational sectors among others. Again it is important to mention here that individual or group or organisation should be extra careful as well as consider the suitability of the study in any other environment properly before implementing or translating the study.

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