Chapter 6  
Assessing the Role and Function of IT/IS Training and Development and Policy Implementation in a Public Sector Organization

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the dramatic changes in the public service in recent years. The paper examines employee Information technology (IT) training and development in Nigerian Immigration services. This chapter fulfils the need for exploring the experiences in employee technological training and development and how these have impacted on their performances. Using a sample of 82 respondents, the research reported here portrays the paths which link the consequences of training and development on effective policy implementation. In this framework, IT training and development consequences in organizations represent a proxy in which employee training, actions, attitudes, and behaviours affect employees’ job effectiveness. Using a multiple statistical analysis, the results indicate a mixed significance. Implications for strategic employee IT training and development policies are reported and suggestions for future research are discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

In order for organizations, whether private or public, need certain inputs like human and material resources. The human side of the organization (employees) is an important component that needs to be of high quality so as to perform as an effective human capital. Although recruitment, selection and placement procedures are planned with the aim of high productivity; there arises the problem of actually ensuring that the people placed on their particular job possess the skills necessary to perform such jobs. One good attempt at ensuring that necessary job skills are available is by embarking on training and development (Kalargyrou & Woods, 2011).

Public sector employees often have a wide range of access to training and development opportunities which can increase organisations’ total output hence leading to the growth of the economy. Public sector staff usually receive IT training through external courses, which are offered by the management of their particular sectors. They also benefit from the formal on the job coaching and mentoring through regular attendance of workshops which are geared towards ensuring that staff are trained (Ceriello & Freeman, 1991).

IT Training and development in public and private enterprise is very important. This is measured by the number of persons engaged whether as trainers, instructors, support personnel, or managers, the number and variety of training programmes provided, or the resources committed to it. Training is one of the most pervasive enterprise in any economy. IT Training and development are affected by demographic, political, economic and social trends. The training manager must recognize that these changes, trends, and challenges and issues must be dealt with while they can be shaped, redirected and exploited before their full effect are felt. Events have shown that many workers leave their organization because their need for training were not identified and provided for as an indispensible part of management function (Armstrong, 2004). As a result, many employees usually prefer having control of their own personal training and development. It is through this process that employees position themselves to have skills for other endeavours (Odueyungbo, 2006).

Employee’s development process and training has been associated with performance improvement (Naylor, 1999; Eddie Kilkelly, 2011). Systematic IT training helps to build confidence in the workers and makes them effective on the job (Gomez-Mejia & Balkin, 2001). According to Sussman (2006), training experts help government agencies make the transition from static personnel management to incorporate modern, more efficient performance management programmes that include greater reliance, and the institution of succession planning to develop leaders for the future.

Increase in technological development is rendering existing techniques and skills of production obsolete. The modernization and technological breakthrough speeds up production process, requires new knowledge, skills and ultimately training and retraining, which is an effective way of coping with such developments. No organization can be guaranteed a permanent place in our highly competitive society and no manager can be effective unless he keeps his business competitive. Because of the dynamic nature of the business environment, it is no longer a debate whether technological training and development activities are luxuries in which organization can indulge in, only in prosperous times. It is a fact that IT training and development of an effective workforce are necessary for the spirit, survival and performance of an organization. Management must develop those who will manage the organization in the years to come (Boone & Kurtz, 1987; Clinton, Williamson, & Bethke, 1994).

According to the ILO (2000), human resources in any organisation remain the most invaluable asset for growth and development. Training and re-training are essential components of workers development. Workers development and training
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