

OPTIMIZING THE POTENTIALS OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS THROUGH EFFECTIVE HUMAN RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND ALLOCATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Maximizing the effectiveness of educational institutions depends largely on how well human resources are mobilized and allocated. This process goes beyond merely recruiting qualified personnel; it also involves placing staff in roles that match their skills, supporting their continuous professional development, maintaining their motivation, and ensuring long-term retention. When these elements are properly managed, educational institutions are better equipped to improve teaching and learning outcomes, enhance administrative efficiency, and respond proactively to evolving educational needs. This paper therefore examines how the potential of educational institutions in Nigeria can be optimized through effective human resource mobilization and strategic resource allocation. It emphasizes the central role that well-managed human resources play in strengthening institutional performance and achieving educational goals. By focusing on the alignment of personnel capabilities with institutional objectives, the study highlights ways to maximize staff productivity and overall system effectiveness. In addition, the paper clarifies key concepts such as human resources, resource mobilization, and resource allocation, providing a conceptual foundation for understanding their interrelationships. It further explores the current nature and practices of resource mobilization and allocation within the Nigerian educational system, identifying both strengths and gaps. Particular attention is given to the challenges that hinder effective implementation, including inadequate planning, uneven distribution of personnel, and limited investment in staff development. Finally, the paper offers practical and forward-looking recommendations aimed at improving the efficiency and sustainability of human resource management in education. By adopting more strategic and inclusive approaches, educational institutions can better harness their human capital, ensuring improved performance and long-term development.

Keywords: Optimizing, Potentials, Educational Institutions, Resources Mobilization, Resources Allocation

Introduction

Educational institutions play a vital role in national development, functioning as key centers for the transmission of knowledge, the development of skills, and the shaping of values. In today's rapidly changing and highly competitive global environment, the effectiveness and relevance of these institutions depend largely on how efficiently they utilize and manage their human resources. Teachers, administrators, and support staff form the core of any educational system, as they are directly responsible for implementing policies, delivering instruction, and maintaining the overall functioning of schools. Their competence, commitment, and productivity are therefore essential for achieving educational objectives and sustaining high-quality outcomes (Oke & Kefas, 2018).

Despite their importance, many educational institutions continue to face significant challenges related to human resource management. Common issues include inadequate staffing levels, improper placement of personnel, low staff morale, and inefficient use of available human resources. In some cases, qualified individuals are assigned to roles that do not match their expertise, while in others, critical positions remain unfilled. These problems often lead to reduced productivity, poor academic performance among students, and a general weakening of institutional

capacity. When human resources are not effectively managed, even well-designed educational policies and programs may fail to produce the desired results. These persistent challenges highlight the need for a more strategic and coordinated approach to human resource management in education. Institutions must move beyond routine administrative practices and adopt systems that align human resource planning with broader educational goals. This includes recruiting qualified personnel, ensuring proper job placement, providing opportunities for continuous professional development, and creating supportive work environments that enhance motivation and job satisfaction. By doing so, schools can maximize the potential of their workforce and improve overall performance.

Human resources are widely recognized as one of the most critical assets in any organization. Increasingly, educational institutions are acknowledging that their staff, more than any other resource, can provide a sustainable competitive advantage. This perspective reflects a broader shift in organizational thinking, where human capital is seen not merely as a factor of production but as a source of innovation, creativity, and institutional growth. The ability to attract, develop, and retain talented individuals has therefore become a key determinant of success in the education sector. Experiences from advanced economies further illustrate the importance of effective human resource management. For example, countries such as the United States have faced significant workforce shortages in certain sectors due to an insufficient supply of individuals with the required skills (Robert & John, 2015). These shortages have underscored the need for continuous investment in education and training to ensure that the workforce can meet evolving demands. In contrast, Nigeria presents a different but equally complex situation. While there appears to be an abundance of labor, concerns persist regarding the quality and employability of many individuals within the workforce (Kairala, 2012). According to Judith (2014), this apparent paradox raises important questions about the effectiveness of the educational system in preparing graduates for the labor market. It suggests that the issue is not merely one of quantity but also of quality. Many graduates may lack the practical skills, critical thinking abilities, and professional competencies required to perform effectively in their respective fields. As a result, employers often struggle to find suitably qualified candidates, even in the presence of high unemployment rates. Addressing this challenge requires a deliberate effort to strengthen the link between education and workforce needs. Educational institutions must ensure that their curricula are relevant, their teaching methods are effective, and their staff are adequately trained to deliver quality instruction. At the same time, there is a need to invest in continuous professional development for educators, enabling them to keep pace with changes in knowledge, technology, and pedagogy. In addition, improving human resource management practices within educational institutions can contribute significantly to better outcomes. This includes implementing transparent recruitment processes, promoting merit-based appointments, and establishing performance evaluation systems that encourage accountability and excellence. Providing incentives and creating a supportive work environment can also help to boost staff motivation and retention. The success of educational institutions depends on their ability to effectively harness their human resources. By addressing existing challenges and adopting more strategic approaches to human resource management, these institutions can enhance their capacity to deliver quality education. In doing so, they will not only improve individual outcomes for students but also contribute to broader national development by producing a skilled, knowledgeable, and competent workforce capable of driving socio-economic progress.

Concept of Mobilization and Allocation of Resources

The term mobilization has been conceptualized to mean different things depending on its usage and perception. To a contractor, it may denote the advancement of needed resources like money to execute a contract. Hornby (2000) defined the word ‘mobilize’ first as: “to work together in order to achieve a particular aim” and secondly “to find and start to use something that is needed for a particular purpose.” From his point of view, mobilization can be

viewed as coming together of people to work as a team in order to achieve a particular aim. It can also be seen as finding something and bringing them together and start using them for a particular identified purpose. According to Judith (2014) 'Resources' is understood as materials, goods or services that help fulfil the organization's needs. Materials, money, human (man and woman), means and time are resources that are used by schools, departments and individuals to fulfil their objectives. Resources are required by every kind of organization, including educational institution to fulfil its objectives. It is essential to know the type of resources, its normal availability and the estimated cost to attain the required resources in order to carry out works as per the objectives of the institution. On the basis of this information, the primary plans of resource mobilization should be established, checked and if needed repeated.

According to Oke and Kefas (2018), "Resource mobilization refers to all activities involved in securing new and additional resources. It also involves making better use of and maximizing, existing resources". To Oke and Kefas, resource mobilization goes beyond getting new and additional resources, but to include best use of it for optimum result. This is why explaining the concepts of mobilization and allocation go together. Kairala (2012) views resource mobilization as a process, which will identify the resources essential for the development, implementation and continuation of works for achieving the organization's mission. In real terms, resource mobilization means expansion in relation to resource providers the skills, knowledge and capacity for proper use of resources. Resource Mobilization does not only mean the use of money but it extensively denotes the process that achieves the mission of the institution through the application of knowledge in human, use of skills, equipment, services etc. It also means seeking new sources of resource mobilization and right and maximum use of the available resources. Resource mobilization is a continuous process and it is important for an educational institution to build its internal capacity to mobilize resources. Institutions sometimes underestimate the time, resources and skills involved in resource mobilization and also maintaining good communication and relations with donors. It takes resources to raise resources and organizations need experienced and skilled personnel and board members in resource mobilization if they are to be successful in getting the right resources. Resource mobilization is a strategic process within an organization carried out at the executive level and should not be looked at as a different or minor task within the organization's management team (Cascio, 2022). From all the definitions above, we can rightly define mobilization of resources in educational institution as the bringing together or securing of human and non-human resources towards achieving the institution's objectives.

Human Resource Mobilization

Broadly speaking, resources can be classified into two namely: Human resources and Non-human resources. For the purpose of this paper, the emphasis shall be on the human resources. The human person is the reason why society exists. The work of the human person varies with individual experiences, skills and techniques which have been garnered from many generations. If the modern work place must continue to flourish then human resource must be given its pride of place, including making it revenue centre rather than the perceived cost centre. Wikipedia defines Human resources as the people who make up the [workforce](#) of an [organization](#), [business sector](#), or [economy](#). Every type of Organization will require people/personnel to ensure that the Organizational role and works are fulfilled. For essential human resources, the School will make different provisions. They can appoint some permanent employees while the remaining appointments are made as regards the requirement. The permanent staff are taken as internal resources of the institution while staff appointed for a specific time period are regarded as external resources. Many institutions utilize dedicated and regular volunteer groups in order to fulfil the need of human resource (Cascio, 2022).

One vital resource in the achievement of mobilization goal is the human resources. They are seen as the greatest and most precious asset or factor in the production process. Human resources comprise both teaching and non-teaching staff. The importance of teaching and non-teaching staff in the secondary school education cannot be over stressed, because they play a number of roles. Specifically, teachers have been referred to as agents of innovation while non-teaching staff are the support system of the school framework. For meaningful innovations, allocation of qualified teachers is very important. Teachers are important in any educational system. This is because the quality of teachers in any educational system determines to a great extent the quality of the system itself. Teachers in particular are crucial to the formulation and successful implementation of education policies in any country. Human resources refer to human beings (Cascio, 2022). In education, human resources comprise learners, teachers, non-tutorial staff, educational administrators such as principals and head teachers, members of the school committee and parents with relevant skills or knowledge. Maduewesi and Jane (2019) described human resources as, the people with different specialties, capabilities and roles, who are part of the organization. They may be direct staff, clients or customers served, temporary employees or consultants or part-time persons. Human resources include all the knowledge, skills and expertise in technical, mechanical, managerial, social and other areas potentially available for utilization in various ways in operating social and economic institutions and enterprises. Human resources do not come by chance; they are created and developed in order to achieve the overall goals of the various sectors of the ever-expanding national economy. This means that these human resources need to be mobilized and utilized in order to achieve the national educational goals and specifically the objectives of primary education.

In order to exploit the full potential of the institution for its socio-economic development, there is the need for building human resource capacity and mobilization. Human resource capacity is the ability of the mobilize workers to discharge its duties efficiently and effectively. Human resource mobilization in school is the process of sourcing the right manpower requirement of the school for optimum results. Therefore, the scope of human resource mobilization is a wide array of activities that are closely knitted and will include staff or personnel inventory and forecast human resource planning, recruitment and selection. A very important factor in human resource mobilization is Personnel inventory. It entails specification of labour demand and supply. Determination of labour demands is usually done jointly by the personnel manager and each unit manager. A unit manager is well placed to identify the number, types, experience etc of the workforce required to accomplish the tasks in his unit within the planned period. He makes these data available to the personnel manager. The use of computer has made this task easier. Similarly, the unit manager prepares the labour supply. He identifies the number of jobs and job holders. It involves preparation of skills inventory which is a list of job holders and the skills possessed by each of them. It also entails taking into consideration of job holders that are due for retirement within the planned period, promotion, those going on leave and further training (Penney, 2010).

Once the inventory is taken, the next step is the human resource planning. Penney (2010) defines human resource planning as “the process which helps provide adequate human resources to achieve stated objectives”. He identified three major segments of the process. The first is to forecast future needs of various forms of employee in the school. The second is to compare the needs to present workforce available. The third is to determine the number and nature of employees to be phased out or added to the school. Cascio (2022) views Human Resource planning as an effort to anticipate future business and environment demands to provide the personnel to fulfil that business and satisfy these demands. To Cascio, Human Resource planning has three major interrelated elements. The first is human resource inventory. The second is forecast of human resource supply, and the third is the control and evaluation of procedures designed to feedback to the entire system of human resource planning and measures the level of attainment of human resource goals. If we look at the view points of Penney and Cascio, we can safely say human resource

planning entails determining human resource objectives, personnel inventory and forecast, and putting in place control and evaluation measures to ensure that the objectives are achieved maximally. Having planned the human resource need and put in place all the paraphernalia needed for successful filling of vacant positions, the Human Resource Team (HRT) proceeds to commence the process.

Gusdorf (2008) views recruitment as the process of attracting individuals on a timely basis, in sufficient numbers and with appropriate qualifications, to apply for jobs with an organization. Note, filling of vacancies may come in the form of internal transfer, promotion or hiring from outside. The school's promotion policy will have a significant effect on the recruitment process. If the open position is above entry level, it may be appropriate to promote someone already working for the school. Many schools use promotion from within as a motivation tool and a reward for good work or longevity with the system. The advantage of promotion from within is that your promoted employee is already comfortable with the corporate culture, knows the school policies and will likely get up to speed much faster than a person new to the school. The disadvantage of promotion from within is that the school loses out on the chance for new ideas and the creativity that can come from a new employee entering the school for the first time. According to Gusdorf when HR planning indicates the need for additional labour; the school has a number of choices to make. This may be the first step in a full-scale recruitment and selection process, but sometimes hiring additional staff is not the best method to obtain additional staff. It may be appropriate for a school to consider alternatives to recruiting, such as outsourcing or contingent labour, instead of hiring regular staff. Whichever process the school seeks to mobilize staff (Internal or external recruitment process), the right specification or plan must be adhered to. Note, mobilizing human resources requires strengthening the can-do and will-do factors. The can-do factors are the skills, knowledge and ability to perform the job while the will-do factors are the motivation, interest and will power to perform various assigned tasks (Mohammed & Farooq, 2009). However, it is important to know that recruitment and selection are critical elements in the activities leading to human resource mobilization.

Human Resource Allocation

Resource allocation is a process and strategy involving a school deciding where scarce resources including personnel should be used in the production of results and other related services. Human resource allocation simply means getting the right personnel for the job. May be here, the right person for the job should not and in fact ought not to be determined by academic certificate possessed alone but what they can offer. It can also be viewed as the utilization of available manpower or personnel to achieve the school goals (Oke & Kefas, 2018). Just as earlier mentioned it is almost impossible to separate the two terms because they are closely knitted. So, the mobilization and allocation of human resources commence from defining the objective of human resources in the school, its planning, budgeting, recruitment and placement of the staff on the job based on the job requirement and the skills and expertise of the new job holder. It is possible to get quality personnel during the selection process but when they are not matched to the right job, they are likely to underperform. Therefore, concerted effort must be geared towards allocating the right job to the right person not minding such factors as favouritism, and other office politics. A school operating within a competitive environment like the private schools will never compromise quality of its staff on grounds of relationship and favouritism (Kairala, 2012).

Challenges Associated with Human Resource Mobilization and Allocation

There are undoubtedly a lot of challenges associated with mobilization and allocation of human resource. For the purpose of this paper, the authors shall briefly consider the following:

1. **Shortages of quality human resources:** There are schools that desire to employ and utilize the services of highly skilled professionals but may be constrained by their inability to mobilize funds and other technical resources. In this circumstance, they are compelled to make decision on employing low skilled with the intention to give them on-the- job training to meet their need. This without doubt, has grievous consequences as the cost of error made by these staff cannot be quantified. Aside this, there is also the tendency of compromising quality in terms of service delivered and physical product.
2. **Favouritism:** It is not uncommon to see people being employed on sentiment basis in Nigeria. It is a common practice in government owned institutions. Even private schools sometimes instruct the managers of the school to recruit their relatives even when there are better candidates for the position. Sometimes, juicy positions are reserved for these favoured candidates who ordinarily are not even qualified for the least position within the Organisation. Key elements in determining favouritism are the delegation of recruitment decisions and unverifiable information regarding the skills of job applicants.
3. **Owner's Syndrome/Leadership:** Several school leaders especially in the private schools face this syndrome. It is a situation where the proprietor tends to control and manage the affairs of the school with minimal participation from other members. For instance, the proprietor who is also the chairman /CEO will not allow other staff to engage in resource mobilization or the leader becomes too comfortable with the current method of resource mobilization and is not willing to explore the other new ways. When this happens, the quality of staff mobilized will be limited to the knowledge and ability of the leader.

Conclusion

The importance of adequately mobilizing and allocating human, material, financial, and time resources in public senior secondary schools in Nigeria cannot be overstated. These resources are fundamental to the delivery of quality education, as they provide the necessary support for effective teaching, learning, and school administration. When properly managed and equitably distributed, they create an environment that fosters academic excellence and student development. However, insufficient provision or poor allocation of these essential resources can severely weaken the educational system. Such shortcomings often lead to overcrowded classrooms, inadequate teaching materials, underqualified or overstretched staff, and limited instructional time. As a result, students may graduate without the required knowledge and skills to advance to higher levels of education or to contribute meaningfully to national development. Addressing these challenges is therefore critical to ensuring a functional education system and promoting Nigeria's socio-economic and technological progress.

Recommendations

1. Highly mobilized schools must avoid discrimination in recruiting staff and spur their workforce toward great achievements. When this is done, the school stands a great chance of realizing the objectives of mobilization and allocation.
2. Government should allocate adequate material resources to schools such as books, laboratories equipment, stationary and other teaching aids to facilitate the standard of teaching and learning in schools

3. Only qualified teachers who have at least NCE qualification should be recruited to teach in schools
4. Government should allocate adequate financial resources for the smooth running of secondary schools.
5. School authorities should allocate adequate time for teaching and other extra-curricular activities which can enhance the educational and social development of students.
6. Therefore, it is recommended that schools faced with these constraints explore alternatives through in-depth analysis of each alternative to come up with actions that will not be injurious to the final output produced by these employees. For instance, a school may decide to combine job schedule for one staff that has full experience in one of the jobs and having partial knowledge of the other job. The implication of this is that, the cost of hiring is cut down drastically even though there is work overload.
7. Business of the school should be completely separated from personal interest. Proprietors should allow the management of the school who are most likely professionals to handle all aspects of the management of the system, including mobilizing and allocating human resources for the overall benefit of the school.

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