

# Human Resource Management in Secondary Schools as a Strategic Tool for Job Creation in Ebonyi State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

This study examines the Human Resource management in secondary school system as a strategic tool for Employment Creation in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The paper reveals that HRM covers staff and students in any social setting like Education. The design adopted for the study was a descriptive survey. To guide this study, the researcher formulated two research questions and two hypotheses which were tested at significant level of 0.05. The population composed of 232 principals of the public secondary schools in the state. A sample of forty-seven (47) principals representing 30% of the research respondents were selected from the three Educational zones in the State using proportionate simple random sampling techniques. A questionnaire containing 12 items was used in collecting data which were analyzed using mean scores and t-test statistics. The major findings revealed among others that: staff development programme in capacity building will help greatly for employment creation in Ebonyi State. Also, that student empowerment in vocational skills will lubricate employment creation in Ebonyi State. The study also revealed that there was no gender difference on staff development programme in capacity building as a strategic tool for job creation. Again, urban and rural respondents sampled equal view on student empowerment in vocational skills as a strategic tool for job creation. It was therefore concluded that school administrators should be subjected to regular training and as well attend regular workshops and seminars so as to channel school administration towards practical knowledge and professional skill development and also empowering students in vocational skills in secondary school. The researcher therefore recommended among others that all government parastatals should support staff development in capacity building for job creation.

**Keynote:** Human Resource Management; Secondary School; Job Creation and Ebonyi State.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this period of stagnated unemployment, economic globalization and technological driven environment, education is considered a paramount of all human activities. Education is no doubt, a major tool for the development of human capital and for personal socio-economic empowerment. It is in recognition of this that both state and federal government committed immense resources to ensure adequate provision of education for its citizenry. Therefore it focused on ensuring knowledge and skill acquisitions that enable individual to increase their productivity and improve their quality of life. This calls for effective administration of educational resources, especially human resource if the aim of education should be achieved. Nakpodia (2010) observed that the efficiency of human resource management in Nigerian schools is being called to question both within and outside the profession. He goes further to opine that many educationists will fully admit that the human resources are being mismanaged and underutilized. This may be as a result of shortage of trained personnel and skillful individual in Nigerian society. This quest calls for the introduction of present secondary education curriculum. It is of high demand by many educationists in Nigeria to have dynamic principals who possess the ability to search for professional growth. This growth coupled with development becomes necessary in order for school administrators to know the rudiments of proper management of school resources. This is because education serves as a power-catalysing agent. It provides mental, physical, ideological and moral training to individuals, so as to enable them have full consciousness of

their purpose in life and equip them to achieve that purpose. Wawo (2003) and Okeye (1998) as well as Southern Education and Library Board on staff training (2003) disclosed the issue of staff Training and Development Programme as of necessity if Nigeria economy must improve.

Rao (2001) noted that there is an immediate and urgent need for giving education to the people in order to build up our future. Nigeria having realized the effectiveness of education to individual and as being a powerful instrument for national progress and development, she therefore, continuously adjusts her educational philosophy and methodology to match the ideals and challenges of changing economic and social structure of modern society. So if secondary education is properly planned, executed and encouraged, it could be used to develop our country by developing the innate genius in the youth and enhance their capacity to and empowerment to create employment for themselves.

Therefore, this level of education is a pointer to vocational skills which yield employment opportunity and as such have far reaching impact on national issues/ problems. Paradoxically, access to secondary school in Nigeria creates pools from which the firms recruit skilled staff. The dream of an educated Nigeria on completion of secondary school is to push pen behind an office desk and anything else became derogatory human dignity. The truth is that secondary educations no longer prepare an individual with coverage and sound mind, not too easily deflected by emotion of the moment (Ajibola, 2008). Majority of

Nigerian youths are idle and some are involved in various vices due to unemployment. The ministry of education noted that the poor quality of graduates is worrisome, since secondary education could not guarantee development, self employment and professionalism among secondary school leavers.

To address these issues, many factors must come into play, as we know that the success of any educational system depends on the quality and quantity of its factors of production, human and material resources. Of all the factors human resources appears to be most important because without human efforts, all other factors remain inept. Onele and Ogbo (2013) revealed some techniques one need to adopt in personnel aspect of management. This may include conducting job analysis (i.e. determining the nature of each employees' job), planning labor needs (i.e recruiting job candidates, selecting job candidates, orientating and training new employees), managing jobs and salaries (i.e compensating employees), appraising performance, communicating (i.e interviewing counselling and discipline), training and developing manpower and building employee commitment. Therefore, Inyamu (2008) defined human resource development as the development which meets the present need of the worker (teacher) as an individual and that of the society at large without compromising the ability of future generation to meet these needs. This is why it calls the attention of everyone on the necessity for effective administration of human resource in secondary school system. In school system, human resources deal with both staff and students who come together for the realization of educational goals. Despite the introduction of professional skills in the education system, vocational courses in secondary school still faces unattended challenges such as curriculum implementation, inadequate funding and student's wrong perception of vocational education hinders the actualization of its objectives. This unpleasant state of affairs has made the goals of secondary education in Nigeria very illusive (Garba, 2004). Other challenges include inadequate funding for the vocational teachers, personal experiences of graduates who have taken up self employment based on vocational education institutions (Manbula,2002; Anyo, 2005; Chu, Kara and Benzing, 2008); (Raimi, Towbola, Kolade & Fadipe, 2011; Akhuemonkhan, Raimi and Sotolunwe (2013), inability of the school administrator to redirect student's wrong notion that vocational subject are for those that are not brilliant and who may likely terminate their education career at secondary school level remain questionable (Itedili & Ofoegbu, 2011).

The issue of gender is also a controversial issue as far as human resource management is concerned. Mc Graw (2010) is of the view that there is no type of education concerned with the management of social affairs which belongs to a man or woman. It has been observed by the researcher that in secondary school when it comes to training of teachers;

there is usually a disparity in gender which may be from the school administrators' choice of preference or the individual not willing to attain such training.

The important thing is that principals should see that the capacity building of the school should be maintained by encouraging teachers to engage in staff development programmes. Many secondary school leavers also find it difficult to obtain employment from employment agencies and industries due to limited vacancies. This may have to lead many secondary school leavers to be useless when white collar job elude them. This creates the gap of unemployment which is the greatest challenge to underdeveloped and developing countries like Nigeria. This ugly situation led to many unemployed youths roaming the street in both rural and urban cities. The unemployment situation prompted Anaele (1997) to state that too many secondary school leavers are always provided without job and the proper vocational education based curriculum would have prevented the unemployment situation. In Ebonyi State observation has shown that there are many capable and highly potential youths, in both urban and rural areas. These youths if well empowered and managed at secondary school level can help to create job in our society. Adekoya (2004), noted that Nigeria nation will only be rescued from the earthquake of unemployment by empowering their youths. However for a student to be self employable and create employment for others there is need for effective administration of human resource management in secondary schools. It is against this backdrop that this research seeks to investigate human resource management in secondary school as a strategic tool for job creation in Ebonyi State.

## 2. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In Nigerian schools, two groups of such personnel exist: students and staff. The students are the recipients of education while the staffs include trained and untrained workers. Management of human resource in school is not an easy task for staff to be to give learning instructions efficiently and effectively he need to be managed by making provisions for their professional training and development. This will enhance their skills and teaching methods for the objective of education to be achieved. The above assertion invariably depends on the school administrators' ability to harness the human resources available in school organizations. More so, the global challenge of unemployment demand much on skill acquisition. Looking at the environmental factors around us, Nigeria society may not actually deliver without human empowerment.

## 3. RESEARCH METHOD

A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study to investigate the management of human resources in

secondary schools as a strategic tool for job creation in Ebonyi state. The population comprises 232 principals of public secondary schools in Ebonyi state, (Secondary Education Board (SEB)Ebonyi State, 2013). The choice of principals was based on the fact that they are concerned with the implementation of school programmes and also with the management of available resources in the school. These principals are from the three educational zones which is made up of Afikpo-(82),Abakaliki-(84)and Onueke Educational zone-(76). Proportionate stratified random sampling techniques was used to select 17 principals from Abakaliki zone, Afikpo- 16 and 14 from Onueke making the total sample of 47 research respondents representing 300/0 of the population.

The instrument used for data collection was researcher developed questionnaire titled “Human Resource Management as a Strategic Tool for Job Creation” (HRMSTJC).It was structured on a four point rating scale of Strongly Agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (1 point). The instrument has two sections. Section “A” dealt with personal data of the respondents, while section “B” contains two clusters. This was further divided into cluster A-B. Cluster “A” contains items on staff development for job creation while cluster “B” contains information on students’ empowerment in vocational skills for job creation in Ebonyi State. The questionnaire was made up of twelve items. The instrument was face validated by three experts, two from

Educational Administration and Planning and one from measurement and Evaluation. The comments of these experts led to some minor modifications before it was put into use. The validated instrument was trial tested to ascertain the reliability of the instrument using Cronbach’s Alpha Method. The internal coefficient of 0.76 was obtained which indicated that the instrument was reliable. The instrument was distributed by three research assistance trained by the researchers and was collected immediately on completion. This ensured 1000/0 return rate. The data collected was analyzed in line with each research question and hypothesis. Mean and Standard Deviation were used in testing hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. A mean score of 2.50 and above was considered significant(s) showing that the respondents are in agreement with the opinion while a mean score below 2.50 was considered not significant (NS) showing that the respondents are in disagreement with the opinion.

#### 4. RESULTS

The results were analyzed according to the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

##### 4.1 Research question 1

How does staff development programme in capacity building in Secondary School serve as strategic tool for employment creation in Ebonyi State?

**Table 1:** Mean scores of the respondents on staff development programme in capacity building as a strategic tool for employment creation in Ebonyi State

S/N	Items on staff development programmes for capacity building as a strategic tool for job creation in Ebonyi State	Staff development by gender (N=47)					
		Male			Female		
		$\bar{x}$	SD	DEC	$\bar{x}$	SD	DEC
1	Organizing Teachers/head-teachers conference make staff not to be obsolete and rustic in the Knowledge of the required skills for self employment	4.00	0.00	S	3.92	0.31	S
2	Head-teachers seminar help them to update them with work, methods and knowledge on environmental factors that inhibits job creation in Nigeria society	3.07	0.25	S	3.39	0.68	S
3	Organising collaborative research of Principals/teachers help them to keep abreast of the change in terms of scientific, technological, social cultural and economic factors that facilitate job creation	3.87	0.53	S	3.94	0.33	S
4	Coordinating teachers for professional lectures help students to develop skills in scientific job area for self employment.	3.94	0.28	S	3.94	0.33	S
5	Couching teachers and students help in developing their interest in some vocational courses which may enhance self employment and job creation for others.	3.00	0.29	S	3.11	0.96	S

6	Workshop and orientation enables the principals to explain some of the hiding facts behind some skills thereby increase their students appreciation for self employment	3.94	0.23	S	3.35	0.83	S
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Key: A mean score of 2.50 and above was considered significant(s) showing that the respondents are in agreement with the opinion while a mean score below 2.50 were considered not significant (NS) showing that the respondents are in disagreement with the opinion.

Table 1 above shows the mean responses of male and female teachers’ principals of secondary school in Ebonyi State on staff development programme in capacity building as a strategic tool for job creation. In the table, data on table one shows that in item 1-6 both male and female respondents are in agreement that staff development in

capacity building help in job creation this is because their mean scores ranged from 4.00- 3.00 which is above the criterion mean of 2.50 and the SD ranges from 0.00 – 0.53 indicating that the respondents did not deviate far from the central mean. Therefore, it accepted that the staff development programme in capacity building serves an effective tool for job creation in Ebonyi State.

**Research question 2**

How students’ empowerment in vocational skills does serve as a strategic tool for employment creation in Ebonyi State?

**Table 2:** Mean scores of the respondents on students’ empowerment in vocational skills as a strategic tool for employment creation in Ebonyi State

S/N	Items on students’ empowerment in vocational skills as a strategic tool for employment creation	Students’ empowerment in vocational skills by location					
		Urban			Rural		
		$\bar{x}$	SD	DEC	DEC	SD	DEC
7	Availability of capital or fund for the procurement of equipment needed in vocational courses enhances job creation	3.92	0.31	S	4.00	0.00	S
8	Provision of physical equipment vocational field make students to develop their interest in job for themselves and others	3.98	0.11	S	3.53	0.50	S
9	Land/site allocation for young school leavers to practice their vocation help them to create job for themselves.	2.94	0.28	S	3.87	0.44	S
10	Organizing apprenticeship training for young school leavers in vocational skills increased their interest in self employment.	2.78	0.17	S	3.07	0.25	S
11	Provision of free and compulsory entrepreneurship education at secondary school level necessitate job creation	3.39	0.68	S	2.86	0.56	S
12	Provision of free manuals for students on vocational/entrepreneurship at all levels of education brings about job creation in Nigeria.	3.11	0.96	S	3.35	0.83	S

Key: A mean score of 2.5 and above was considered significance (S) showing that the respondents are in agreement with the opinion while a mean score below 2.50 were considered not significant (NS) showing that the respondents are in disagreement with the opinion.

Table 2 above shows that there is an agreement between the mean responses of both urban and rural principal as it relates to students empowerment in vocational skills as a strategic tool for employment creation in Ebonyi State. Data on table two shows that availability of fund, provision of physical facilities, site allocation, apprenticeship training, provision of free and compulsory in entrepreneurship

education as well as manuals for students in vocational and entrepreneurship studies (as in item 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12) respectively serves as a strategic tool for job creation in Ebonyi State.

## 5. TEST OF HYPOTHESES

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant location difference on staff development programme in capacity building as a tool for employment creation in Ebonyi State.

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**Table 3:** t-test analysis of male and female principals on staff development programmes in capacity building as a tool for employment creation in Ebonyi State

Source of variation	N	Mean	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	P > 0.05
Male	28	3.69200	0.1922				
Female	19	3.66700	0.18979	45	1.4677	1.96	NS

The result of Table three above indicated that the t- value of 1.4677 with df of 45 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96 tested at 0.05 alpha levels. This leads to the non rejection of the null hypothesis showing that there is no gender difference on staff development programme in capacity

building as a strategic tool for employment creation in Ebonyi State.

H0<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant location difference on students' empowerment in vocational skills as a strategic tool for employment creation in Ebonyi State.

**Table 4:** t-test analysis of urban and rural principals on students' empowerment in vocational skill as strategic tool for job creation in Ebonyi State.

Source of variation	N	mean	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	P>0.05
Urban	25	3.7570	0.36910				
Rural	22	3.7100	0.35560	45	1.4117	1.96	NS

In table 4, the result shows that the t-test value is 1.4117; df of 45 is less than the t-critical value of 1.96, tested at 0.05 alpha levels. This shows that the second null hypothesis is not rejected. Again, urban and rural respondents sampled, equal view students' empowerment in vocational skills as a strategic tool for job creation in Ebonyi State.

mean of 2.50. The tools of empowering students for self employment include making capital available, provision of physical infrastructure, site allocation, apprenticeship training, free and compulsory entrepreneurship training and free manual on vocational and entrepreneurship courses. These instruments have been accepted as a strategic tool for job creation in our society. In his support, Adekoya (2004) examines influence of practical skill acquisition and socio economic empowerment of youths in Nigeria, using random sampling of 150 students. The findings revealed that youth practical skill acquisition significantly influence their socio-economic empowerment in the larger society.

Finally, the non significant gender/and location difference observed in the study are indication that human resource management serves as a strategic tool for job creation in Ebonyi State.

## 6. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicated that staff development programme in capacity building make staff not to be obsolete and rustic in skill acquisition, update their knowledge, keep abreast of the changes, develop specific skills, develop interest in vocational courses and appreciate the idea of self employment. This supports Witte and Wolf (2003) who explains that irrespective of the method of training that the teacher engaged in, the important thing is to improve their teaching skills and use of teaching aids. Also, that the training activities equip the trainees to contribute more meaningfully to the realization of educational objectives of the school and in the understanding of how social economic and cultural values of society influence school work. Okoye (1998) in her study stressed that there is need to upgrade quality of leadership in school system and in institution offering education in order to achieve effective programme of selection and participation. Nevertheless, the Southern Education and Library Board on Staff Training and Development (2001) says that it values its employees and as a result encourages life-long learning so that individuals can develop their potentials and enrich their lives and the lives of others.

The study also revealed that human resource management through students' empowerment in capacity building serves as an adequate tool for employment creation. The mean score of all the items in table are above the criterion

## 7. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusion drawn from this study is that human resources in secondary schools will to a great extent make secondary school management more functional by developing school staff in capacity building and by empowering students in skill acquisition for employment creation in Nigeria society.

Based on the findings of this study the following recommendations are made:

- That all government parastatals should support staff development programmes in capacity building to enhance employment creation.
- That school managers should emphasize on different ways in which students can be empowered for skill acquisition so as to appreciate self employment and reduce their quest for government work.

- That both staff and students should be involved in making an open protest for government to embark on staff training and as well assist students in the provision of those instruments that can enhance skill acquisition, if individuals are to involve in employment creation in the society.

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