# HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING: THE BASIS FOR ORGANIZATIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Anofi Efosa Aguebor**
Department of Public Administration, University of Benin, Nigeria
Author's Email: efag_christ@yahoo.com

**ABSTRACT**

The success and development of any organization or nation depend on the management of its equipment, materials, and other resources, which are managed by the human elements, which need to be adequately planned, to achieve its set targets. Human resource planning is so vital, that its management in terms of recruitment, training, placement, utilization, and disengagement will affect the manpower available, deficient, and redundant. For any organization or nation like Nigeria, with a huge population to take advantage of its human resources and attain its goals, the need for human resource planning cannot be over-emphasized. The paper through the use of observation and contents analysis of the documents available was able to draw inference on the subject matter which includes the significance, objectives, functions, types, process, factors, problems, and solutions to the problems of human resource planning, with a comparison of the human resource planning in the private and public sectors. In conclusion, the need for adequate, effective and efficient use of human resource planning which is very imperative for the attainment of all organizational and national targets was recommended.

**Keywords:** Development, Human Resource Planning, National, Organizational Productivity, Targets/Goals.

## INTRODUCTION

Nigeria as a nation has not been able to develop its enormous human potential, due to its inadequate human resource planning. This accounts for why the nation is undeveloped and cannot ultimately utilize its human endowment efficiently and effectively. "The axiom that "if you failed to plan, you planned to fail", represents realities in the decline of productivity in the Nigerian public organization. Productivity has suffered a serious setback in Nigeria, despite our enormous human resource deposits. It suggests that we lack well-planned and managed human resources" (Eze, 2018;1). Human resource planning also known as manpower planning,

personnel planning, or employment planning is very critical and vital for any organization or nation, in the utilization of its human resource or manpower, to attain its set goals and get the best results. "It has become imperative to plan ahead in terms of the human needs of the organization both in the short and long terms" (Okoh, 2005:59).

It must be emphasized that there is a need for human resources planning in the present-day organization/ nation. This is due to the dynamics of the work environment and the workplace itself, in terms of changing technology, new training methods, new rules and regulations, economy, new skills, and employment relationships. "Manpower planning is a continuous process, it is not static, it involves many interrelated activities, and the plan must be reversed and updated as conditions determine" (Okoh, 2005:60). This will help to prepare any organization or nation to cope with its present and future human resource requirements and to achieve its strategically set goals and objectives on a short and long-term basis. Human resource planning is the most important asset of any organization; it ensures the right type of people, in the right number, at the right time and place (Chand, 2022). Human resource planning is so relevant to the organization or nation since its manpower determines the use of other resources that as equipment and materials. The success or failure of any organization or nation will be determined by the planning and management of its human resources.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Human Resource

The human resources may be regarded as the quantitative and qualitative measurement of the workforce required in an organization (Harendra, 2011). Human resources is primarily concerned with how people are managed within organizations, focusing on policies and systems (Collins & wood, 2009). The above concepts harped on the available manpower, their skill/ability, and how they are utilized through the administrative laid down rules in the organization or nation.

### Human Resource Planning

Human resource planning is a process by which the management ensures the right number of people, and the right kind of people, at the right time, doing the right things, for which they are recruited and placed, for the achievement of the goals of the organization (Harendra, 2011). Human resource planning is the process whereby an organization determines the staffing support they will need, to meet business needs and customer demands (Leigh, 2014). Human resource planning is responsible for everything, from payroll to hiring a new employee and it's used to ultimately structure and meet organization goals (Brown, 2014). Human resource planning is the process of ensuring that the human resource requirements of an organization are identified and plans are made for satisfying those requirements (Bulla & Scott, 1994). Human

resource planning is concerned with identifying the organizational demand for human resources, and devising means to ensure that a sufficient supply of labour is available to meet that demand (Cole, 2002). Cole went further to say that, Human resource planning is a technique aimed at securing and improving an organization's human resources to meet present and future needs. Manpower planning involves forecasting the future recruitment of kinds and levels of employees and attempting to match these with forecasts of the likely availability of such employees, put differently; it is about labour demand and supply (Ebegbe, 1996).

From the above assertions, human resource planning, also known as manpower planning, therefore, involves a deliberate act, method, or device for the proper engaging and disengaging, placement, development, and optimal and effective utilization of an organization's or nation's workforce /employees efficiently to attain its present and future needs adequately. Cole (2002) summed it up thus; Human resource planning will be taken to mean any rational and planned approach for ensuring:

1. The recruitment of sufficient and suitable staff.
2. Their retention in the organization.
3. The optimal utilization of staff.
4. The improvement of staff.
5. The disengagement of staff "as necessary".

A key part of the human resource planning role is the development of a workforce plan. This plan is a design for the organization/nation to attract, retain and develop the workforce that is required, to achieve its present and future needs. And it must also be noted that human resource planning is dynamic and continuous, it is not static, but evolves with time.

**The Significance of Human Resource Planning**

The importance/ significance of human resource planning in the management of the organization/nation cannot be over-emphasized, due to the ever-changing world today. These benefits include:- (i) It help to link manpower plan to organizational/national planning (ii) It determine the organizations/nation's recruitment needs and levels (iii) It will aid the organization to anticipate redundancies (iv) It determine the optimal training needs and levels (v) It provides the basis for management to plan its developmental programmes for its manpower (vi) It cost the manpower in the organization/nation (vii) It will assist productivity bargaining (viii) It will help to assess the future manpower requirement that the organization/nation can accommodate (ix) It study the cost of the overheads and value of service function in the organization/nation (x) It decide whether certain activities need to be subcontracted (xi) It will assist to determine both the present and future needs of its personnel (xii) It will provide the organization/nation the ability to cope with changes (xiii) It helps in the organization/nation strategic planning, by providing data of its manpower strength and

weakness (xiv) It help to meet up with government rules and standards (Corehr, 2012; Cole, 2002).

**Objectives of Human Resource Planning**

The main objective of human resource planning is to improve and maintain the organizational/national manpower capacity to achieve or attain its set goals. Through the development of appropriate strategies that will ensure the maximum utilization and contribution of its human resources in the organization/nation. The following are its objectives: - (i) To assess and forecast the organization's/nation's future manpower, and skill requirements (ii) To ensure the optimum and effective use of its current human resources or employees (iii) To provide control measures, to ensure that necessary resources are available as and when required (iv) To effect management change in line with current trends or situations (v) To realize or attain its organizational/national goal (vi) To encourage the employees through promotion as rewards with other benefits (Corehr, 2012).

**THE FUNCTION OF HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING**

The functions of human resources planning in an organization/nation consist of the followings:

(i) The collection, maintenance, improvement and interpretation of the relevant information regarding human resources (ii) Report periodically, the human resource objectives and requirements, the existing employees and allied the features of its human resources (iii) Develop the procedures and techniques to determine the requirements of the various categories of human resources over a period of time, in line with the views of the organizational/national goals (iv) Develop the measure of human resources utilization, by employing suitable techniques, leading to the effective allocation of work with a view to improving its human resources utilization (v) Conduct researches, to improve individual or groups, by identifying their handicaps and addressing them (vi) The economic assessment of its human resources, through the development and employing standard methods (vii) The analysis of the dynamic process of recruitment, promotion and the loss to the management and control process (viii) The evaluation of the procurement, promotion and retention of the effectiveness of its human resource management (Corehr, 2012 & Paauwe, Boron 2009, Ebagbe, 1996 & Klerck, 2009).

From the above, it will be observed that the actual practice of these functions in the public organization is poorly executed with (a) Inadequate collection and use of data and (b) Wrong placement or allocation of work, thereby leading to the ineffective utilization of its manpower resources (c) The none identification and development of its manpower resources (d) The evaluation of its plans are very poor, and this accounts for the low productivity in the public sector.

**TYPES OF HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING**

There are two types of human resource planning, which are the period/time and organizational based planning;

**Period/ Time-Based Types of Human Resource Planning**

There are three major types of human resource planning which are based on time or period that is short term, medium-term, and long term (Okoh, 2005).

**Short-term plan:** this is based on a short-term basis of a few months to one year, it is meant to address immediate pressing human resource needs in the organization/nation. It is easier and cheaper, errors are easily detected and corrected, meet urgent manpower requirements but it does not allow for adequate training and development of its workforce.

**Intermediate or medium-term plan:** This is between the short and long term, from two to four years, and it is used to address human resource needs that are not too urgent and not distant. It helps to properly plan to recruit and briefly train it manpower, but it cannot deal with future issues, which are long-term based.

**Long-term plan:** This is the plan which ranges from five (5) years and above, it is used to address the strategic human resources of the organization/nation. It helps to tackle issues that might arise in the future, by forecasting its human resources needs and projecting ways to deal with them. The public sector is permanent and continuous in nature and therefore, more of long-term planner, with little or minor short and intermediate plans, while the private sector is mostly engaged in short and medium-term planning, due to their quick fix and profit orientation and rarely engages in a long-term plan.

**Organizational Based Types of Human Resource Planning**

For any organization/nation to attract and retain the right employees there are various types of organizational/national based human resource planning that the organization should follow and they include:

**Workforce Forecasting Plan:** Every organization/nation needs to adequately plan its human resources, through the forecasting of its manpower requirements.

**Recruitment Plan:** The organization/nation must have a means and strategies for attracting and recruiting highly qualified manpower into its bank of human resources, through good pay, fringe benefits, compensations, security of a job, and safety.

**Development Plan:** There is a vital need for any organization/nation to have manpower development programs in place, to train and improve its human resources.

**Retaining Plan:** There should be an adequate plan in place in any organization/nation, for the retaining of its workforce, through various reward systems in terms of promotion/ growth or advancement, recognition, fringe benefits (Franklin, 2014).

The public sector is known for its ability to attract and retain its workforce; this is mainly due to its job security strategies, but with a very poor development plan of its manpower resources.

Though the private sector can attract qualified manpower, its ability to retain its workforce is poor, due to the very high rate of job insecurity.

**THE PROCESS OF HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING**

There are five major fundamental steps in the planning of human resources and Okoh (2005) outline these steps to include:

**Setting of overall goals and plan for the organization:** A comprehensive based policy and objective plan of its manpower resources in line with the organizational goals and plans should be set in place.

**Current human resource situation:** The inventory of its current manpower resources, should be undertaken, by knowing its staff strength and weakness, skill, qualifications, employee records, training, prospect, distribution, and performance.

**Human resource forecast:** The forecast of the current manpower resources, in terms of promotions, retirements, layoff, quit, and transfers, which could affect the availability of human resources. The forecast of its future manpower demands due to current plans growth rate/expansion, market, and other external environmental influences. The Plan should be adequately designed in response to the above internal and external issues regarding the availability of its human resources.

**Implementing Programmes:** The setting up of programs that will help in the implementation of organizational plans, by deploying men and resources, this could be in the form of recruitment, training, appraisal of its workforce, and the provision of the needed materials/equipment.

**Audit and adjustment:** This is the evaluation and appraisal of how the plan was implemented to determine its future success or failure, with the amendment of the original plan to address its shortcomings and improve on its shortcomings and improve on its achievements.

Both the private and public sectors adhere to these processes, but the public organizations are very poor in the implementation, audit, and adjustment stages. The distortion and none execution of its plans are very high, coupled with the poor evaluation and slow response to any observed lapses. While the private organization is known for its high rate of implementation, evaluation, and quick response to any lapses with modification. An effective human resource

planning process helps organizations (nations) to maximize human capital and build a future-ready workforce (Boatman, 2022). But despite its obvious importance, many organizations (nations) do not have a strategic human resource planning process in place (Williams, 2022).

## FACTORS AFFECTING HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

Several affect human resource planning, they could be internal or external (Dillon, 2004).

The internal factors are

1. Manpower increase or reduction in the organization.
2. The budgetary allocation.
3. The data and other necessary information are available.
4. Unrealistic, not truthful in its plans, superficial, with a job title and description.

The external factors are

1. Its political situation, whether stable or in turmoil, at war or peace.
2. The economic situation in the nation, rich or poor.
3. The socio-cultural issues prevailing in that environment, are religious beliefs, customs and traditions.
4. The changing technology prevailing in society.
5. The laws and regulations control or govern the organization and labour relations.

## PROBLEMS WITH HUMANS RESOURCE PLANNING

There are limitations and barriers to the activities of human resources planning, which Franklin (2014) gave as follow:- (i) The lack of support from the executive leadership (ii) Inexperienced specialist in human resource planning (iii) Poor/low budget allocation for planning, which requires huge finance for its activities (iv) It is time-consuming, and human resource planner lack such time (v) The lack of required skills and techniques by human resource planners (vi) The complex nature of human resource planning (vii) Inadequate data and other relevant information needed for planning (viii) Inability to plan or inadequate planning by most organizations (ix) The lack of commitment to the planning process and its implementation (x) The unpredictable external environment e.g. political, economy, market, and competitors.

## SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

The followings are proffered as solutions to the barriers that hinder human resource planning:

**Adequate Financing:** Planning requires huge financing to carry out its activities, so it should be properly funded.

**Record Keeping:** proper record keeping should be practiced from the units, and departments to central levels in any organization.

**Adequate Data/Information Gathering:** Reliable data/ information should be obtained.

**Co-operation:** The support from both the executive leader and all staff is necessary for any meaningful planning.

**Engaging Experts/Specialists:** Specialists and qualified experts should be engaged, to conduct planning, either as a department or consultants.

**Commitment:** There should be a total commitment by all stakeholders in the organization for its plan to succeed.

**Adequate time and resources:** Adequate time and resources should be allotted, to guarantee proper and adequate planning.

The development of effective human resource planning, stands out as a solution to improve employee productivity in the Nigerian public organization (Eze, 2018).

## COMPARISON OF HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING IN THE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS

The public sector is renowned for its high-level of job security and permanency; unlike the private sector which has a very high level of job insecurity and fairly/none permanent. The public sector is mainly none profit-making but service-oriented; the private sector on the other hand is mainly known for its high profit-making inclinations and drive. The public sector has a very high bureaucratic process; unlike the private sector which is very flexible in its dealings. While performance monitoring and evaluation are well pronounced and frequent in the private sector, such practice is low in the public sector. The motivation in the private sector in terms of enumerations and work environment is very high and performance-based; that of the public sector is very low and not based on performance. While efficiency is the hallmark of the private sector; the public sector is much known for its inefficiency (Smith, 2015). Private organizations have no political interference in their human resource planning, unlike the public organizations, whose human resource planning is mostly politically influenced, especially at an implementation level. Most recruitment and placement are done with political motives or interference (Smith, 2015). And this has led to over-staffing, redundancy, and under-utilization of its human resources. Political influences should be eliminated and the management has given the liberty to adequately plan and administer these public organizations professionally for efficiency and effectiveness.

### Similarities in Private and Public Human Resource Planning

Both the private and public organization plan their human resources, through some forms of planning activity.

Both have units or sections that are charged with the responsibility of managing their personnel.

***Table 1: A Comparison of selected management practices in both the private and public sectors in Nigeria***

| **Management practice** | **Public sector (Nigeria)** | **Private sector (Nigeria)** |
|---|---|---|
| Operational management | Unclear | Clear |
| Human resource management | Bureaucratic, politically influenced | Based on merit, motivated by efficiency |
| Performance monitoring | Limited, less frequent | High, more frequent |
| Incentive/people management | Poor, fixed, motivated by legislation | Motivated by efficiency, performance |
| Decision making | Politically motivated legislative approval | Profit is driven, motivated by efficiency |
| Financial control | Merged with administration | Separated from administration |

Source: Smith (2015).

## CONCLUSION

A comprehensive human resource planning deals with many important goals and responsibilities for any organization or nation, it addresses both tactical and strategic needs which include: recruitment, training, fridge benefit, labour relations effective utilization of manpower. The need for organizations and the Nigerian nation to engage in standard and adequate planning of human resources cannot be over-emphasized. Nigeria, like China, can develop and utilize its huge population to become one of the most developed nations on earth. Whether private or public, all organizations must ensure that their human resources are adequately planned to guarantee the successful attainment of their goals. The evaluation of a human resource plan is imperative to determine the success or failure of the organizations strategies.

**REFERENCES**

Boatman, A. (2022). *Human resource process: A practitioner's guide*. Retrieved from (www.aihr.com/blog/human.resource) accessed 12-2-2022.

Brown, J.M. (2014). *Definition of human resource planning,* Houston Chronicle, Houston, Texas.

Bulla, D.N, & Scott, P.M (1994). *Manpower requirement forecasting: a case example in human resource forecasting and modeling,* In Ward, D., Bechet, T.P. and Trepp, R. (Eds) *Human resource planning society*, New York.

Chand, S. (2022). *Human resource planning: meaning, definition and features.* Retrieved from *(www.yourarticlelibrary.com/essay>hrp-human-resource-planning-meaning)* accessed 31-1-2022.

Cole, G.S. (2002). *Personnel and human resource management:* London: Bookpower.

Collins, D.G. & Wood, G. (2009). *Human resource management: A critical approach.* In Collins, D.G. & Wood, G. (Eds), *Human resource management: A critical approach,* London: Routledge.

COREHR, (2012). *Human resource planning.* Retrieved from (www.Corehr.Wordpress.com/2012/04/21/ Human -resource –planning) accessed 26-9-2019.

Dillon, S. (2014). *Factors affecting human resource planning,* Houston Chronicle, Houston, Texas.

Ebagbe, R.E. (1996). *Personnel management,* Benin City: Mareh Prints and Consultancy.

Eze, M. (2018). *Productivity and human resource planning in Nigeria public organization.* Retrieved from (www.researchgate.net/publication/345670341-PRODUTIVITY_AND_HUMAN_RESOURCE_PLANNING_IN_NIGERIA_PUBLIC_ORGANIZATION) accessed 12-2-2022.

Franklin, J. (2014). *Types of human resource planning.* Retrieved from (www.ehow.com> Types of Human Resource Planning> Human Resources> General Human Resources) accessed 26-9-2019.

Harendra M. (2011). *What is human resource?* Retrieved from (www.slideshare.net/HARENDRAMULLICK) accessed 26-9-2019.

Klerck (2009). *Industrial relations and human resource management.* Retrieved from (www.en.wikipedia.org/ wiki/ Human-resource-management) accessed 26-9-2019.

Leigh, R. (2014). *Human resource process.* Houston Chronicle, Houston, Texas.

Okoh, A.O.(2005) *Personnel and human resource management in Nigeria.* Lagos: Amfitop Books.

Paauwe, & Boron (2009). *Strategic human resource management: a critical review, Retrieved* from (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human-resource-management) accessed 26-9-2019.

Smith, B. (2015). *The private and public sectors in Nigeria: a management comparison*, Retrieved from (www.academia.edu>the_public_and_public_sectors_in_nigeria_a_management_comparison) accessed 31-1-2022.

Williams, S.(2022). *4 steps to strategic human resource planning.* Retrieved from *(*WWW.lucidchart>blog>what-is-the-human-resource-planning-process*)* accessed 31-1-2022.