

THE ROLE OF MANPOWER PLANNING IN ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract

Although organizations often eschew the phrase “people are our greatest asset”, few executives have any idea of what raw talents they have that can be tapped more productively and profitably. Manpower planning is a potent strategy to any organization which plans, procures and retains best human capital. As the challenge shifts from managing capital and technology to managing people, so this requires a fundamental shift in the way we consider resources. People should be considered in human terms since they bring their own perception, feelings and attitudes toward the organization which must be integrated with organizational goals. The task of any successful manager now requires the need to have a highly developed sense of people perception and to understand the behavioural side of human resource. These facts underlie the need for organizational managers to acquire the knowledge and skills to carry out the manpower planning function as effectively as possible because of its implications for virtually all other aspects of management. Consequently, this paper examines the role of manpower planning in organizational behaviour; its implications for organisations in Nigeria are presented.

Too often organizations look at strategic planning only in light of the market place- the demand for the product, cost of production, expansion of product lines, etc – and only incidentally look at the manpower requirements of the expanding organization. However, any organization, as it grows in size, finds itself faced with a set of critical issues concerning human resource or personnel needs; such as, why do many organizations lay off staff or why do they recruit at first place at all? Are vacancies to be filled by promotions or hiring from outside? How do downsizing the organization make it more competitive? How do they ensure continuous availability of adaptive and flexible workforce etc. Answers to such key issues usually result in some form of manpower planning. Manpower planning is also called Human Resource (HR) planning. Since the human resource is the most vital resource in determining the long-term effectiveness of any organization, it is important that systematic plans be prepared to identify short and long-term personnel needs.

Manpower planning policies must be formulated within the framework of organizational objectives. Infact, the future plans of the organization must mesh with the work of manpower planning. If the organization, for example, plans to expand its output or move into new areas or products, then these considerations must be reviewed in light of the people who will be needed to move the plans ahead. In short, without clear-cut planning, estimation of an organizations human resource need is reduced to mere guess-work.

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Following the development of the manpower plan, a series of step is necessary to implement the plan; the first of which is staffing, including a determination of how many people with, what needed skills will be required at what particular time.

It is important to realize that it is people who are being managed and people should be considered in human terms. At the heart of successful management is the problem of integrating the individual and the organization and this requires an understanding of both human personality and formal organization. Since the behaviour of people cannot be studied in isolation, it is also necessary to understand the interrelationships with other variables which together comprise the total organization. Attention must be given to the work environment and appropriate systems of motivation, satisfaction and rewards. Management styles and behaviour can also be as important as managerial competence. This paper therefore serves to recognize the importance of the context in which the process of manpower planning and organizational behaviour takes place and to specifically examine:

- The nature of manpower planning function and organizational behaviour.
- The relationship between manpower planning and organizational behaviour.
- The role of manpower planning in organizational behaviour.
- Implications of this role in organizations in Nigeria and recommendation.

The Nature of Manpower Planning and Organisational Behaviour

The Nature of Manpower Planning Function

The role of planning in business management has long been recognized. The problem has been that, for far too long a time, the emphasis has been on planning for the physical and financial resources in production. Not much thought was spared for planning human resources utilization. This fact can be easily explained. In the early stages of the development of modern industry, the technology in use and the levels of skill involved in productive operations were rather simple. Thus, the training period for acquiring the basic skills needed was comparatively short. Besides, the industrial labour force had not yet been properly organised and employment conditions were deplorable. It was relatively easy and cheap for employers of labour at that time to hire and fire at will depending on their moods and the exigencies of their business. With the interference of government in regulating conditions of employment and the emergence of organized labour union, all these were to change. All these changes were however not fast enough for manpower planning to emerge as a function worthy of the attention of the highest authority in most business organization until the mid-1960s.

By the mid-1960s, a number of developments had made it imperative for most business organizations to consciously install the machinery for manpower planning in their management set-up. First, business organizations had become more complex both in terms of their operations and the variety of skills needed for such operations. Second, major advancement of science and technology had brought the emergence of a large number of specialized skills which require long years of both classroom and on-the-job-training to acquire. Third, government regulating practices in the employment market had curtailed the liberty of employers to lay-off staff in response to adverse economic conditions. Fourth, trade unions have emerged as a formidable group within the industrial set-up ready to use its power to resist arbitrary discharge of its members. All these factors have

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combined to increase the cost and slow down the speed with which business organizations can replace staff or reduce their staff strength. Essentially, manpower planning has increased in importance because of globalization, economic growth, demand for skilled workers, mobility of workers, need for productivity improvements, need for efficient growth, diversity in workforce, forward planning of resources and controlling wastage. All these factors brought into sharp focus the need for organizations to set up the necessary machinery which would enhance their ability to anticipate future developments and fashion out policies aimed at efficient utilization of human resources.

Manpower planning is a concept that has been used to describe that machinery. While scholars agree on the objectives of manpower planning, they have defined the function itself differently. Perhaps due to this problem of definition it is not uncommon to find whole text books on manpower planning in which the authors make no attempt to present an explicit definition of the concept itself. We present below few definitions of manpower planning in order to underscore the differences in emphasis.

Manpower planning is understood as the process of forecasting an organization's future demand for and the supply of right type of people in the right number. Mintzberg, (1979) Manpower planning is a subsystem in the total organization planning. Organization planning includes managerial activities that set the company's objectives for the future and determine appropriate means for achieving those objectives.

Mullins, (2008:30) defined it as strategy for the acquisition, improvement, and preservation of an enterprise's human resources. It relates to establishing job specifications or the quantitative requirement of jobs determining the number of personnel required and developing sources of manpower.

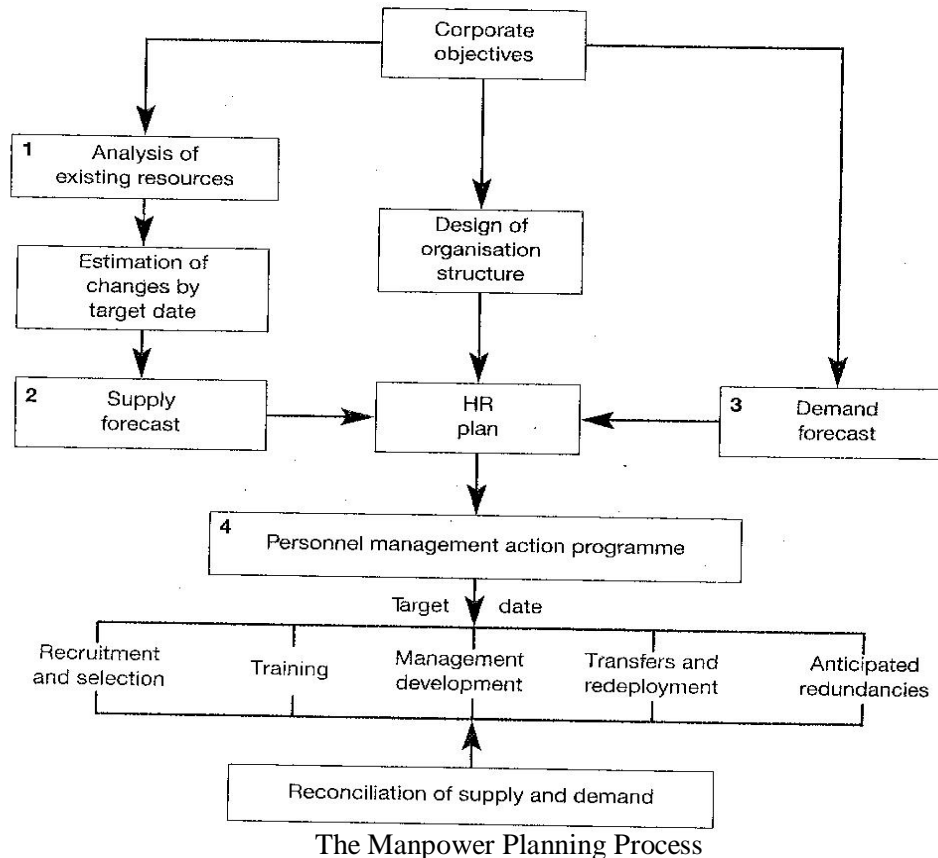
Specifically, manpower planning is the process by which an organization ensures that it has the right number and kind of people, at the right place at the right time capable of effectively and efficiently completing those tasks that will help the organization achieve its overall objectives.

Manpower planning serves two broad purposes. First, it provides information on the organizations current manpower resources and capabilities. Second, it attempts to anticipate the future, thus preparing the organization for changes in its environment. These changes could be technological, economic or political.

Whatever the nature of the organization, manpower planning should not be regarded in isolation but as an integral part of the broader process of corporate planning. Manpower planning is linked to the development of the organization as a whole, and should be related to corporate objectives, and to an organization structure capable of achieving those objectives. It should also be related to the nature of the organizational culture and climate.

The Manpower Planning Process

The concept of manpower planning process is used to describe the basic approach towards an understanding of the different activities involved in manpower planning. Whatever the scope and nature of the HR plan, it is possible to identify four main processes or stages (see figure).



Source: Newstrom J.W & Davis K. (1996: 261)

- An analysis of existing staffing resources: This requires an effective system of personnel records and a staffing inventory including. For example, details of gender and age. In larger or organizations, a computerized HR database will be required.
- An estimation of likely changes in resources by the target date. This includes the consideration of changes and losses to the organization, incremental improvements in staff performance and current programmes of staff development; and external environmental factors such as the likely availability of labour, areas of potential new developments or markets, and changes in legislation. This determines the supply forecast.

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- A forecast of staffing requirements necessary to achieve corporate objectives by the target date. This determines the demand forecast.
- A series of measures to ensure that the required staffing resources are available as and when required. This reconciliation of supply and demand is the basis of the manpower plan and personnel management action programmes.
- The manpower planning process should also take account of broader environmental factors such as changes in population trends, patterns of employment,, changes in the educational system, government initiatives on employment, employment legislation, development in information technology and automation etc.

Barriers to Manpower Planning

Conflict may exist between short-term and long-term HR needs. For example, there arises a conflict between the pressure to get work done on time and long-term needs, such as preparing people for assuming greater responsibilities. Many managers are of the belief that human resource needs can be met immediately because skills are available on the market as long as wages and salaries are competitive. The managers fail to recognize that by resorting to hiring or promoting depending on short-term needs alone, long term issues are neglected.

- There is conflict between quantitative and qualitative approach to manpower planning. Some people view manpower planning as a number game designed to track the flow of people across the departments. These people take a strictly quantitative approach to planning. Others take a qualitative approach and focus on individual employee concerns as promotability and career development. However, best results would accrue if there were a balance between the quantitative and qualitative approaches.
- Human resource information is incompatible with the information used in strategy formulation. Strategic planning efforts have long been oriented towards financial forecasting often to the exclusion of other types of information.
- Ignorance of objectives of organization and manpower planning.
- Uncertain social, economic, environmental and technological developments.
- Unavailability of funds to meet desired recruitment and training programmes.
- Non-involvement of operating line managers can render manpower planning ineffective.
- Labour turnover problems.
- Resistance to plans by union members.

The Nature of Organisational Behaviour

Organisational behaviour is concerned with the study of the behaviour of people within an organizational setting. It involves the understanding, prediction and control of human behaviour and the factors which influence the performance of people as members of an organization. In practice, we are referring to the behaviour of individual (micro) or sections or groups of people within the organization (macro).

Several characteristics of organisational behaviour have been suggested. They are as follows:

1. Problem and questions are typically formulated within an independent variable-dependent variable framework to search for cause and effect.

2. Concern is towards change as a desirable outcome for organizations and persons within organizations.
3. The field has a humanistic tone reflected in the concern for self development, personal growth and self actualization. It emphasizes operant and behaviour modifications.
4. The field is performance -oriented.
5. The field is science -oriented.

In brief organization behaviour is concerned with the understanding, prediction and control of human behaviour in organizations Mullins, 2005. It represents the behavioural approach to management. Other approaches include the process, quantitative, systems and contingency approaches.

It is necessary to understand the interrelationships between human behaviour and other variable which comprise the total organization. These variables include:

- **The Individual** – Organisations are made up of individual acting in isolation or as part of a group responding to organization expectations or the external environment. However, frustration and conflict can emerge where the needs of the individual and the demands of the organization are incompatible.
- **The Group** – All organizations exist with various groupings which may be formal or informal. People in groups influence each other in many ways and groups may develop their own hierarchies and leaders. Group pressures can have a major influence over the behaviour and performance of individual members. An understanding of group structure and behaviour complements knowledge of individual behaviour and invariably organisational behaviour.
- **The Organization** – Structure is created by management to establish relationships between individuals and groups to provide the order and to direct the efforts of organizations into goal seeking activities. The focus of attention is on the impact of organization structure and design and patterns of people within the organization.
- **The Environment** – The environment affects the organization through for example, technological and scientific development, economic activity, social and cultural influences and governmental actions.

Advantages

- It suggests the need for an inter-disciplinary approach.
- While not been inconsistent with the view that human behaviour is continuous between different context, it also direct attention to certain classes of variables which may be relatively more important in organizational setting than elsewhere.
- It may describe an orientation towards action on the basis of existing (albeit limited) knowledge.
- In the sense that the term has authoritarian connotation for the people in the field it is in use.

Relationship between Manpower Planning and Organisational Behaviour

There is a close relationship between manpower planning and organisational behaviour. Infact, some writers seem to suggest that the two concepts are synonymous but this is something of an over-simplification.

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Manpower planning is the key to managerial functions i.e. planning, organizing, directing and controlling are based upon the manpower. In other words, manpower planning is a major component of HRM that involves all management decisions and practices that directly influence the people or human resources who work for the organization.

Besides, while manpower planning encompasses virtually all aspects of HRM, organisational behaviour does not. It is more accurately described in the narrower interpretation of providing a behavioural approach to management theory and practice; there are other broader approaches such as the process quantitative, systems and contingency approaches.

Also, while manpower planning is concerned with the management of demand and supply of labour in an organization, we see organisational behaviour as concerned with the provision of accommodation to justify the manifestation of all these labour management activities as evidenced in the structure of organizations.

However, manpower planning and organisational behaviour are related in the sense that both assumed significance in the organization in terms of a common goal of improving organisational performance and productivity.

Although we cannot separate it completely from its foundation disciplines, we can identify certain ideas shared by those who have established organisational behaviour as a field of study. Firstly, they believe that knowledge from a variety of disciplines is necessary for the study and management of organizations. Secondly, knowledge from the disciplines can be applied to problems of the management of people and thirdly, the knowledge from the disciplines can be applied to achieve increased organisational effectiveness and psychological health and growth of organisational participants.

Thus, the real application of organisational behaviour may require us to do more than to think system. Rather, it may require affective or emotional characteristics, thought patterns and information processing abilities which are yet to be developed. Organisational participants need an ability to search out the systems variables to feel the complexity and diversity of human systems.

In summary, while organisational behaviour is about behaviour of individuals or labour, manpower planning is about quantitative and qualitative staffing of labour requirement in the organization. However, the both phenomena are apparently needed to balance an organisational structure for efficiency and effectiveness. Organisational behaviour absolutely relies on efficient manpower planning to ensure friction-free relationship among employees in an organization. In the same vein, the manpower planning function should be based on underlying philosophies of management behaviour and employee relationship. Therefore, if positive result is actually desirable in any organization, manpower planning and its techniques and its application in organizational behavioural concept is inevitable.

The Role of Manpower Planning in Organisational Behaviour

1. Key to managerial functions – The managerial functions i.e. planning, organizing, directing and controlling are based upon the manpower. Human resources help in the implementation of all these managerial activities. Thus, manpower planning helps the organization to realize the

- importance of manpower management which ultimately helps in the stability of a concern. Therefore, staffing becomes a key to all managerial functions.
2. Procuring competent personnel. This requires positive recruitment sources. These sources must consider not only the nature and conditions of external labour market, but also the presence of qualified personnel who are available to fill vacancies through internal promotions and transfers. The recruitment activities should be integrated with diversity and equal employment opportunity initiatives. Staffing needs must be anticipated sufficiently in advance to permit the recruitment and development of fully qualified personnel.
 3. Anticipating manpower problems by projecting present resources into the future and correcting them with forecast of requirements to determine their adequacy both quantitatively and qualitatively.
 4. It's a systematic approach because it ensures a continuous and proper staffing. It avoids or checks on occupational imbalances (shortage or surplus) occurring in any of the department of the organisation. In the same vein, it is argued that organization can achieve its goals effectively through effective contingencies of all the manpower planning functions; for example, the structure of an organisation and the design of the job within it affect an organisation's ability to achieve only through the efforts of people.
 5. There is a certain degree of flexibility; that is, it is subject to modifications according to needs of the organization or the changing environment. Manpower plans can be done at micro or macro levels depending upon various environmental factors.
 6. Increasing investments in human resources. Human assets, as opposed to physical assets, can increase in value. An employee who gradually develops his/her skills and abilities becomes a more valuable resource. The naira value of a trained, flexible, motivated and productive workforce is difficult to determine (although attempts are being made to do so, as in HR accounting HRA).
 7. It enables an organization to cope with changes in competitive forces, markets, technology, products and government regulations. Such changes generate changes in job content, skill demands and number and type of personnel. Also, technological changes will often upgrade some jobs and degrade others.
 8. Protection of weaker sections. In matters of employment and promotions, sufficient representation needs to be given to physically handicapped, backward-class citizens etc. These groups enjoy a given percentage of jobs, notwithstanding the constitutional provision, which guarantees equal opportunities for all. A well-conceived personnel, planning programme would protect the interests of such groups.
 9. Provides the trigger for a personnel management action programme related to such activities as recruitment, selection, training, management development and career progression, transfers and employment, retirement, wage/salary levels, anticipated redundancies and accommodation requirements.
 10. Planning facilities preparation of an appropriate manpower budget for each department or division. This in turn, helps in controlling manpower costs by avoiding shortages/excesses in manpower supply before hand.

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Beardwell, Holden & Claydon (2004:181), suggest that manpower planning can be perceived to have a number of distinct advantages. It can help to reduce uncertainty as long as plans are adaptable. Other advantage relate to the contribution of planning to organisational performance. For example, the planning process can make a significant contribution to the integration off policies and practices with each other and with the business strategy, i.e. horizontal and vertical integration.

Managerial Implications and Recommendation

1. Managerial competence and development. The quality of management is one of the most important factors in the success of any organization. There is, therefore, a continual need for managerial development as an integral part of the process of organization development. The manager needs to be conversant with social and human skills and have the ability to work with and through people. Using accumulated knowledge of management theory, it is possible to construct an integrated model of managerial behaviour and development.
2. Developed sense of people perception. It is important that managers have a highly developed sense of people perception and understand the feelings of staff and their needs and expectations. It is people who are being managed and people should be considered in human terms. At the heart of successful management is the problem of integrating the individual and organization and this requires an understanding of both human personality and formal organizations.
3. People organization fit – Attention should be focused on improving the people-organization relationship. Management is an integral part of this relationship. Management should therefore endeavor to create the right balance between the interrelated activity which make up the total organization and weld these into coherent patterns of activity best suited to the external environment in which the organization is operating.
4. Integrating style of management. The general movement towards flatter organization structures, flexible working and greater employees' involvement has placed increasing emphasis on integrating rather than a hierarchical controlling style of management.
5. Psychological Contract – The changing nature of organizations and individuals at work has placed increasing pressures on the awareness and importance of new psychological contracts. Rather than seeing people as a corporate asset from which value can be appropriated, people are seen as a responsibility and a resource to be added to. The new moral contract also demand much from employees who need to abandon the stability of life time employment and embrace the concept of continuous learning and personal development.
6. Work Environment – How managers exercise the responsibility for duties of management is important. Attention must be given to the work environment, and appropriate systems of motivation, job satisfaction and rewards. It is important to remember that improvement in organisational performance will only come about through people. Consideration must be given to developing an organisational climate in which people work willingly and effectively.

Conclusion

Manpower planning is vital to the organisation but underutilized. Since the human resource is the most vital resource in determining the long-term effectiveness of any organisation, it is important that systematic plans be prepared to compare short and long-term personnel needs. Manpower planning translates the organisation's objectives and plans into the number of workers needed to meet

those objectives. While organisational behaviour is about behaviour of individual or labour. Manpower planning is about qualitative and quantitative staffing of labour requirement in the organisation. However, organisational behaviour absolutely relies on efficient manpower to ensure friction-free relationship among employees in an organisation. Hence the manpower planning should be based on underlying philosophies of management behaviour and employee relationship. Consequently, the role of manpower planning in organisational behaviour should be considered not only within the organisational context but also should be viewed as a system in which participants seek to attain individual and group goals. The implication of this is that a greater emphasis should be placed on integrating rather than a traditional controlling style of management.

Recommendation

Management should design the components of an HRM of which manpower planning is a part system to be consistent with each other, with the elements of organization corporate system and with the organization's strategy and goals (Ofotokun 2001:292).

- Strategic integration – Infact, human resource management (HRM) should be integrated into strategic planning. Mintzberg's (1979:935) view of strategy as a pattern in a stream of decisions could allow HRM to be placed in an interdependent position in relation to decision making on objectives, structure and job design. Acceptance of HRM as a management aspect of strategy will generate systems such as performance management based on competency framework to ensure coherence throughout an organization and appropriate actions by line managers.
- Strategic Capability – Integrate manpower planning more closely into the organization strategic plans; i.e. the ability of the head to be fully involved in the development of cooperate strategy is critical.
- Management should ensure that all the activities of the personnel function are directed toward improved bottom-line performance for the good of the organization and of all its stakeholders.
- Management should enable and empower people within the organisation to reach high levels of performance in achieving organisational goals. The function need to point out to management, the strengths, and weakness of the human resources and the opportunities and threats so that these can be considered in developing business plans.
- Furthermore, management should ensure that employees are used effectively throughout their career. Much will depend on the extent to which the overall management philosophy supports and reinforces an approach to HRM that focuses on the utilization and development of new employment once they gained entry to an organisation.
- Top management should also agree on a clear terms of reference for the manpower planning manager within the framework of general personnel policies.
- In addition, management should foster harmonious relationship among departments. Effective management involves a partnership between managers and manpower planning practitioners. Although, it is the managers who have the immediate responsibility for effective personnel activities.
- The management of human resources should be viewed as a system in which participants seek to attain individual and group goals.
- Above all, the nature of organisational behaviour and the practice of management should be considered not in a vacuum but within an organisational context and environment because the

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majority and actions are likely to involve a number of simultaneous functions that relate to the process of management.

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