

# PREPARATION OF ACCOUNTANTS FOR MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT

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## Abstract

The accountancy profession over the years has continued to gain popularity as a result of the role it plays in the economy of a country. As a nation grows and develops, so also the need for manpower arises to enable its system function well. It is known that manpower is the sole backbone in the development of any nation. Manpower development cannot be complete without the accountants. They are the watchdogs of our economy. This discussed the relevance of the accountancy profession to manpower development. Such includes the contribution of the professional bodies of accountancy in the training of professional or certified accountants. Challenges such as the information technology and globalization, which have made the world a global village, are discussed. Brain drain and inadequate facilities in our academic institutions are also identified as factors militating against the profession. Prospects include the opportunities created by the changes in the business environment. Recommendations are also made based on the findings.

## Introduction

Professional associations have played major roles in the development of manpower in both the developed and developing worlds. Professional bodies are not only saddled with the functions of protecting interest and discipline of erring members but also training, certification and retraining of members. They also set standards and professional conducts which binds every member of the profession. The accountancy profession in Nigeria like other professions such as Medicine, Law and Engineering; is also responsible to carry out the above functions.

Maduabum (2003:35), had the view that, professional bodies such as Council of Registered Engineers of Nigeria (COREN), Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN), Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), Institute of Personnel Management (IPM) etc are having one common denominator which is peculiar qualification for membership and code of ethics in operationalising their professional calling.

Maduabum (2002:36) stressed that, education is the only type of training that qualifies an individual for a particular vocation, which also makes him a professional in the field. Iroko (2002) also said, globally, every growing economy depends and relies substantially on the ability of professional associations to boost its growth and development here in Nigeria. -The accountancy professions are also setting the pace in producing professional accountants.

## Definition of Terms

'Accountancy- According to Kirckpatrick (1980:436) it is the work of an accountant and an Accountant is a keeper or inspector of accounts while accounting according to Edwards (1981) in Malgwi (200:13) is a service activity that provides quantitative information usually financial in nature, for use in making economic decisions.

Profession - an occupation or job that need special knowledge e.g. Medicine, Law, Teaching etc (Chambers) Manpower - number of people available for employment. Development - process of growing in size and ability and other mental and physical changes (Kirkpatric, 1980:436).

## History of Accountancy as a Profession

The history of accountancy profession in Nigeria cannot be discussed without mentioning Chief Akintola Williams; the first Nigerian to be qualified as Chartered Accountant, in 1949. The birth of professional accountancy body was brought by the idea of bringing together all qualified accountants under one umbrella to function as professionals under one code of ethics (Ayeeni, 2003:30).'

In 1965, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) Act came into force on September 1965. This gave the members the authority to practice and the institute to regulate th

practice of accountancy in Nigeria, A new idealistic accountancy body, the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) was chartered by Act No. 76 of 1993 (Ayeni, 2003; Odumeru, 2001; Osisioma, 1996).

ANAN unites all Nigerians holding accountancy qualification and employed as accountant or auditors in the public service of the federation, industrial, commercial and self employment." (Ayeni, 2003).

Odumeru (2001) noted that between 1965 and 1978 (13 years), ICAN produced only 45 accountants from its training programmes. However, between 1979 and 1998, when ANAN was founded, with its dynamic training policy of turning accountants into only graduate-entry profession! ICAN produced over 800 accountants. The emergence of ANAN has really boosted the accountancy profession. There are now two recognized accounting bodies in Nigeria - the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN).

### **Manpower Development in Accountancy**

Manpower according to Chambers Universal Learner's Dictionary (1980), it is the number of people available for employment, The accountancy profession is geared toward the development of manpower in the field of accountancy; as ANAN (Association of National Accountants of Nigeria) took a giant stride by establishing the Nigerian College of Accountancy (NCA) Jos. The first of its kind in Africa, as college for postgraduate training of professional accountants. ANAN has taken steps to fill the vacuum created by ICAN.

Murealewe (2002) from Habson (1982) stated that human resources not capital, not income, not material resources constitutes the ultimate basis for the wealth of a nation. Our various institutions and industries are still lacking skilled personnel to man the accounting functions and the collapse of many banks during the 90s were created by such circumstance.

Ayeni (2003): opined that "Nigeria has developed tremendously from its abysmal industrial state of the early days of agricultural dependent to industrialized state. This phenomenal growth, which is expected to continue, has its implications on management information, which is the lifeblood for the efficient and effective operation of any business. The accounting information has remained the only recognized quantitative information that serves the need of investors, creditors and other stakeholders in making decisions and assessing the real worth of the business organizations all over the world. Nigeria cannot be an exception. As a necessary commitment, therefore the accounting system hitherto has hardly grown beyond its conventional model, requires a reorientation towards a modern approach of management to achieve greater efficiency and higher reliability.

ANAN had broken the monopoly created by ICAN since 1979 and with the establishment of her training college in Jos, more and more graduate accountants are now acquiring professional qualifications. To enable a graduate with Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) or Higher National Diploma to sit and pass the professional examination, one-year full time class will be attended. Another group known as the matured students attend professional course on part time basis. The college is having the objective of advancing the science of accountancy in Nigeria. With current average of about 500 professional accountants produced by ANAN annually and bi-annually examination by ICAN, professional accountants shortages will soon be a thing of the past. Hence, perennial problems associated with the profession will also become things of the past.

### **Impact of ANAN (Association of National Accountants of Nigeria) on Professionalisation of Accountants**

Since the emergence of ANAN in 1979 the following remarkable changes were identified, according to Odumeru (2001).;-

- (a). ICAN tripled its usual output of passed professional accountants.
- (b). The idea of training without education became out functioned; now only graduates go for the examinations, (c). ANAN also introduced a training programme known as Mandatory Continuing Professional Development (MCPD) of which ICAN also copied.
- (d) The entry qualification of ANAN is a graduate affair. The ICAN, which was allowing lower levels of education, changed to graduate ones, (e). Between 1988 and 1998 ICAN under gone many changes, (f). ANAN opened a college for the training of only graduates of accountancy to be certified accountants. ICAN also tried to emulate, but failed.

From the inception of the Nigeria College of Accountancy, healthy competition arose

between the two professional bodies. This has increased the annual output of professional accountant.

### **Challenges to the Professional Accountants**

Umeh (2001) said:

There are challenges for the profession as a whole and for the different stakeholder groups within the profession. This is to adopt a structure and mindset that can rapidly adopt to the changes in the profession and business community.

The training of accountants should be structured to meet the current changes. The changes include computerization and the information technology. The wave of globalization and information technology has engulfed every economy which has made the world a global village. The contemporary accountant must be knowledgeable and skilled in computer. The bookkeeper of yesterday was required to be good penman. But the accountants of today need to be wizards of the keys.

It is unfortunate that universities are not adequately furnished with some essential things. Staff are no longer found lecturing. They have found themselves else where. (Umeh, 2001).

The professional bodies should ensure adequate learning facilities in institutions where accountancy is taught and professional accountants should also continue to update themselves to cope up with the business environment. The Electronic-taxation and Electronic-commerce is a typical area that may require attention.

### **Prospects of Accounting Profession in Manpower Development of Nigeria**

Umeh (2001), opined that changes in the business environment will present many opportunities to professional accountants. They include services to global organizations, change management, stakeholder, value creation, new assurance and performance measurement service and finance.

Ayeni (2003:37) revealed that the future of the accounting profession in Nigeria depends on the education and personal qualities of its practitioners.

The accountancy profession must adapt to transformations in the values and needs of Nigeria. The future professional accountancy education must emphasize skills and knowledge, and in addition to permitting ethical standards and commitment to professionalism. The accountant of the future requires dynamic training like the one carried out by the Nigeria College of Accountancy, Jos. The MCPD (Mandatory Continuing Professional Development) which is also done four times in a year, is also a great achievement.

### **Conclusion**

Manpower development cannot be discussed without considering the accountancy profession. With the fact that accountants are the watchdog of our economy., they need to be adequately trained. The accounting profession need to set up standards and professional conduct to bind every member of the profession.

For manpower to be encouraged there is a need for education and training for prospective accountancy professionals. Nigeria has to rely on the two accounting professional bodies for her teaming industries and parastatals. Until when TCAN monopoly was broken, accountants had not been enough for Nigeria. These two professional bodies should now put heads together to face the current challenges of globalization. This is because the opportunities created are products of changes.

### **Recommendations**

The folio wings are some recommendations:

1. To improve manpower development in accountancy, the Nigeria government should assist: two accountancy professional bodies by giving grand adequately.
2. The accountancy professional bodies should emphasize on training of accountants that v> meet the needs of the Nigerian economy.
3. Education and training of the professional accountants, should also be geared tow: globalization
4. The two professional bodies - Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), which are now recognized bodies accountants should have a standardized curriculum for training their members.
5. There should be proper supervision of polytechnics and universities undertaking courses accountancy,

6. As there is emphasis on professionalism and the two accounting bodies responsible for training of professional accountants, head of accounts offices should possess any of certificates.
7. Continuous training should be stressed by the professional bodies.
8. Facilities in tertiary institutions need to be improved. Good lecturers and instructors should also be employed to impart the knowledge in schools.

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