

Human Capital Development Plans Implementation in Public Institutions: The Case of Ilala Municipal in Dar es salaam, Tanzania

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Abstract

This paper explores the state of human capital development in public institutions in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Specifically, the paper examines the existence of employees development programmes (plans) in public institutions and assesses the implementation of staff development plans in public institutions. In line to that, the paper assesses the administrators' comments on the state of staff developments in public institutions. The study was conducted in four public institutions using a sample of 95 respondents of which 90 respondents were non-administrative employees and 5 were administrative officials. The data from non-administrative employees was collected through a structured questionnaire. For administrative officials, interviews were adopted. Data were analysed qualitatively through content analysis and quantitatively through Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 15.0. The study revealed that very few employees advanced their education when at work and for the few who did it, was for their own cost, otherwise most of employers had low commitment in supporting their employees academically. It is suggested that public institutions should establish good human capital development plans which will be realistic and favour all public workers with less discriminations based on the section and area of specialization. The head of public institutions should manage the question of human capital development properly so as to promote employees effectiveness and productivity. In this way the government will realise its policy. Further research can establish the relationship between institutional human capital development states and employee's mobility.

Keywords: Employer, Employee, Human Capital Development, Institutions

INTRODUCTION

Human Capital Development is explained as the process that relates to training, education and professional initiatives in order to increase the levels of knowledge, skills, abilities, values and social assets of an employee which will lead to the employee's satisfaction and performance (Schultz, 1993). It is also an important input for organizations especially for employees' continuous improvement mainly on knowledge, skills and abilities (Rastogi, 2000). According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2001, p.18), human capital development refers to knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social and economic well-being. In current global market, companies are composed of competitors, regardless of industry. To develop a competitive advantage, it is important that firms truly leverage on the workforce as a competitive weapon. A strategy for improving workforce productivity to drive higher value for the firms has become an important focus. Firms seek to optimize their workforce through comprehensive human capital development programmes, not only to achieve business goals but also most important is for a long term survival and sustainability. To accomplish this undertaking, firms need to invest resources to ensure that employees have the knowledge, skills and competencies they need to work effectively in a rapidly changing and complex environment (Akinyemi, 2004).

In response to the business environment changes, most firms have embraced the notion of human capital as a good competitive advantage that will enhance higher performance. Human capital development becomes a part of an overall effort to achieve cost-effective firm performance. Hence, firms need to understand human capital that would enhance employee satisfaction and improve performance. Although there is a broad assumption that human capital has positive effects on firms' performance, the notion that human capital development leads to labour mobility remains largely untested in public sector specifically in Tanzania. This paper attempts to explore the human capital development plans implementation in public sectors in Dar es Salaam region.

The constantly changing business environment requires firms to strive for superior competitive advantages via dynamic business plans which incorporate creativity and innovativeness. This is essentially important for their long term sustainability. Undoubtedly, human resource input plays a significant role in enhancing firms' competitiveness (Barney, 1995). At a glance, substantial studies were carried out on human capital and their implications on firm performance were widely covered and obviously, human capital enhancement will result in greater competitiveness and performance (Agarwala, 2003). Meantime, there is a significant relationship between innovativeness and firm performance under the human capital philosophy (Lumpkin & Dess, 2005). In relation to this, the definition of firm performance could vary from one and another.

Nonetheless, some clear definitions of firm performance in the context of human capital enhancement could be put forward. In some cases, financial performance measures such as percentage of sales resulting from new products, profitability, capital employed and return on assets (ROA) (Selvarajan et al., 2007; Hsu et al., 2007) can be used. Besides, Return on Investment (ROI), Earnings per Share (EPS) and Net Income after Tax (NIAT) can also be used as measures of financial performance (Grossman, 2000). Interestingly, researchers also tend to benchmark managerial accounting indicators against the financial measures in five dimension including: 'workers compensation' (workers' compensation expenses divided by sales); 'quality' (number of errors in production); 'shrinkage' (e.g. inventory loss, defects, sales return); 'productivity' (payroll expenses divided by output); 'operating expenses' (total operating expenses divided by sales) (Wright et al., 2005). On the other hand, firm performance can also be measured using 'perceived performance approach' (also referred to as subjective performance measure) where Likert-like scaling is used to measure firm performance from the top management perspectives (Selvarajan, 2007).

BACKGROUND

According to Schultz (1993), the concept of human capital is rooted from the field of macroeconomic development theory which describe the rationale for human capital advancement in terms of skills and competences for the purpose of improving effectiveness and efficient in organizations. Becker (1993) in his writing argues that there are different kinds of capitals that include schooling, a computer training course, and expenditures on medical care, and in fact lectures on the virtues of punctuality and honesty are capital too. In the true sense, these capitals improve health, raise earnings, and add to a person's appreciation of literature over a lifetime. Consequently, it is fully in keeping with the capital concept as traditionally defined to say that expenditures on education, training, and medical care are investment in capital. These are not simply costs but investment with valuable returns that can be calculated. From the perspective of classical economic theory, human capital considers labour as a commodity that can be traded in terms of purchase and sale. This classical theory very much focuses on the exploitation of labour by capital. However, unlike the meaning traditionally associated with the term labour, human capital refers to the knowledge, expertise and skills one accumulates through education and training.

Emphasizing the social and economic importance of human capital development, Becker and Barry (1996) noted that, the most valuable of all capital is that investment in human being. They distinguished firm-specific human capitals from general-purpose human capital. Examples of firm-specific human capital include expertise obtained through education and training in management information systems, accounting procedures, or other expertise specific to a particular firm. On the other hand, the general-purpose human capital is knowledge gained through education and training in areas of value to a variety of firms such as generic skills in human resource development.

Regardless of the application, these scholars consider education and training to be the most important investment in human capital which can help to fast drive developments in a firm through improved effectiveness and efficient.

According to Bontis and Fitzenz (2002), human capital development is a combination of factors such as education, training, experience, intelligence, energy, work habits, trustworthiness, initiatives and others that affect the value of the worker's marginal product. In this sense education either formal or informal plays a crucial role in developing and securing human capital. In line to that, Dooley (2000) add that, human beings are the active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources, build social, economic and political organizations, and carry forward national development. Hence it is important to emphasize on the need for developing human personnel for advancement of any organization.

A decision to invest in human capital, like a decision to invest in other assets, it is very much important though it requires comparing costs to represent with benefits to be received in the future. Human beings are optimizers as they strive to acquire the skills and experiences that sell them in the labour market (Drucker, 1999). In line to that, different scholars such as Garavan, Morley, Gunnigle and Collins (2001) also argue that, the principal cost to the individual is the time required to produce an additional value of each of the skills and experience required by the labour market. This is because the marginal products will be the primary determinants of individual's compensation and they are directly related to skills levels possessed prior to before and after training. Therefore, it is the matter of fact that for any institution or organisation to succeed, it should make sure that human capital development is enhanced.

Moreover, Shrader and Siegal comment that human resource development is the most important and vital factor of economic development in any institution. These scholars add that, the better education, improved skills and experience for workers can have great impact on the economic development of any organisation and the society in general. Hence developing workers can give the institution an opportunity to grow and increase work effectiveness and productivity.

Data from research show that human capital investment and management differ widely across the

world and at a global level, it is revealed in different researches that countries that invest heavily in human capital, do better on a wide range of social, economic and development indicators (Lutz & Goujon, 2002). Looking at the status of human capital development in Tanzania, the country is ranked 156 out of 174 countries, with Sierra Leone ranked last and Canada first. In fact, Tanzania is behind Kenya and close to Uganda in terms of human development, in line to that, the country ranks lower than the average for all sub-Saharan Africa in the areas of Per capita income (UNDP, 1999).

The status of human capital development described by this report indicate a challenge in line to human capital development in Tanzania and contrary to what is being emphasized by the National employment policy which indicated intentions in different skills so as to increase productivity in various sectors of production (URT, 2008). Moreover, the human capital development status does not reflect the intention raised in the country development vision 2025 which insist on the need to deal with human personnel through hard work, initiatives, skills, as well as to make use of the many opportunities available in the country. The vision comment on the need to transform the education system so that it can develop the human capital in tandem with the socio-economic changes envisaged in the Vision 2025 (URT, 2005). This is possible only through strengthening human capital development in different sectors in the country by providing opportunities for different employees in different institutions so that they can upgrade their skills.

Statement of the Problem

Studies by Becker (2010) indicate that, human capital development is very much important for any firm so as to increase effectiveness, efficient and productivity in organisations. Akinyemi (2004) in his study emphasize that, human capital development cannot be neglected by any organisation if it intends to improve and succeed in terms of efficiency and productivity. Considering the commitment shown by the government of Tanzania to public employees on human capital development, it is emphasized that, there is a need for rewarding public employees by providing good contractual and intangible developmental (URT, 2010). Therefore the paper explores the level of human capital development plans implementation at institution level especially in Ilala Municipality in Dar es salaam, Tanzania.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the state of human capital development in public Institutions in Dar es salaam, Tanzania.

Specific Objectives

- i. To examine the existence of staff development plans in public institutions.
- ii. To assess the implementation of staff development plans in public institutions.
- iii. To identify the administrators' comments on the state of staff developments in public institutions.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The two approaches were used concurrently so as to minimize the weaknesses of each which would have been encountered if only one of them was used. Kombo and Tromp (2006) insist that, quantitative and qualitative approaches to research are complimentary, when appropriate, they should be used together so as to maximize the strength and minimize the limitation of each. In line to that qualitative research designs enable researchers to give a complete, detailed description of observed phenomenon, while quantitative research designs enable them to construct statistical models in an attempt to explain what is observed (Kothari, 2004). With this approach, the cross sectional survey research design was used, this was considered to suffice the study demands because it allowed collection of data from public institutions (the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, Ilala Municipal Council, Benjamin High School and Jangwani High School) at a single point in time. Bryman (2004); Gray, Mills and Airrasian (2006) emphasizes that, cross sectional survey is good design for collecting information in a relatively short period of time and making predictions.

Moreover, the study was done in Ilala municipality of Dar es Salaam region, Tanzania. The region is located in the eastern part of the country with approximation of four million people which is highly dominated by youth and young adult individuals. The majority of the people in this region are engaged in office works in government, international and private institutions, others work in private sectors, private owned businesses, international companies and many others in small businesses. This area was considered to be ideal for this study due to presence of enough government schools, hospitals and social welfare departments. The target population in this study were teachers, accountants, community development officers, administrative officers and doctors from public sector. Public servants working in these institutions were estimated to be over 1000. The demographic and descriptive characteristics of the respondents in this study are shown in the Table 1:

Table.1: Demographic and Descriptive Characteristics of Respondents (N = 95)

Socio-demographic variable	Category	Number of respondents (%)
Age in (years)	Less than 30	18 (18.9)
	30-39	55 (57.9)
	40-49	12 (12.6)
	50 and above	5 (5.3)
Sex	Male	45 (47.4)
	Female	50 (52.6)
Institution	Benjamin W. Sec.School	41 (43.2)
	Jangwani Sec. School	19 (20)
	Minstry of Education and Vocational Training	22 (23.2)
	Ilala Municipal Council	13 (13.7)
Marital status	Married	63 (66.3)
	Single	29 (30.5)
	Widowed	2 (2.1)
	Divorced	1 (1)
Education level	University degree	64 (67.4)
	Advanced diploma	14 (14.7)
	Diploma	14 (14.7)
	Certificates	1 (1)
	Others	2 (2.1)
Occupation	Teachers	66 (69.5)
	Accountants	10 (10.5)
	Community development officers	6 (6.3)
	Others	13 (13.7)

Structured questionnaires with closed items were used in collecting data from non administrative employees. Closed questions have been found to be effective at keeping respondents to subject of concern due to their objectivity, as well as in collecting adequate information from a large number of subjects within a relatively short period of time (Cohen et al., 2000). Moreover, they are quick to complete and easy to code for statistical analysis. Gravetter & Forzano (2003) stated that by presenting people with a few carefully constructed questions it is possible to obtain self-reported answers about attitudes, opinions, personal characteristics and behaviours. It was also believed that the use of questionnaires would ensure privacy of respondents, and maintain confidentiality (Petro, 2009).

Focus group discussion was conducted to some employees by using focus group guide questions so as to obtain their feeling on top of the responses provided in the questionnaire. On the other hand, employers and administrative officers were interviewed using semi-structured interview guide questions. Patton (2002) explain that, interview is a process of asking people questions about their feelings, thoughts, intentions and how they organize the world and the meaning they attach to what goes on in the world.

The estimated time for the interview with the employer and administrative officials was 20 minutes for each respondent. Data obtained through questionnaires were coded. Computation of total scores by major sections or items representing various clusters was done. Frequencies and percentages were computed through statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 15.0 (Pallant, 2005). Data were summarized and presented in tables for interpretation and discussion. Moreover, the qualitative information from employers and administrative officers was descriptively analysed and major summary was reported together with some direct quotations from respondents in providing more insight for explaining the findings of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings from this study are presented in respect to objectives intended to be accomplished. Depending on the requirements raised by the objectives and the nature of instruments used, the results obtained are presented as indicated below;

Existence of Staff Development Plans in public Institutions

To address this objective, respondents were required to indicate the existence of employee's development plans in their institutions and the impacts of these plans in their professional development. To accomplish this task, respondents provided their responses by completing questionnaires and the results are summarized in Table 2;

Table 2: Existence of Staff Development Plans in Public Institutions

Variables tested	Level of agreement from different professionals			
	Teachers	Accountants	C. officers	Others
	F (%)	F (%)	(%)	F (%)
My institution has good staff development plan	13(19)	9(90)	0(0)	10(80)
My institution staff development plan do not favour staff development	53(80)	1(10)	6(100)	8(60)
According to my institution staff development plan, it is difficult to acquire financial support for further studies	51(77)	2(20)	6(100)	4(70)
My institution support staff development as stipulated in the development plan	22(33)	8(80)	0(0)	3(20)
My institution staff development plan is realistic	36(55)	8(80)	0(0)	10(80)
The response of my institution to staff develop plan is fair	35(53)	7(70)	2(40)	8(62)

Note: F = Frequency, % = Percentage

Responses in Table 2 indicated that, 19% teachers, 90% accountants, 0% community development officers and 80% others agreed that there were good staff development plans in their institution. However, 80% teachers, 10% accountant, 0% community officers and 60% of other professionals stressed that staff development plans available do not favour staff development.

In line to that, 51(80%) teachers, one (10%) accountants, six (100%) community development officers and six (60%) others acknowledged that, it is difficult to acquire financial support from employers. On top of that, employees made a comment that, their institutions provide support to staff development as stipulated in development plan by 22(33%) teachers, eight (80%) accountants, none (0%) community development officers and three (20%) other officers. Employers' plan to develop staff was said to be realistic by 36(55%) teachers, eight (80%) accountants, none (0%) community development officers and 10(80%) other officers.

Furthermore, the responses of institutions to provide human capital development was said to be fair by 35(53%) teachers, 7(70%) accountants 2(40%) community development officers and others 8(62%). The variation in responses from the respondents indicated that, although public servants were employed by the same employer, some employees were academically well developed than others. For instance the data from the field indicated that accountants were academically developed followed by others (human resource managers, doctors, programme managers, teachers and community development officers were poorly advanced academically as indicated in Table 2.

The information from the findings indicates that though there is a public staff development policy in Tanzania, the plans to implement this policy are not available or are ineffective in different institutions in the country. This is due to the fact that, the plans are not helping many staff to advance their education, they seem to be not realistic and are not followed as indicated in the country's human capital development policy, on top of that there is the different in the level of commitment for different public institutions and sometimes a difference in the level at which staff across different professionals are benefiting. The findings are contrary to what is stipulated with the emphasis pointed by Becker (2010) who explained the need and importance of human capital development in all sectors of work. Due to this state of human capital development, the country is more likely to end in failures to bring the intended developments in the country as insisted by Lutz & Goujon(2002).

State of Implementing Staff Development Plans in Public Institutions

To address this objective, respondents were required to indicate the state of implementing employee's development plans in public institutions in Dar es salaam, Tanzania. To accomplish this task, the responses from the respondents were required the degree of agreements to different constructs which ware intending to measure the level of implementing staff development plans at institution level as emphasized by the country policy, The response to this objective were as indicated in table 3;-

Table 3: State of Implementing Staff Development Plans in Public Institutions

Variables tested	Yes	No
	F (%)	F (%)
There is staff development plans in my institution which is well implemented	24(26.7)	71(73.3)
The nature of staff development plans in my institution caused me to remain in the same level of education as from my time of employment	52(57.8)	43(42.2)
The nature of staff development plans in my institution helped me to advance the level of education as compared to the time of first employment	34(37.8)	61(62.2)
The academic development I acquired since my employment was not supported by the employer (s)	59(65.6)	36(34.4)
The academic development I attained since my employment is the result of my personal efforts	84(93.3)	11(6.7)
The academic development I attained since my employment is the result of funding from other institutions or organisations	34(37.8)	61(62.2)

Note: F = Frequency, % = Percentage

With regard to these responses; very few respondents 24 (26.7%) agreed that the institution staff development plans are well implemented at institution level. In line to that 52(57.8%) of all workers included in this study agreed that the nature of staff development plans in their institution is to some extent a reason for them to remain in the same level of education from their time of employment. Surprisingly, 59 (65.6%) of respondents commented that the academic advanced they have was not supported in any way with their employers and that 84 (93.3%) of these employees regardless of their occupation and age admitted to be responsible for their own academic development. This situation give a signal that, there is a possibility to these workers to easily more from their current sector or working institution due to lack of institution and worker commitment attachment. Some of employees agreed to have developed academically as the result of funding from other institutions and organizations as indicated in table3.

After completing the questionnaires, some employees were involved in a short focus group discussion so as to see their response in relation to realities on the state of human capital development in their working stations. During the discussion their response were as indicated below;

“Our employer does not support us financially in order to advance our career. Even if one acquires admission to higher learning institutions nobody bothers to assist him/her. I remember last year, when three teachers (diploma holders) got admission to the University of Dar es Salaam to pursue their studies in the same career; they were removed from the payroll for that they were absent from duties without permission. And worse is when one wants to pursue master studies; they say that master’s level is not necessary for a secondary teacher.”

Contributing on the same aspect during focus group discussion another teacher insisted:

“In general, majority of us have failed to advance our career due to poor cooperation we get from our employer. You find some employees who are working at the ministry of education when they acquire admission to further their career; they are supported by the employer, but we, other teachers, who are curriculum implementers are treated differently. I wonder! Syllabi are changing now and then, but we, implementers of whatever changes of the curriculum are left behind. For sure, I don’t know where this country is heading”.

The findings in table 3 and the comments from the focus group discussion indicates challenges in implementing human capital development policy as well as the plans set in institutions. This is the fact because the large number of workers indicates that there is less support from their institutions and even the advancement attained by many employees are not the results of efforts from the employees’ institutions. Hence the revealed situation indicate a challenge in supporting employees in their professional development the case which can results into less commitment to workers and therefore less performance and productivity in public institutions.

Moreover, this study is contrary to what is emphasized by Akinyemi (2004) who emphasized that institutions and firms need to invest resources to ensure that employees have the knowledge, skills and competencies so that they can work effectively in a rapidly changing and complex working environment. Furthermore, different studies about the importance of human capital development in a firm or institution emphasize that human capital enhancement will result into greater competitiveness and performance among employees in working stations (Agarwala, 2003; Guthrie et al., 2002).

Administrator’s comments on the State of Staff Development in Public Institutions

To address this objective, respondents were required to indicate the existence of employee’s development programmes in public institutions in Dar es salaam, Tanzania.

The researcher interviewed the employers to give their view on whether they had human capital development programmes in their institutions. The responses from heads of schools agreed that there were human capital development plans in their institutions however there were difficulties in getting support from the employer for academic advancement to some employees in some sectors such as teachers due to budget

constraints and bureaucracy. To cement on this, some heads of institutions commented on this as indicated below;-

“Our Education policy allows employees (teachers) to advance their career in order to improve performance; the employer is responsible to support these employees but due to bureaucracy and nepotism in implementing the policy none of my teachers have received financial support from the employer. Normally they advance their career/academic at their own cost”

When the permanent secretary at the ministry of education and vocational training who is the main employer for teachers interviewed his views about supporting employees in their professional development, the response were as follows:-

“We have the policy which stipulates the procedures to be followed by employees who want to advance their career and we do encourage employees to advance their career in order to improve their performance. Nevertheless, our budget is too small to allow us sponsor all employees who get admission to different universities/colleges to further their career. We would like to advance our employees academically for sustainable development but due to the budget constraints, we normally fail. Very few employees are sponsored, almost 3%.”

Some employers had mixed feeling when it comes to developing employees as they thought that many employees when supported to advance their studies they always don't turn up after their studies. One human resource and administrative officer of Ilala municipal council said:

“I have the experience of teachers leaving their working station for further education. For instance last year five diploma teachers and two degree holders left for their studies; out of them four diploma teacher and two degree holders were supported by our council and only one was self-sponsoring, but to my surprise only two teacher came back to their former station after completion of their studies.”

These responses from administrative officials (heads of schools and the permanent secretary) indicated that there were programmes for human capital development; however, the programmes were not effective. The reasons mentioned included budget constraints and fear of losing employees. This would imply that most employees advance their education at their own cost, which led to only few employees to advance their education and leaving a good number of employees working with the same level of education they were employed and the effectiveness and efficiency of the workers in their work place and hence delay development.

The responses provided under this objective clearly show that most employees are not developed academically by their employers, something which is not good for the development of the employees, organizations, community and the nation at large. This information from teachers also gave an idea that, employers tend to treat their employees differently. The way employers treated administrative officials was different from the way subordinates were treated although both are equally important for the organisation or institution.

Therefore, more efforts are required by employers so as to make human capital development a reality in their organization. This is possible by preparing a good training policy which will provide equal opportunity to all employees to advance their career for the betterment of both organization and employees' wellbeing.

Discussion

In examining the state of human capital development results indicated that very few employees advanced their education when at work. Most of those employees who advanced their education did it at their own cost or they were supported by other bodies.

This can have implication on the employees' commitment and productivity in the working station the condition which can determine the success or failure of institutions to achieve their objectives.

Furthermore, it was discovered by the researcher that institutions had plans to develop their staff, but these plans were poorly implemented because of several reasons such as budget constraints, fear of the employer to lose employees after developing them or to incur expenses for paying employees good salary and other incentives as per their academic level in order to retain them. This imply that, employees in some specializations of public institutions such as teachers and community development officers are more likely to be disadvantaged in terms of professional development due to budget constraints and priorities of the institutions, this can imply to some employees perceiving themselves as neglected or not considered important the situation which can results into less commitment to the institutions and therefore less productivity.

Moreover, it was revealed in this study that, there is a challenge in implementing the human capital development policy, this is due to the fact that, the commitment of the government to public employees is not realised with some employees the situation which can results to many competent public workers moving to private sectors to search for green pastures.

Conclusion

From this study it is concluded that, many public institutions in Ilala, Dar es salaam-Tanzania have staff development plans. However the plans are not realistic and not well implemented due to different factors such as financial constraints, less commitment from heads of institutions and heads of institution's fear to lose employees when advance their education. This is because, many heads of institutions interviewed revealed that, when employees are developed academically their chances to change their employer increases.

Recommendations

The study recommends that, employees need to be developed academically in order to improve their motivation and performance at work as well as commitment to institutions. It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the employer to develop employees professionally as made clear in the country's human development policy and heads of public institutions are urged to help the government in implementing this good will for the good of institutions, the government and the country at large. Further research can attempt to see the relationship between employee's professional development and their mobility.

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