



ENUGU STATE UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

**Volume 9
Number 2,
2024**

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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PUBLISHED BY

**Faculty of Social Sciences,
Enugu State University of Science And Technology**

APPRAISAL OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND PORT OPERATIONS IN SOUTHWESTERN PORTS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study assessed human resource development and port operations in the Nigerian maritime industry. It examined the organization development, training development and career development and factors that could motivate employees at the southwestern seaports which include Lagos Port Complex and Tincan Island Port Complex. A survey research design was employed, in which both inferential and descriptive statistics were used to analyse 100 questionnaires from the respondents. The result in table 1 shows the relationship between training development and carrier development. It was discovered that there is a relationship between the f statistics ($TD=167.515$ and $CD = 283.707$). However, both training and career development are significant ($p = 0.000$). It can be deduced that training and career development enhance organisational performance. Also the result demonstrates that reasonable income, social security, and pensions serve as the primary motivators for employees, along with decent working conditions, health, safety, and environment. It was concluded that organisational performance is anchored on training development, career development, and employee motivations. These factors increase worker competence and productivity, which in turn improves the organisation's performance in the maritime industry. The maritime industry should prioritise staff development and adopt workplace democracy to motivate workers.

Keywords: *Human Resource Development (HRD), Port operations, Training development, Career development*

Introduction

The role of Human Resource Development (HRD) in the optimization and utilization of workforce cannot be overemphasized in the maritime sector of a nation. According to Vinesh (2014), human resource development (HRD) refers to an organization's investment in the education and growth of its employees, encompassing training and development, career advancement, and organizational enhancement. However, with the presence of port automation systems, there is a need to address the hurdles in human resource development to enable them to adapt to the ever-growing demand. Black (2001) cited De Langen, who asserted the need for additional evaluation in port studies related to human resource development. He suggested applying this assessment-based approach to the port's entire range of activities.

Maritime transport necessitates specific abilities, both practical and theoretical, which form the foundation for efficient maritime operations. Port operations attract a larger number of employees, especially in Nigeria. Ndikom (2011) elucidates various activities that generate employment in the maritime sector, like fishing, salvage, towage, underwater resources, exploitation and extraction, and onshore economic activities in ports, shipping activities, ship construction, repair, and maintenance. Nevertheless, prior to engaging in maritime operations,

individuals must learn certain skills and undergo training. Mariners, ship captains, bureaucrats, and others express dissatisfaction with the working conditions and compensation. For instance, the operating environment, the ship they operate on, and the items and procedures they manage undergo constant changes (Zoto, 2002). Hence, this study evaluates the role of human resource development in enhancing port performance in Nigeria.

Literature review

Port operations

Transport experts define a seaport as a geographical location along a shoreline where the mode of transport transitions from land to sea or water, or vice versa. It is characterised by the availability of geographical advantages, socio-economic potential, technological advancements, and political considerations (Patrick, 1999). It serves as a major gateway for the exchange of goods and the contact between nations through international trade. Ports are geographical locations that are connected to bodies of water such as seas, oceans, or rivers. Infrastructure and technical equipment provide safe havens for various types of ships. Research has demonstrated that a port facilitates the movement of goods from one transportation method to another.

In their study, Olaogbebikan et al. (2014) provided a precise definition of a port as a specific area along a coast or shore that includes one or more harbours. Ports serve as docking locations for ships, facilitating the passage of people and merchandise to and from land. The port locations are selected based on the optimization of land and navigable water access, commercial demand, and protection from wind and waves. A port consists of three components, namely:

Physical infrastructure: This encompasses many components such as wharves, docks, storage areas, and cranes.

Port Authority: Business entity management

Service providers include dockers and terminal operators.

The history of Nigeria port development began in the 19th century. This occurred subsequent to the initiation of maritime commerce and transactions that ensued from the expeditions along the African coasts during the early discovery period. The first effort to provide amenities for seafaring vessels was to widen the entrance to the Lagos lagoon. Significant littoral drift occurred along the coastline, and the ever-changing channels in the sandbar at the entrance made it very challenging to enter. On February 1, 1914, the Akoko, the first postal steamer, entered Lagos Harbour. The vessel had a draft of 5.64 metres. After a few months, ships started utilising the amenities offered by the customs dock located on Lagos Island.

Previously, the presence of a port along a vast coastline area from Calabar to Lagos became necessary due to the exploration and commercial endeavours of European missionaries and businesspeople in Africa. In the 15th century, Europeans initiated maritime exploration and uncovered abundant natural resources in the western and central regions, which were crucial for their economic and industrial advancement. In 1906, the commissioning of dredgers to operate at the bar marked significant progress in clearing the Lagos lagoon.

Also, the year 1906 marked a significant milestone in the progress of shipping reforms in Nigeria (Afolayan, 1994; Badejo, 1998). That year saw the establishment of the Nigerian Marine Corps. The Marine, commonly referred to as such, originated as the initial maritime

reform to introduce and establish order in port administration within the country. Upon its establishment, Nigeria entrusted it with the task of overseeing and managing the pre-existing ports and terminals. The categorization of ports varies depending on the analyst's viewpoint. For instance, the type of equipment available for cargo handling can classify ports, such as RoRo ports.

Michaela, Daniela, and Nistor (2014) argue that the most crucial resource for a port manager is the port staff. However, they note that effectively utilizing this resource can be challenging due to the port's unique characteristics and historical conditions, which may not always align with modern management principles. However, the effectiveness of a certain terminal is contingent upon its internal structure and the implementation of its planning and control procedures. According to Gudelj, Krčum, and Twrdy (2010), human resources play a crucial role in the development of an operation. They argue that strategic decisions, which are made by human intelligence, are responsible for expanding the terminal to meet the demands of European markets. This expansion includes extending the quay and yard, acquiring new equipment, increasing TEU capacity, and developing infrastructure.

Maritime workers often encounter the challenge of allocating berths, which is complicated by various factors such as varying arrival times of ships, different quantities and sizes of incoming ships, multiple docking areas, varying lengths of berths, varying numbers and capabilities of cranes, navigation restrictions, and so on (Lacksonen, 2001) and (Gudelj and Vidačić, 2007).

Various areas of maritime operations have established colleges in collaboration with existing universities to offer transport curricula with the aim of improving operational performance. Some examples of professional institutes in this field include the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, the Institute of Transport Administration, the Chartered Institute of Shipping, the Institute of Port and Terminal Management, and the Institute of Freight Forwarders of Nigeria. Despite the existence of numerous professional institutes, staff development and operations at the port still fail to meet the standards set by established economies. The academic qualification of personnel requires workers to possess abilities, intuition, and inventiveness in order to effectively fulfil their tasks.

Staff quality assessment refers to the level of achievement of predetermined objectives, ability for innovation, and conduct toward colleagues, customers, and the organization (Michaela, Daniela, and Nistor, 2014). In the current dynamic and demanding business landscape, it is crucial for human resource development to adopt a proactive approach. This involves implementing strategies that enhance efficiency and productivity by focusing on the qualitative growth of individuals, enabling them to realise their capabilities and potential for growth and development.

Concept of Human resource development

Human resource development (HRD) is a systematic approach to enhancing and harnessing human skills and knowledge through organisation development (OD) and personnel training and development (T&D) with the goal of enhancing performance (Swanson and Holton, 2001).

1. The performance domains include organisations, work processes, groups, and individuals.

2. Organisational development (OD) is the methodical implementation of changes inside an organisation with the aim of enhancing performance.
3. T&D, or training and development, is the systematic process of cultivating individuals' knowledge with the goal of enhancing performance.

Human Resource Development, refers to a structured collection of activities aimed at enhancing employees' abilities, knowledge, and experiences in order to fulfil both current and future demands and achieve organisational goals.

Human resource planning necessitates employers ascertaining the methods by which managers should evaluate and oversee performance, recognise and cultivate potential, and provide training and development opportunities for personnel (Tyson, 2006). Inadequate recruitment procedures frequently lead to incorrect hiring decisions, resulting in subpar performance and high turnover rates among employees. The induction should provide comprehensive information regarding staff expectations and performance metrics. Tyson (2006) also observed that additional factors contributing to job dissatisfaction include a lack of understanding of the range of tasks involved, inadequate supervision, commuting difficulties, payment issues, and other related problems stemming from exaggerated job descriptions or inadequate oversight by employers.

Methodology

This study used ports in south-western Nigeria. These include the Lagos Port Complex and the Tin Can Island Port Complex. The Lagos Port Complex, commonly known as the Premiere Port (Apapa Quays), is the oldest and largest port in Nigeria. It is located in Apapa, Lagos State, Nigeria's primary economic hub. Founded in 1913, the port initiated the construction of its initial four deep water berths in 1921. Modern cargo handling equipment and human support facilities equip the Apapa Port, enhancing its efficiency in terms of cost and customer satisfaction. It benefits from multimodal connectivity, including rail, water, and road. The Port has a distinct advantage over competitors in processing oversized cargoes due to its four-wheel gate, which measures around 8 metres. Also, Tin Can Island Port is located precisely seven kilometres west of the centre of Lagos, directly across Lagos Harbour. Tin Can Island Port began construction in 1976 and officially opened its doors in 1977. The Nigerian Ports Authority assumed operational control of the port in 1991. In 1977, the newly established Tin Can Island Port officially designated the Roro Terminal as a component. The merger of Tin Can Island and Roro Port came into existence in 2006, when the private terminal operators, Port and Terminal Multiservices Ltd. (PTML), assumed control of the terminals. As a result, PTML has made efforts to renovate the terminals. Tin Can Island Port is Nigeria's second-most heavily trafficked port, following Apapa Port. A survey research design was used, in which both inferential (One Way ANOVA) and descriptive statistics were used to analyse 100 questionnaires from the respondents.

Result and Discussions

The result in table 1 shows the relationship between training development and carrier development. It was discovered that there is a relationship between the f statistics (TD=167.515 and CD = 283.707). However, both training and career development are significant ($p = 0.000$). It can be deduced that training and career development enhance organisational performance.

TD = Training development
 CD = Career development

		ANOVA				
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
TD	Between Groups	46.529	2	23.264	167.515	.000
	Within Groups	13.471	97	.139		
	Total	60.000	99			
CD	Between Groups	39.284	2	19.642	283.707	.000
	Within Groups	6.716	97	.069		
	Total	46.000	99			

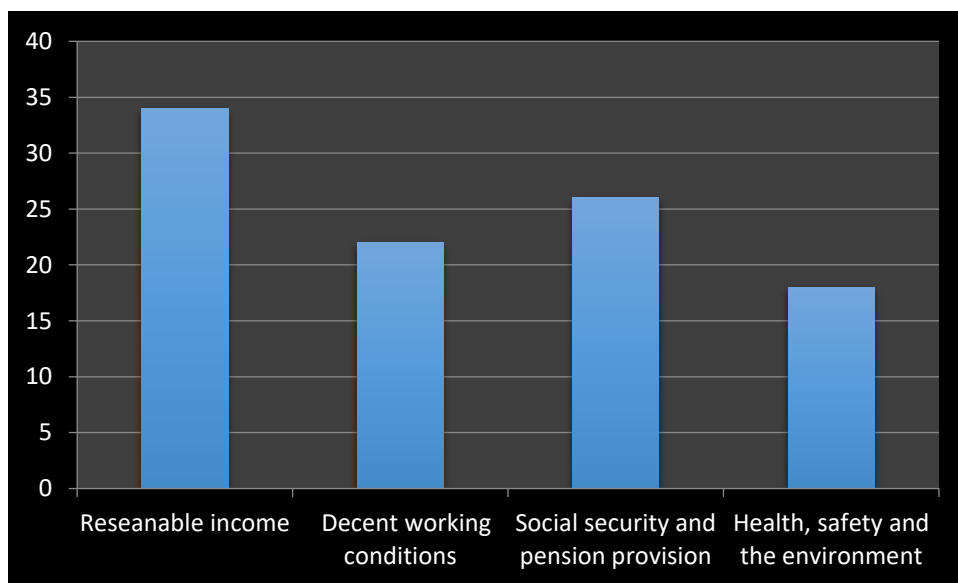


Figure 1: Employee's motivations

Figure 1 demonstrates that reasonable income, social security, and pensions serve as the primary motivators for employees, along with decent working conditions, health, safety, and environment. This influences labour productivity on port operations.

According to Werner and Desimone (2012), employee involvement improves organisation effectiveness, which requires essential changes in work expectations, reward systems, and reporting procedures. Everts (2001) asserted that career development enhances both employee and organisational performance. Hence, career and training development are major boosts for organisation development.

Conclusion and recommendations

It was concluded that organisational performance is anchored on training development, career development, and employee motivations. These factors increase worker competence and productivity, which in turn improves the organisation's performance in the maritime industry.

The maritime industry should prioritize staff development and adopt workplace democracy to motivate workers.

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