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# Human Resources Development: Evidences from Insurance Companies in Nigeria

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**Abstract:** *This article shows the importance of Human Resources Development as it relates to the growth of the insurance industry in Nigeria. Primary data were collected through the use of a structural questionnaire from workers in insurance companies in Nigeria. Our analysis reveals that Human Resources Development has not been made a priority amongst insurance companies in Nigeria, hence the poor growth in the sector. We suggested that training and re-training of staff should be made a pre-requisite for staff promotion, in order to get the best from staff. This will enhance the organization's growth and development, resulting in an improved contribution of the insurance sector to the nation's economy.*

**Keywords**: *Economic development, Human Resources, Insurance, Investment, Training*

## 1. Introduction:

Human resource is the manpower (employee or workers), required by an organization be it public or private to enable it achieve its predetermined objectives or the purpose for which it is setup. That is, the entire human resources (skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled) available within the country (Ajala, 1981). It has further been defined in human resources glossary as "The people that staff and operate an organization as contrasted with the financial and material resources of an organization. That is, the organization function that deals with the people" (Susan, 1987). Armstrong (2006) argued that competitive advantage of a company can be generated from Human Resources and company performance is influenced by asset of effective Human Resources Management practices.

Management duty in any organization involves employment development, which includes ways of developing the skills of her workforce. This is tagged Human Resource Development (HRD). HRD was coined from the broad heading of Human Resources Management, which entails workings on how to enhance continuous training and development of human resources skills available to an organization. Store (1995) defined Human Resources Management as a distinctive approach to employment management which seeks to obtain competitive advantage through the strategic deployment of a highly committed skilled workforce, using an array of cultural, structural and personal techniques. HRD is therefore concerned with the employment development and reward of people in an organization and the conduct of relationship between the management and the workforce.

Training and development remains a major component of Human Resources Development. Human Resources Development (HRD), also referred to as Manpower Development is a continuous process of impacting new information, skill, attitude and ideas through education and training (Howal, 2006). It is a means by which employee are kept current on their official duties. It is the process of preparing the total qualitative and quantitative human asset in an organization so that they can move with the organization as they develop, change and grow (Howal, 2006). In economic terms, Human Resources Development could be described as the accumulation of human capital and its effective investment in the development of a nation's economy.

Insurance operation in Nigeria can be traced back to 1921, when the first insurance company, the Royal Exchange Assurance (A British Company) began operations. Twenty eight years thereafter (1941) three other companies were registered and by independence in 1960, the reports on “Insurance companies operations in Nigeria” published by the Federal office of statistics put the number at 59 (Ogunshola,1980). Thereafter, the number of insurance companies operating in Nigeria increased considerably to over 100 by 2004 (Insurance digest, 2004). Recapitalization of the industry pegged the total number of insurance operating today at 49. With this growth one would expect the insurance sector of Nigeria to have developed in terms of operations, productivity and contribution to the nation’s economy. Several factors have been responsible for these problems (Afolabi, 2013). Patience (2004), in her work opined that a former managing director of Continental Reinsurance plc, Lagos, Nigeria, identified poor Human Resources Management as one of these factors. The managing director asserted that the insurance sector’s poor performance and its insignificant contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Nigeria is as a result of the industry’s poor development of its human resources. He noted that the sector could perform to expectation if institutions would devote themselves to building up its human resources (Patience, 2004). The attitude of insurance employers to training and retraining has thus led to the low level of performance in the insurance sector.

## 2. Statement Of Problem:

In spite of the non definite nature of the result of most study duties on Human Resources Development (HRD), with the attendant atavisms of the various dimensions for improvement in the research area, efforts have been intensified. The Nigerian insurance industry unlike that of prior investigations in human resources development, form a good basis for detailed criticism and/ or analysis. The problem has been that research oriented practitioners not willing to carry on exclusive research work in aid of insurance education. In effect, there are good numbers of unanswered questions which are opened for proper investigation and these constitute the basis of this study to a reasonable degree. There is need to highlight a few of these problems in order to define the focus of this article.

According to a study on HRD in the field of insurance (1991), insurance industry in Nigeria are faced with the problems of Human Resources Development. This means that most insurance companies have not put in place specifics human resources development policies and guidelines. There is hardly any or a conscious definition by these companies for the training and re-training needs for their staff. This has led to obvious lapses in the existing human resources development programs (Irukwu,1981). An example is the course organized by NICON (National Insurance Commission of Nigeria) training school which was primarily targeted toward staff of the corporations, but eventually opened for attendance by the other subscribers. The question is to what extent does the course content reflects the training needs of the participants whose office practices are different in several ways. That is personnel, administrative, finance, marketing and so on.

Similarly, the Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria (CIIN) which is statutorily charged with the responsibility of determining the standard of practise as regards adequate data on human resource development (HRD) in Nigeria, does not operate a functional training and research unit which could carry out requisite research in this area (Oredugba,1993). The result is that most conferences, seminars and courses are designed in very broad terms to cater for no specific segment of participants, since they are drawn from a broad spectrum representing as it were an all area participant. Apart from reflection of the absence of concern for proper evaluation of the outcome of each program they are designed with fresh imperatives in mind and therefore there is a total neglect of the benefit of retrospection. One should normally expect courses designed as a follow up of previous courses so as to cover area not properly covered by the previous course or to take of fallouts of the earlier courses due to unexpected finding requiring explanations. It would therefore be greater omission not to highlight the need to find and implement HRD (Human Resource Development) programs by the insurance industry.

Human Resources Development plays a key role in increasing competitiveness, improving quality of life of the population and in generating economic growth and development in Nigeria. Currently Nigeria wishes to be among the twenty most developed countries in the world by year 2020 (Owolabi, 2010). To achieve this, one of the pre-requisite is to ensure that capable manpower (HRD) is available in various area of insurance industry in the country. This article thus aims at creating awareness for the management of insurance companies in Nigeria, on the importance of Human Resources Development. It shows that the human resource available to them within the organization are great assets which will bring about greater output in every of their endeavours, if well developed, strengthened and stabilized thereby accelerating economic activities which trigger off higher productivity. We also intend to show, through this article that Human Resource Development is a major growth determinant and a channel to ease poverty and improve quality of human living through creativity and productivity. When Human Resources are developed within an insurance company, the company tends to cope better when faced with economic crisis because the workforce possess the skills and techniques to stand in term of hard times.

With an effective Human Resources Development in insurance companies in Nigeria the industry will be stable. Insurance companies will be able to maintain and utilize funds properly thereby enabling things to be done accurately. This will encourage diversification of funds to various sectors of the economy for investment to yield more return to enhance development. If this is done insurance company in Nigeria will be able to pay all genuine claims without delay, the appropriate amount and as at when due. This will affect positively the mindset of the Nigerian populace on the need for insurance, thus encouraging them to take up insurance policies knowing their losses will be adequately catered for. Insurance sector in the country will thereby expand and affect other sectors of the economy because people will buy more insurance products and services, and they will more money in the general pool of fund and which will be available for investments, training and development of more Human Resources for effective productivity. Therefore, to enhance economic development in Nigeria, the insurance industry must develop their workforce and provide training on the job. This will aid proper understanding of the concept of each of the company's product and services, thus paving way for effective marketing.

## 3. Review Of Related Literatures:

Irukwu (1991) defines insurance as 'a purchase of security'. In practical terms, there are two schools of thought on how best to define insurance; the transfer school and the pooling school. The transfer school sees insurance as "a device for the reduction of uncertainty of one party, called the insured through the transfer of particular risk to another party called the insurer, who offers an indemnity, at least in part, of the economic losses suffered by the insured". The pooling school sees insurance as arising in "the elimination of uncertainty risk of loss for the individual through the combination of a large number of similar risk exposed to by individuals". From these schools of thought, it can be deduced that insurance means protection or security against the effect of certain future losses or misfortune. Insurance can also be described as an agreement by which one party assumes a risk faced by another party in return for a premium payment, and undertakes to pay money or do something of value on the occurrence of the risk. Insurance is thus a contingent financial security instrument often referred to as policy or certificate.

According to Falegan (1991) the development of insurance in Nigeria is in thee phases which are; the traditional phase, which was between 1960 and 1990; the transitional phase which coincided with the first national development plan period (1962-1969); and the take off phase (1990 to the present times), which witnessed the toughening of the framework of governments attitude towards the control of the industry. Human Resources Development in the Nigerian insurance industry follows the patterns set by these three phases. Falegan stated the first phase was “characterized by a market which was dominated by European companies which virtually had the monopoly of insurance business over the continent of Africa”. By implication, the business of insurance during this period was handled by expatriate training in the requisite technicality. Due to this length and unreliable communications, some British insurance companies started to appoint merchants of reasonable status to act, note and give helping hands in claims settlement. The death of indigenous professionals during the period under review set the stage for bad image from which the insurance industry in Nigeria is yet to fully recover.

Falegan (1991) identified distinguishable phases in the development of the insurance industry in Nigeria and her attainment of political independence. The springing up of indigenous insurance companies during this period must have also necessitated a change in the attitude of local practitioners to insurance education. Falegan (1991) described manpower under development as the most serious problem facing Human Resources Development in Nigeria insurance industry. He was able to provide adequate insight to the types of option the industry needs for education and consequently the human resources development. On the job training accrues to workers through routine job schedule, which makes it possible for a new employee in specific skills to learn about the job and helps to prepare the employee for a proper understanding of the industry, regulation and procedures within the organization. Company training scheme is the conscious and deliberate policies by some companies to set up training centres with programs designed by employees.

Irukwu (1991) explains that in the early 1950s most people who went into insurance in Nigeria entered with either the primary school leaving certificate or at best what was proudly termed a government class certificate. With the earliest group of CII diplomats emerging in late 1950’s the awareness for professional certification soon caught up with Nigerian. Most of who according to Irukwu then saw the CII diploma as the standard professional qualification and the pre-requisite for a successful career in insurance. Professional certification is becoming increasingly patient in the scheme of things, especially with the provision in

Decree 2 of 1997 (the CIIN) requiring all heads of technical department in insurance companies to be professionally qualified.

Ajala (1981) was right in saying that "reliance on the CII London for providing the Nigerian insurance industry with the much needed qualified manpower will result in an uncontrollably acute shortage of the necessary personal in the industry". It be rightly said in connection with Ajala saying, the Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria with it new input (the 1997 decree) is faced with the challenges of feeding the market with qualified men and women whose expertise in the respective areas of insurance business will brighten the horizon and consequently, erase the dark shadow which the image problem had long cast on the face of insurance as a profession.

In general terms, Human Resources Development can be thought of as a level of contribution to the growth of the industry. Nadler (1980) defined Human Resources Development (HRD) as an "organized learning experiences provided by employers, within a specified period of time, to bring about the possibility of performance improvement and/or personal growth" (Katz and Kahn, 1978). Lang (1992), suggested that training should be designed to achieve increased organizational workforce commitment. Osaka (1992) paints a gloomy picture of the image problem that since insurance is a business that succeeds on confidence and integrity, its perception by the public is crucial to it development. This subject of public image of the insurance is one of the most discussed within the industry, while the main issues of Human Resources Development are treated with levity or sometimes with total negligence. As a result of this not much success has been achieved in promoting the image of the insurance industry to the public. Osaka (1992) in his papers preferred a number of measures, which can be narrowed down to the need for re-orientation of the practitioners through properly designed training and re-training programs. According to him, the training presently given to the insurance practitioner fall short of a clear cut perception of what should be present in a well trained workforce

Whereas training has an early and often time visible payoffs, development on the other hand is future oriented. Hence, Human Resources Development (HRD) could be viewed as an investment for the future, with attendant risks of uncertain returns (Onaolapo, 2005). The Nigerian insurance industry is a vital sector of the economy but has been faced with lots of challenges. Eugene (2003) put some of these challenges as insurance awareness and image, unethical practices, capitalization and capacity, strategic co-operation, human capital and IT development, and so on.

In Human Resources Development all training needs analysis regardless of how widely the term applies to insurance education. To develop human resources there is need to assess the quality and quantity of trainers, assessing demand for insurance education and the development of human resources and therefore make plans for future strategies to deliver insurance education on a cost effective program. There is now a growing recognition of the need for human resources development in the field of insurance. The United Nations must have felt this growing need in 1960, when it organized its first ever seminar on the subject in Libson, Portugal. Sixty-four participants representing forty five countries attended the seminar. According to the speaker on the seminar title “United National Conference on Trade development”, published in New York in 1991, the aim of the seminar was to help developing countries improve the terms and conditions of insurance services in their respective markets through the recognitions of the importance of education and training. The overall objective of the seminar was “to pool ideas, problems encountered by various countries on the subject of human resources development and training in the insurance sector”. The seminar was designed for officials and managers from the public and private sectors who were responsible for the organization and management of training services in development in the insurance industry.

## 4. Methodology:

Ten insurance companies were selected randomly out of a total of forty seven insurance companies in Nigeria. The insurance companies are Prestige Insurance Company, Leadway Assurance Plc. Law Union and Rock Insurance Plc., Guarantee Trust Assurance Plc., Goldlink Insurance Plc., Crystal-life Assurance Plc., Royal Exchange Plc., Niger Insurance Plc., Starco Insurance Plc., and LASACO Insurance Plc.

The instrument employed in the investigation is a structural questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of questions designed to recognise the degree of intensity in the respondents feeling on how certain situation are perceived. A total of two hundred (200) questionnaires, were distributed amongst the ten insurance companies (20 each) in order to achieve the relevant balance of judgement. Only one hundred and forty (140) questionnaires were properly and correctly filled, which were then used for the analysis.

The following hypothesis shall be tested to answer the research questions for this study.

$H_{01}$: Employers in Nigerian insurance companies do not regard staff training and development as employee's benefit.

$H_{02}$: There is no significant relationship between the job performance of an employee in an insurance company and the level of training on the job.

The Chi-square statistical model will be employed for the analysis of the responses to the questionnaires. The model assumes at least a nominal level of measurement on dependent variable. It is mathematically stated as:

$$X^2 = \frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})}{E_{ij}}$$

Where $X^2$ = represents the calculated chi-square value

Oij = represents Observed frequencies

Eij = represents Expected frequencies

## 5. Analysis And Discussions:

This section of the study provides relevant data and the results of the data analysis for accepting or rejecting the hypothesis.

### *5.1. Hypothesis I:*

$H_{01}$: Employers in Nigerian insurance companies do not regard staff training and development as employee's benefit.

The tables below (Appendix 1A & 1B) show the SPSS Chi-square computations for hypothesis I.

| Items | | Responses | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | |
| 1 | Count | 21 | 28 | 23 | 45 | 23 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 25.1 | 41.3 | 25.4 | 30.0 | 18.2 | 140.0 |
| 3 | Count | 19 | 76 | 20 | 15 | 10 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 25.1 | 41.3 | 25.4 | 30.0 | 18.2 | 140.0 |
| 4 | Count | 25 | 35 | 40 | 22 | 18 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 25.1 | 41.3 | 25.4 | 30.0 | 18.2 | 140.0 |
| 5 | Count | 30 | 40 | 32 | 22 | 16 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 25.1 | 41.3 | 25.4 | 30.0 | 18.2 | 140.0 |
| 6 | Count | 24 | 51 | 25 | 25 | 15 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 25.1 | 41.3 | 25.4 | 30.0 | 18.2 | 140.0 |
| 9 | Count | 20 | 20 | 35 | 35 | 30 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 25.1 | 41.3 | 25.4 | 30.0 | 18.2 | 140.0 |
| 11 | Count | 33 | 36 | 31 | 20 | 20 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 25.1 | 41.3 | 25.4 | 30.0 | 18.2 | 140.0 |
| 12 | Count | 49 | 30 | 29 | 25 | 7 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 25.1 | 41.3 | 25.4 | 30.0 | 18.2 | 140.0 |
| 13 | Count | 15 | 53 | 19 | 35 | 18 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 25.1 | 41.3 | 25.4 | 30.0 | 18.2 | 140.0 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 14 | Count | 30 | 49 | 20 | 19 | 22 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 25.1 | 41.3 | 25.4 | 30.0 | 18.2 | 140.0 |
| 16 | Count | 27 | 38 | 19 | 37 | 19 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 25.1 | 41.3 | 25.4 | 30.0 | 18.2 | 140.0 |
| 17 | Count | 8 | 40 | 12 | 60 | 20 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 25.1 | 41.3 | 25.4 | 30.0 | 18.2 | 140.0 |
| Total | Count | 301 | 496 | 305 | 360 | 218 | 1680 |
| | Expected Count | 301.0 | 496.0 | 305.0 | 360.0 | 218.0 | 1680.0 |

Appendix 1A: Cross tabulation of responses to relevant items to hypothesis I on the questionnaire.

*Table 1*

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 214.211[a] | 44 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 208.384 | 44 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | 2.511 | 1 | .113 |
| N of Valid Cases | 1680 | | |

Appendix 1B: Chi-square test.

*Table 2*

The chi-square value is 214.21. Since this value is greater than the tabular value at 5% level of significance and 44 degree of freedom, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that employers in Nigerian insurance companies regard staff training and development as employee’s benefit.

### 5.2. Hypothesis II:

*Table 3*

| Items | | Responses | | | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree | |
| 2 | Count | 20 | 29 | 20 | 37 | 34 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 26.4 | 48.9 | 20.5 | 23.8 | 20.5 | 140.0 |
| 3 | Count | 19 | 76 | 20 | 15 | 10 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 26.4 | 48.9 | 20.5 | 23.8 | 20.5 | 140.0 |
| 5 | Count | 30 | 40 | 32 | 22 | 16 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 26.4 | 48.9 | 20.5 | 23.8 | 20.5 | 140.0 |
| 7 | Count | 32 | 48 | 17 | 10 | 33 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 26.4 | 48.9 | 20.5 | 23.8 | 20.5 | 140.0 |
| 8 | Count | 30 | 65 | 20 | 15 | 10 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 26.4 | 48.9 | 20.5 | 23.8 | 20.5 | 140.0 |
| 10 | Count | 25 | 48 | 25 | 21 | 21 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 26.4 | 48.9 | 20.5 | 23.8 | 20.5 | 140.0 |
| 15 | Count | 25 | 55 | 20 | 30 | 10 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 26.4 | 48.9 | 20.5 | 23.8 | 20.5 | 140.0 |
| 18 | Count | 30 | 30 | 10 | 40 | 30 | 140 |
| | Expected Count | 26.4 | 48.9 | 20.5 | 23.8 | 20.5 | 140.0 |
| Total | Count | 211 | 391 | 164 | 190 | 164 | 1120 |
| | Expected Count | 211.0 | 391.0 | 164.0 | 190.0 | 164.0 | 1120.0 |

$H_{02}$: There is no significant relationship between the job performance of an employee in an insurance company and the level of training on the job.

The tables below (Appendix 2A & 2B) show the SPSS Chi-square computations for hypothesis II.

Appendix 2A: Cross tabulation of responses to relevant items to hypothesis II on the questionnaire

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 131.119[a] | 28 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 132.318 | 28 | .000 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | .380 | 1 | .537 |
| N of Valid Cases | 1120 | | |

Appendix 2B: Chi-square test.

*Table 4*

The chi-square value is 131.12. Since this value is greater than the tabular value at 5% level of significance and 28 degree of freedom, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between the job performance an employee in an insurance company and the level of training achieved on the job.

## 6. Conclusion And Recommendations:

This study has no doubt raised some substantive issues, which are of great importance regarding Human Resources Development in the Nigerian insurance industry. The article has revealed the problems facing HRD and effectively the growth of insurance companies in Nigeria. This can be summed up as lack of effective training of employees, poor funding of HRD programmes, inadequate HRD programmes as well as the near absence of clear HRD policies and objectives. It is therefore imperative for employers to place higher premiums on

Human Resource Development and ensure it is manned by experts. All insurance companies should have a well defined policy on HRD. The industry as a whole must develop adequate punitive measures against trainers who run fraudulent courses. One of such is by ensuring that all training must be registered with the Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria, who will supervise the training activities.

There are have been stories of insurance companies failing to settle claims as at when due or deliberate delays of such settlements. This has been responsible for the negative images created as regards the insurance industry. We are of the opinion that the industry should evolve a deliberate strategy in an effort to repair this dented image, by providing efficient client relationship and services as well as improving with the emergence of new insurance companies. This will provide for healthy competitions within the industry in terms of the quality of services provided. Agent and intermediaries who sell insurance products must have sufficient training in technical insurance and public relations since it is through them that people have their impressions of insurance. The performance of well trained and well informed practitioners can help gain and retain the confidence of the insuring public. The issues of ethic and code of conduct are also relevant in this regard. When insurance companies maintain the highest standard of professional conduct, the reputation of the industry is bound to improve.

The essence of the use of computers and other technological devices in insurance operations is not necessarily to attract new clients neither is it for the purpose of retraining existing ones. It is to improve the quality of services rendered by insurance companies. The management information system of companies would be greatly enhanced as the use of various current technologies would provide the much needed support in all areas of insurance operations; marketing, finance, administration and product development. The benefits are equally tremendous, as they help to provide for an efficient, competent and proficient workforce.

There is now the need more than ever before for the insurance industry in Nigeria to revalidate its workforce and to plug all leakages, which appear to be hampering the industry's good intentions. No items certainly are more valuable than an enlightened workforce, which is amendable to the dynamics of today's economy.

On the basis of this research, we therefore put forward the following recommendations which we consider suitable to solve the problems associated with Human Resources Development in Nigerian Insurance industry:

1. Insurance companies in Nigeria should embark on training and re-training of their staff as a way of getting them acquitted to the challenges while performing their duties.

2. Technological training should be encouraged in the insurance industry. This will help to enhance efficiency in the performance of their job functions.

3. Policy makers in the industry should mandate every staff to be flexible enough to fit into the current trend of advancement in the industry. This will assist in creating awareness on the importance and relevance of insurance to the public.

4. Staff promotions should be based on development programmes as a way of making staff more articulate in their performance, with the knowledge that training and development enhances promotion.

5. The Insurance Industry should increase the number of training and development institutes in the country. This will make training and development easily accessible to workers in the industry

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