

DIALECTICAL RELATIONSHIP` BETWEEN HUMAN RESOURCES ASSESSMENT (HRA) AND JOB SPECIFICATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IMPLICATION FOR EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

This paper examines the dialectical relationship between Human Resource Assessment (HRA) and Job Specification (JS) of secondary school teachers in Nigeria. With the evolving dynamics in the educational sector, aligning teachers' capabilities with job roles is imperative for optimal school performance. As schools struggle with issues such as teacher shortage, declining student performance, and professional dissatisfaction, it becomes imperative to reassess how the assessment of human resources aligns with the expectations set by job specifications. The goal of this discussion is to bridge the knowledge and practice gap by analyzing the conceptual, theoretical, and practical intersections between HRA and JS in Nigerian secondary schools. Ultimately, the paper seeks to propose a more holistic framework for aligning human resource functions with educational outcomes, thereby enhancing teacher performance and school effectiveness. This paper highlighted the relevance of Human Capital Theory of the training and development of teachers in line with specific Job specifications. Secondly, the Concepts of Human Resources Assessment, Job specification and Secondary School teacher were explained, in addition to highlighting the purpose and tools of Human Resource Assessment. Finally, the practical relationship between Human Resource Assessment and the challenges of aligning Job specification and Human Resource Assessment were discussed among others, it was suggested government and school authorities should invest, update and adopt technology in aligning Job specification and Human Resources Assessment while also encouraging meaningful feedbacks.

Keywords: Dialectical Relations, Education Management, Human Resource Assessment, Job Specification, Secondary School Teacher, Nigeria,

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Introduction

The effective functioning of educational institutions, particularly secondary schools, relies heavily on the quality, suitability, and performance of teachers. In Nigeria, as in many developing countries, secondary education serves as a crucial bridge between foundational basic education and tertiary education, and it plays a vital role in national development outcomes. At the heart of delivering quality education lies the teacher, the human resource whose roles, competencies, and performance determine the extent to which educational goals are achieved. Against this backdrop, human resource assessment (HRA) and job specification (JS) become critical components in educational administration, especially within the public-school system. Human Resource Assessment (HRA) refers to the systematic process of evaluating individuals

to determine their competencies, performance, potential, and suitability for specific roles within an organization (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). As regards to education, it involves the appraisal of teachers' qualifications, pedagogical practices, classroom effectiveness, professional development needs, and alignment with curricular goals. Effective HRA contributes to identifying training needs, rewarding performance, and redeploying or promoting staff based on merit (Mathis et al., 2020). On the other hand, Job Specification (JS) is a precise outline of the attributes, qualifications, skills, experience, and behavioral traits required for a particular position (Dessler, 2019). In the Nigerian secondary school system, job specification for teachers includes a relevant academic qualification (e.g., B.Ed., PGDE), subject-matter expertise, TRCN certification, competence in lesson delivery, ICT skills, classroom management, and professional ethics. Job specifications are intended to ensure that only qualified and competent individuals are recruited and retained within the system.

However, despite clear job specifications and the formal establishment of teacher appraisal mechanisms, the Nigerian educational system still suffers from a disconnect between what teachers are expected to deliver and what is obtained in practice. A significant number of teachers are deployed to teach subjects outside their area of specialization due to staff shortages or political interference in recruitment (Obi & Adeyemi, 2021). Furthermore, performance appraisals are often irregular, subjective, and underutilized in decision-making, leading to inefficient human resource utilization (Okendu, 2022). This gap creates a fertile ground for dialectical inquiry into the relationship between HRA and JS. A dialectical pontification on this subject implies a critical examination of the contradictions, tensions, and synergies between assessment and specification within Nigeria's secondary school teacher management system. The term "dialectical" is the philosophical approach of reasoning through contradictions to reach a more refined understanding. This is particularly relevant given the often-contrasting realities between official policy and practice in human resource management in Nigerian public schools. As schools struggle with issues such as teacher shortage, declining student performance, and professional dissatisfaction, it becomes imperative to reassess how the assessment of human resources aligns with the expectations set by job specifications. Are teachers being deployed in line with their competencies? Are appraisal systems effective in determining who stays, who gets promoted, and who needs development? Are job specifications periodically reviewed, such as the integration of ICT and digital literacy? These questions form the basis of this paper. The goal is to bridge the knowledge and practice gap by analyzing the conceptual, theoretical, and practical intersections between HRA and JS in Nigerian secondary schools. Ultimately, the paper seeks to propose a more holistic framework for aligning human resource functions with educational outcomes, thereby enhancing teacher performance and school effectiveness.

Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework provides a lens through which the relationships among variables in a study are understood and interpreted. For this paper, the Human Capital Theory (HCT) is adopted as the guiding framework to explain the nexus between Human Resource Assessment (HRA) and Job Specification (JS) in the management of secondary school teachers in Nigeria. Human Capital Theory was popularized by economists such as Gary Becker and Theodore Schultz in the 1960s. It posits that individuals and societies derive economic value from investments in people, especially

in education, training, health, and other capacities that improve productivity (Becker, 1993). According to the theory, just as physical capital (e.g., machines, tools) contributes to production, human capital embodied in people's knowledge, skills, and competencies also contributes significantly to organizational and societal development. In this framework, education is viewed not merely as a consumption activity but as an investment that enhances the productivity of individuals. Consequently, employees who are well-educated, trained, and properly placed within job roles that match their competencies are more likely to perform optimally and contribute meaningfully to organizational goals.

The relevance of Human Capital Theory to this discussion is multi-dimensional and can be understood as both Human Resource Assessment and Job Specification: HCT underscores the need to continuously assess teachers' capacities as a means of safeguarding and maximizing the state's investment in education. Through regular and strategic HRA, schools can identify gaps in knowledge, pedagogical skill, and professional conduct, which in turn informs targeted capacity development initiatives (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Without proper assessment, the human capital value of teachers remains underutilized or wasted. Human Capital Theory provides a strong rationale for designing Job Specifications that show the actual competencies needed to achieve educational outcomes. The theory suggests that for educational institutions to benefit fully from the capabilities of teachers, they must ensure proper alignment between what teachers are trained for and the job roles they are assigned. Mismatches such as deploying an English graduate to teach Civic Education represent a loss of human capital efficiency. From the HCT perspective, investing in the continuous development of teachers through workshops, in-service training, and higher education enhances their value to the school system. Therefore, HRA should not be seen solely as a tool for evaluation but also as a gateway to teacher empowerment and job enrichment, contributing to national development (Akinbote, 2020). The theory supports the need for evidence-based recruitment and deployment policies in Nigeria's secondary schools. It argues that without accurate HRA and clear JS, the educational system will continue to suffer from inefficient utilization of its most vital resource teachers. HCT also aligns with the global push for SDG 4 (Quality Education) by emphasizing that quality teaching is a function of investing in teacher capacity and aligning them properly with their job roles. Therefore, HCT supports the dialectical interrogation of current practices in teacher assessment and job matching within Nigeria's secondary schools.

Conceptual Clarification

Human Resource Assessment

Human Resource Assessment refers to the organized and methodical process of evaluating individuals within an organization to determine their performance, strengths, competencies, and areas needing improvement. In educational institutions, particularly in secondary schools, HRA focuses on evaluating teacher effectiveness through formal appraisals, self-assessment, peer reviews, classroom observations, student feedback, and supervisor evaluations (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). In Nigeria, the assessment of teachers is governed by both internal and external frameworks, such as the Annual Performance Evaluation Report (APER), inspection reports by education quality assurance departments, and TRCN's professional standard checks. Despite its intended role in ensuring accountability and professional development, HRA is often fraught

with challenges such as subjectivity, political interference, inadequate follow-up, and insufficient integration into human resource planning (Obi & Adeyemi, 2021). The core idea behind HRA is to provide actionable feedback to improve performance, inform training needs, and guide decisions on promotion, redeployment, or retention (Mathis et al., 2020). It also aligns with strategic human resource management by linking performance outcomes to institutional goals.

Job Specification (JS)

Job Specification is a critical component of job design that details the minimum qualifications, experience, skills, competencies, and personality attributes required to perform a specific job effectively (Dessler, 2019). In education, it defines what is expected of a teacher in terms of academic qualifications, subject mastery, professional certification, teaching methodology, communication skills, classroom management, and ethical conduct. For secondary school teachers in Nigeria, the job specification is guided by the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014) and enforced through the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), which mandates that teachers must possess a Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE), a Bachelor's degree in Education or a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE), and be duly registered with the TRCN. Additional competencies such as proficiency in ICT, student counseling, extracurricular engagement, and ongoing professional development have become increasingly relevant in the 21st-century classroom (Akinbote, 2020). JS provides clarity to both the employer and the employee. It forms the basis for recruitment, placement, and promotion. A misalignment between job specification and actual human resource deployment, such as assigning a history graduate to teach physics, can undermine student outcomes and teacher morale (Okendu, 2022).

Secondary School Teacher

A Secondary School Teacher in Nigeria is a trained and certified individual who delivers educational instruction to students in either junior or senior secondary school, typically ranging from ages 11 to 18. These teachers are responsible not only for academic instruction but also for contributing to the emotional, social, and moral development of learners (Nwagwu, 2021). Their functions encompass lesson planning, content delivery, student assessment, record-keeping, classroom management, and participation in co-curricular activities. Teachers in Nigerian public secondary schools are recruited by federal or state ministries of education, and their employment is guided by policies and standards set by TRCN, UBEC, and other supervisory agencies. Their job scope requires a unique blend of subject-matter expertise, instructional skill, behavioral competence, and emotional intelligence (Iroegbu & Ifeoma, 2020). Secondary school teachers are central to educational reform and national development. Hence, assessing their capacity through HRA and aligning their roles through clear JS are vital for educational effectiveness.

Purpose of Human Resource Assessment Practices in Nigerian Secondary Schools

Human Resource Assessment (HRA) in secondary education refers to the structured process of evaluating the competencies, performance, professional behavior, and developmental needs of teachers and other school staff. In the Nigeria, the aim of HRA is to ensure the effective deployment of qualified personnel to achieve educational goals

and to sustain teacher professionalism in line with national education standards (Federal Republic of Nigeria [FRNJ, 2014). However, despite its recognized importance, the practice of HRA in Nigerian secondary schools has been marred by inconsistencies, administrative lapses, political interference, and lack of standardization (Okendu, 2022). The fundamental purposes of conducting HRA in Nigerian secondary schools include: Performance Evaluation: To assess the extent to which a teacher is achieving instructional and professional objectives (Aghenta, 2020). Identification of Training Needs: To determine specific areas where individual teachers require additional training or retooling (Ogunyinka et al., 2015). Promotion and Career Progression: To guide decisions on teacher promotions and recognition of exceptional performance (Obi & Adeyemi, 2021). Re-deployment and Role Re-alignment: To ensure that teachers are assigned roles and responsibilities that match their qualifications and capabilities (Adegbesan, 2018). Quality Assurance: To maintain standards of teaching and learning by identifying areas of improvement within the teaching workforce (TRCN, 2022).

Tools and Methods of Human Resource Assessment in Nigerian Secondary Schools

HRA practices in Nigerian secondary schools are guided by both federal and state education authorities, with input from regulatory bodies such as the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) and State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs). The most common tools and methods used include:

- i. **Annual Performance Evaluation Report (APER):** This is a standardized document used in most government schools to assess the performance of teachers annually. It focuses on criteria such as punctuality, instructional delivery, discipline, and participation in school activities (Adeyemi & Igbineweka, 2021). However, many scholars argue that APER is often filled subjectively, leading to questionable reliability.
- ii. **Classroom Observation:** Supervisors or school heads observe teachers during lesson delivery to evaluate teaching methods, classroom control, content mastery, and student engagement (Adeleke, 2020). While potentially effective, its impact is limited when observations are infrequent or superficial.
- iii. **Student Performance and Feedback:** Some schools use student examination outcomes and informal feedback to assess teacher effectiveness. This method, while reflective of academic outcomes, may be biased by external factors such as student readiness or parental support (Omorie, 2019).
- iv. **Peer Review and Departmental Appraisals:** In some schools, teachers assess one another, particularly in departments, based on collaboration, content expertise, and professional attitude. Although less formal, peer review can promote collegiality and professional growth when properly managed (Iroegbu & Ifeoma, 2020).
- v. **Principal and Supervisor Reports:** School principals are expected to document teacher behavior, professional ethics, and contributions to school development. These reports contribute to decisions on retention, promotion, or further development (Adegbesan, 2018).
- vi. **TRCN Professional Standard Compliance Checks:** The TRCN periodically conducts checks to ensure that teachers meet minimum professional standards. This includes evidence of licensure, engagement in continuous professional development (CPD), and adherence to ethical codes (TRCN, 2022).

Nexus between HRA and JS: A Dialectical Analysis

There exists a critical interplay between HRA and JS. While job specifications define what a teacher should ideally possess, human resource assessment determines whether the teacher actually meets those specifications.

Dialectical Tensions:

- i. *Ideal vs. Reality:* JS outlines an ideal teacher profile, while HRA reveals existing strengths and deficits. For example, job specification typically identifies the expectations, qualifications for teaching in an educational level of education, such as minimum qualification of securing teaching appointment, human resource assessment on the other hand helps identify deficiency adequacy of teachers at a particular level of education.
- ii. *Theory vs. Practice:* While job specification is often based on educational policy, HRA exposes practical classroom realities. For example, job specification is usually a policy issues as determined by appropriate authority. It sets the standards to be met. It could be stipulated that principals must have a masters degree in education or ten years teaching experience, while human resource could reveal some of them with lesser qualifications.
- iii. *Static vs. Dynamic:* Job specification tends to be static, whereas HRA allows for dynamic responses to emerging challenges. For example, the static nature of job specification reflects the formal structure of the requirements of teachers, such as age, sex experience Human Resource assessment could spring up new issues or challenges that require adjustments. A failure to integrate the two leads to role misfit, dissatisfaction, and poor educational outcomes. For instance, assigning a teacher trained in Physics to teach Mathematics due to staff shortage, without adequate assessment or retraining, is common and problematic.

Challenges of Aligning Job Specification and Human Resource Assessment

Aligning job specification with human resource assessment is fraught with alot of challenges.

- i. **Lack of Standardization:** One of the obvious challenges is the problem if lack of standardisation reflected in varying ideas across various states in the country. This deficiency does not engender uniformity, universality and harmony in quality school personnel. For instance a situation where different states in the country have different jobs specification term plates and assessment criteria for recruitment and promotion of their teachers there would be a dysfunctional educational system that affects education quality.
- ii. **Political Interference:** Political interference in teaching appointments in some states has not only created skill gap, but also mismatch in quality and quantity. The role of politics in education in Nigeria has been observed over the years. While politics plays a very important role in education provision for Nigeria citizens, its involvement in recruitment, placement and allocation to education has negatively affected education practice. Often the influence of politicians in recruitment and promotion exercises in Nigeria has encouraged the influx of

-
- under qualified personnel in various positions, thereby reducing the quality of service delivery.
- iii. **Lack of Basic Tools and Expertise:** Furthermore, some school lack some basic tools and expertise for meaningful assessment, thereby hindering objective results undermining the purpose of assignments. For instance a situation of lack or inadequate basic stationery items, as well as information and communication Technology (ICT) devices could truly hinder assessment process. Sometimes, the right technical knowhow required of school heads are inadequate, thereby encouraging purely subjective and substandard assessment. In some cases Job specifications are not adequately stated, which eventually encourages the influx of half-baked personnel in some government educational institutions. Usually conflict of interest, and disorderliness are the by-product of such confusion of roles and function.
 - iv. **Resistance to Change:** Resistance to change equally poses a challenge to proper alignment of Job specification and human resource assessment. As a negative phenomenon some staff not only avoid assessment, they provide wrong information that are not useful for meaningful assessment. In some cases, some staff prefer to uphold the old ways of doing things rather than embracing modern strategies and methods. For instance the introduction of Computer-Based Test for assessment seem to be a big problem which must be resisted by those who are not proficient in computer appreciation packages. Some teachers have abandoned assessment tests due to lack of adequate in knowledge of ICT.
 - v. **Nepotism:** Conclusively, nepotic and favouristic tendencies in assessment blur the true position of staff status. Such anomaly hinders or sometimes obviate the true essence of assessment, a situation to that affects the overall outlook and objectives of Educational system.

Implications for Educational Management

The need to bridge the gap between job specification and human resource assessment cannot be over stated. It is important to properly align them to determine the present and future needs and quality and quantity of school personnel to run schools for effective and efficient goal realisation. This development would go a long way at cost reduction, improve improvement of instructions, efficient school system and national development.

Furthermore, properly aligning Job specification and Human Resource Assessment helps improve teacher recruitment and placement in that the right caliber of teachers can be acquired from among the army of teachers. Educational Managers can align recruitment processes with evidence based Job specifications derived from systemic assessment outcomes.

Also performance appraisal system become more effective, objective and meaningful when grounded in clearly articulated job specifications. It is also very likely that targeted Professional Development Assessment data help school managers identify skill gaps and design in-service training address job demands. A proper connection between Job specification and Human Resource Assessment equally supports adaptive human resource planning and educational policy formulation, in that policy would not merely be based on speculation or assumption, but evidence based. Finally the

relationship engender consistency between teachers expectation and performance thereby improving general educational outcomes.

Suggestions

In the light of the above there is the need to do the following:

Governments and school authorities should update job specification to meet contemporary demands and realities as a matter of policy. Even though job specification appears static, it is subject to review to meet the goal of modern education

Governments and school authorities should adoption technology driven system of assessment as against to manual or outdated methods because of the inherent objectivity in digital measurements.

Governments and other schools stake holders should ensure that investment in capacity building and professional development are based on assessment feedbacks rather than mere guess action or primordial considerations, as these would build trust and improve compliance.

Governments and school authorities should endeavour to adopt a collaborative assessment procedure that is inclusive of all relevant Stakeholders to prevent disassociation from the results of the process.

Conclusion

The nexus between Human Resource Assessment and Job Specification of secondary school teachers in Nigeria is pivotal to educational effectiveness. This paper has demonstrated that aligning assessment outcomes with job specifications ensures proper teacher deployment, promotes job satisfaction, and enhances learner performance. Educational administrators must adopt a dialectical lens to harmonize these components for sustainable development in the Nigerian education system.

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