



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



Effect of training and development on labour union-management relationship at Unicane Industries Limited, Kogi State

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore the impact of training and development on labour union-management relations in Unicane Industries Limited, Jamata, Kogi State. The study adopts the descriptive cross-sectional research design and a quantitative method in achieving its objectives. A sample of 260 employees of Unicane Industries Limited was used and census sampling technique was employed in choosing the sample members. Data was collected using an electronic questionnaire from 220 respondents, showing a response rate of approximately 85%. Gathered data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and percentages were used to collect the demographic information of respondents while inferential statistics in the form of simple linear regression was used to test the study's hypothesis. The study findings reveals that training and development leads to better and harmonious relationship between labour and management. Hence, it recommends that organisations should pay great attention to the training and development of its employees so as to achieve a peaceful industrial relations climate.

Keywords: Training; Development; Employee; Labour Union-Management Relations

1. Introduction

In most industrialized countries, human resources have continued to play key and strategic roles in their economic growth and development. This is also the case as regards a 21st century organisation that strives to excel amongst its peers. It is therefore accurate to say that an organisation with its resources both financial and material will run at slow pace if adequate attention is not given to the training of its human resources. This therefore makes managers of organisations take relevant steps to equip its manpower with requisite skills and knowledge, not only for the productivity of the organisation as a whole but also towards adding value to the employee with a goal to build a harmonious climate at workplace.

A harmonious workplace relationship is one where all human elements are at peace and satisfied with various working conditions which includes motivations such as satisfactory compensation and benefits, conducive working atmosphere, additional welfare services, promotions, job enrichment, and training and development (Ogunola, 2018). All these elements put together make up what makes a workplace relationship harmonious especially between labour and management.

Amongst all, training and development involves adding value to an employee through direct investment on activities that is tailored towards making the employee more skillful, equipped on the job, possess self-reliance, and be able to succeed in their current and future job roles (Al-Rahawi, 2022). This tends to boost the morale of the employee which in turn translates to good work attitude and relations at work place. It is therefore imperative that organisations gives

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necessary attention to the issue of training and development as it portends great and positive tidings for the industrial relations climate of the organisation.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Industrial unrest between the staff and management of Unicane Industries Limited, Jamata, Nigeria, a major exporter of ethanol and distilling agents have continued to surface by ways of strikes, absenteeism, low quality service rendering and lack of commitment to daily tasks. The management have continued to express serious reservations and concerns about the sad development while the labour union from their own end have consistently queried management attitudes towards issues that border on welfare and working conditions of its members. This is an intense problem to such a viable industrial entity and sector.

With this problem in view, many studies in the literature seemed to have focused squarely on training and development and how they affect organisational performance (Al-Rawahi, 2022; Amoah-Mensah & Darkwa, 2016; Katere, Sutinga, Ohene-Adjei, & Arhin, 2022) while neglecting to tackle the issue of industrial unrest between labour and management in an organisation such as Unicane Industries Limited. It is therefore in the light of the foregoing that this research attempts to examine the perception of employees about training and development on their relationship with management at Unicane Industries Limited.

1.2. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to:

- evaluate how employee perception of training and development affects labour union management relations at Unicane Industries, Jamata.

1.3. Research Question

The research question in which this study seeks to answer is:

- to what extent does employee perception of training and development affect labour union-management relations at Unicane Industries, Jamata?

1.4. Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: Training and development does not significantly affect labour union-management relations at Unicane Industries, Jamata.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Conceptual Clarifications

This aspect conceptually clarifies the independent variable and the dependent variable. The independent variable is training and development while the dependent variable is labour union-management relations.

2.1.1 *Training and Development*

Training has become one of the necessary functions in most organisations which leads to superior performance in a specialized field. It is also described as an important part of an organisation's human resource function due to its significant impact on the performance of the organisation through its performance enhancing mechanism (Azara & Naqvi, 2013). Effective training programs assist an organisation in increasing staff productivity and improving on real performance. Employees who receive excellent training will have more opportunity to gain new information, skills, and competence. As a result, they will be disposed to carry out tasks efficiently and successfully (Ameeq & Hanif, 2013).

Training, on the other hand, is considered expensive which makes some organisation's managers to think that it is only essential for weak performers who actually need to be trained in order to save money that would otherwise be wasted on unpleasant situations. Another school of thought holds that training corrects an issue that arises during the execution of a task (Bassam, 2015). According to Hashim (2012), training and development is concerned with the acquisition of knowledge, skills, methods, and procedures. In reality, training and development is one of the most important aspects of human resource management since it has the capacity to boost individual, team, and organisational performance.

2.1.2 Labour Union-Management Relations

Thapliyal (2019) described labour union-management relations as an aspect of industrial relations that serves as a nerve of industrial harmony in any work organisation. These basically moderate the relationship between employees and its employers towards the attainment of key organisational goals. Labour union-management relations are interactions and collaborations amongst the human component of an enterprise whose daily roles are to actualize corporate objectives. These collaborations are guided by terms and conditions of employment (Budd, 2018).

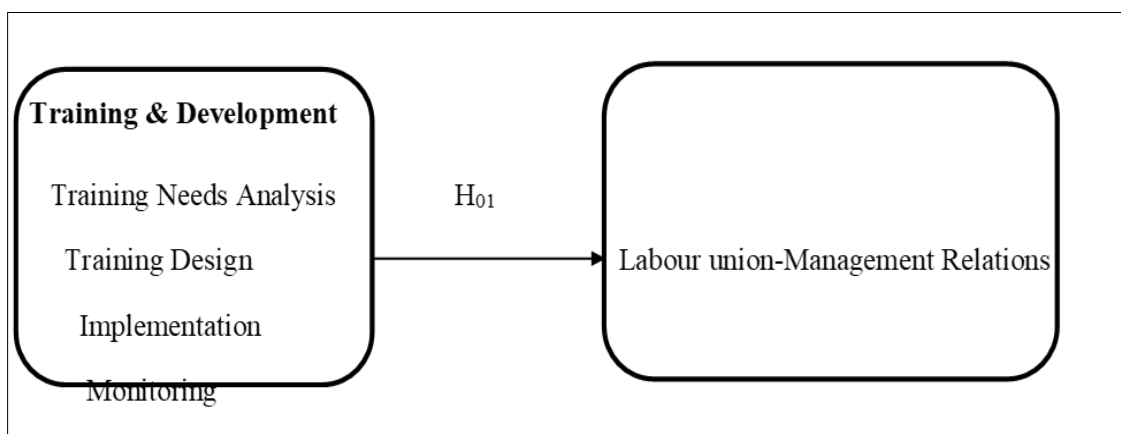
The labour-management relationship is a framework for organisational justice that takes into account organisational culture and management style, as well as grievance and dispute resolution procedures. It is an all important aspect of an organisation based on its critical role of ensuring a healthy industrial relations climate (Ayewoh, 2019). Hassan (2016) noted that the absence of relations between management on one hand and the employees on the other hand leads to conflicting situations that leads to militant actions and strikes which leads to colossal effect on the productivity of an organisation. Both the management of the organisation and the employee representatives must make sacrificial moves to always forestall such situation.

2.1.3 Training and Development and Labour Union Management Relations

According to Fapohunda (2013), industrial relationships also revolves around training and development. To begin with, employers' training and development expenditure decisions are frequently impacted by larger industrial relations structures, both within and outside the workplace. In many countries, for instance, training benefits are actively framed and negotiated in terms of content, activity, and outcome within established structures of collective bargaining between employers and trade unions, either at the sectoral or workplace level, as well as by broader acts of parliaments. Some training approaches may, in and of themselves, raise issues about training opportunities, accessibility, use, and reward in the workplace. Employers and workers, for example, may have opposing views on the sort of training offered and the perceived value of such training.

Training and development and labour union-management relations are closely linked due to the fact that both are social partners. This is because organisations train employees so as to gain competitive advantage amongst competitors in the world of business while employees agrees to training and development or participate because they feel it will add value and requisite skills to them which will in turn lead to higher pay and better career upscale within an organisation (Sholokwu, 2016). Sridharan (2017) observed that parts of the problem of the labour market are not just the demand and supply of labour but the demand and supply of employable labour. This might explain how important training and development is to the relationship between management and labour unions, as one of the major objectives of labour union is to keep in check the issue of employee loss of jobs while management objectives is to retain only competent hands that could guarantee productivity.

2.2. Conceptual Framework



Source: Adapted from Maliki and Bankole (2021)

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

As given in figure 1, the study comprises two variables – training and development (independent variable), and labour union-management relations (dependent variable). As shown in the diagram above, training and development is measured by four proxies – training needs analysis, training design, implementation, and monitoring. From this

framework, the study hypothesizes that training and development will have no significant impact on the relationship between labour union and management of Unicane Industries Limited, Kogi State. This hypothesis which is stated in its null form will be tested using simple linear regression.

3. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive cross-sectional research design in achieving its objective. The rationale for its adoption is due to the fact the study aimed at describing the subject area just the way it exists without any interference. The study population of this study are 260 employees, both full-time and contract staff, of Unicane Industries Limited, Jamata, Kogi State. Census sampling technique was used to generate the sample because the study took the entire population as its sample. Hence, a sample of 260 employees of Unicane Industries Limited was used. However, only 220 employees of the firm participated in the study, showing a response rate of approximately 85%. The quantitative research method was adopted because the study is grounded upon the research philosophy of positivism. Data was collected using close-ended and structured survey questionnaires which were administered electronically. Collected data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics was used to analyze data on socio-demographic features of respondents using frequencies and percentages. Inferential statistics, on the other hand, was used to test the study's hypothesis. This was done using simple linear regression through the SPSS version 20.0.

4. Results

4.1. Data Analysis and Presentation

Out of the total two hundred and sixty (260) questionnaires that were distributed to the respondents, 11 were not properly filled and hence were invalid while another 29 were not filled at all. This makes the total number of valid questionnaires 220. Analysis was therefore carried out on the valid 220 which happens to be 85% of the total questionnaires distributed as earlier indicated.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	129	58.6%
Female	91	41.4%
Total	220	100%
Age		
21-30	70	31.8%
31-40	131	59.5%
41-50	8	3.6%
51 and above	11	5.1%
Total	220	100%
Marital Status		
Single	95	43.2%
Married	105	47.7%
Divorced	0	0%
Widowed	20	9.1%
Total	220	100%
Educational Qualifications		
Primary/Secondary	93	42.3%

OND/NCE	72	32.7%
BSC/HND	52	23.6%
M.Sc/MBA	3	1.4%
Total	220	100%
Number of Years Spent in the Current Organisation		
Below 5 years	85	38.6%
5-10 years	128	58.2%
10 years and Above	7	3.2%
Total	220	100%
Employment Status		
Full-time	100	54.5%
Contract	120	45.5%
Total	220	100%

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 1 above provides a tabular presentation of respondents' demographic characteristics. As shown in the table, 58.6% of the respondents were male while 41.4% were female. This shows that most of the study's respondents were males. Regarding age of respondents, 31.8% were within the age range of 21 and 30 years, 59.5% were within the age range of 31 and 40, 3.6% were within the age range of 41 and 50, while 5.1% were either 51 years or above. This analysis reveals that most of the study's respondents were within the age category of 31 and 40 years. With regards to marital status, 43.2% of the respondents were single, 47.7% married, none divorced while 9.1% are widowed. This shows that a majority of the study's respondents were in a marital relationship. Regarding the educational qualifications of respondents, 42.3% have primary or secondary education, 32.7% have either an OND or NCE, 23.6% have either a B.Sc. or HND, while just 1.4% have either an M.Sc. or an MBA. This analysis shows that most of the study's respondents have either a primary or secondary education. Concerning the number of years spent in the organisation, about 38.6% of the respondents have spent lesser than 5 years, 58.2% have stayed in the organisation within a time period of 5 and 10 years, while just 3.2% have stayed above 10 years. From this analysis, it can be seen that most of the respondents who participated in this study have stayed in the organisation for a duration of 5 and 10 years. Finally, concerning the employment status of respondents, about 54.5% are full-time staff while 45.5% are contract staff, indicating the participation of more full-time staff in the study than contract staff.

4.2. Hypothesis Test

As earlier stated, the study's hypothesis will be tested by using simple linear regression to measure the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

Table 2 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.256	0.065	0.061	0.83132

Table 3 ANOVA

Model	Sums of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Regression	10.543	1	10.543	15.256	0.000
Residual	150.657	218	0.691		
Total	161.200	219			

Table 4 Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig
	B	Std Error			
Constant	2.490	0.340		7.324	0.000
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT	0.331	0.851	0.256	3.906	0.000

Dependent Variable: Labour union-Management Relations; Predictor: (Constant), Training and Development

The table above represents the degree to which the variance in labour union-management relations is expressed by training and development. This is represented by R square which equals 0.065 and expressed as 6.5%. This indicates that training and development only accounts for 6.5% of labour union-management relations while the standard error estimate is 0.83132 which signifies an error term.

4.2.1. Decision Rule Interpretation

The null hypotheses should be rejected when significance value is below 0.05. The ANOVA table shows that the F value is 15.256 at 0.000 significance level. It implies that training and development ($\beta=0.331$; $t=3.906$; $p<0.000$), have significant positive influence on labour union-management relations.

Decision

Null hypotheses is therefore rejected because the significance is below 0.05. Therefore, there is a significant positive influence of training and development on labour union-management relations.

5. Discussion

Findings from the study indicates that training and development has a significant positive effect on the relationship between labour union and management. The regression analysis showed that there is actually a significant causal relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This implies that employees believe that training and development programs will improve the relationship between the management and themselves. This aligns with the viewpoint of Stuart, Guile, and Unwin (2019) who opined that training and development are integral to industrial relations due to the fact that an employer's investment decision in the area of training on an employee promotes a good industrial relation climate at the workplace.

Moreover, Dhal (2015) is in consonance with the findings of the study also by asserting that human resource (HR) practices such as training ameliorates the relationship between labour and management. This creates a friendly and harmonious relationship between these two industrial actors in the organisation.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings and haven achieved the research objectives, the research therefore recommends the following:

- Organisations should ensure that they incorporate training and development programs as part of its corporate culture and organisational policies.
- Employee representatives should be consulted so as to know the various training needs of employees so as to make necessary training arrangements.
- Organisations should provide an atmosphere that encourages self-development for employees in order to achieve a harmonious industrial climate.

Suggestion for Future Studies

Research as we know it is multi-dimensional and has no boundary. Hence, it is believed that inherent in every research is a weakness. This study's weakness is that it focused only on a private organisation and neglected public organisations. Due to this study being performed in a private organisational context in Kogi State, Nigeria, it is therefore suggested that future studies be attempted in a broader geographical scope like the public sector in Kogi State. This would be significant as it would help to ascertain whether training and development can improve the existing relationship

between labour union and management. Based on the fact that this study only made use of quantitative research method, future studies can also adopt qualitative research method to achieve its objective.

6. Conclusion

This study concludes that training and development positively affects the relationship between labour union and management in Unicane Industries Limited, Kogi State. It shows the potency that training and development has in improving the relationship between labour union and management of a firm and as a result offers organisations that are bedeviled with industrial unrest in their relationship with labour, a reliable solution via the aid of training and development. This study is crucial as it would contribute to the body of knowledge on how the incessant industrial unrest in the society can be reduced.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors want to make it clear that none of them have any conflicts of interest.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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