



**THE ROLE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FOR EFFECTIVE OFFICE OPERATIONS**

Tantua, E.

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Tantua, E.

Department of Office and Information Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Rivers State University, Nkpolu- Oroworukwo, PMB, 5080, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

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### ABSTRACT

*Human resource management is integral to the successful operations of any office. It is the responsibility of human resource management to create and maintain an engaging, efficient, and legally compliant workplace. The role of HR has shifted from handing out pink slips to having a huge part in the strategic formulation, implementation and evaluation of different policies in an organization. Regardless of its importance to an economy and the development of its citizen, the prosperity and growth of an organization still depends mainly upon the policies, programs and practices of human resource sub-system and therefore, an organization aiming at growth from all dimensions should maintain a dynamic and effective human resource sub-system and management. Human resource management is one of the major business issues in the current market. Globally, organizations have been focusing on profit maximization and increase in wealth of the owners leaving out the key factors that ensures business growth such as human resource management practices. Human resources are key elements in the achievement of short, medium and long term goals of corporate organizations. This is because without human resources organizations would find it difficult to accomplish corporate goals, objectives, mission and vision. Hence, organizations need to manage human resources effectively and efficiently. Human resource management is concerned with the planning, organizing, directing and controlling various operative functions of procurement, development, maintenance and utilization of a labour force in such a way that objectives of company, those of personnel of all levels and those of community are achieved. The purpose of this study was to examine the role of human resource management in the 21<sup>st</sup>.*

**Keywords:** Human Resource Management, Organizational Performance, Training, Mentoring, Coaching

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive and rapidly changing business world, organisations especially in the service industry need to ensure maximum utilisation of their resources to their own advantage; a necessity for organisational survival. Studies have shown that organisations can create and sustain competitive position through management of non-substitutable, rare, valuable, and inimitable internal resources (Barney, 1991). HRM has transcended from policies that gather dust to practices that produce results. Human resource management practices have the ability to create organisations that are more intelligent, flexible and competent than their rivals through the application of policies and practices that concentrate on recruiting, selecting, training skilled employees and directing their best efforts to cooperate within the resource bundle of the organisation. This can potentially consolidate organisation performance and create competitive advantage as a result of the historical sensitivity of human resources and the social complex of policies and practices that rivals may not be able to imitate or replicate their diversity and depth. HRM facilitates the distribution of human resource and material to the different unit of the organization to put in the production process (Tantua & Egonu, 2019).

Lately, organisations are focused on achieving superior performance through the best use of talented human resources as a strategic asset. HRM policies or strategies must now be aligned to business strategies for organisational success. No matter the amount of technology and mechanisation developed, human resource remains the singular most important resource of any success-oriented organisation. After all, successful businesses are built on the strengths of exceptional people. HRM has now gained significance academically and business wise and can therefore not be relegated to the background or left in the hands of non-experts. Attention must be paid to the human resources organisations spent considerable time and resources to select.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Human Resource Management (HRM)

Armstrong (2009) defines Human Resource Management (HRM) as a strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organisation's most valued assets; that is, the people working there who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of its objectives. Moreover, Human resource management practices can be defined as a set of organisational activities that aims at managing a pool of human capital and ensuring that this capital is employed towards the achievement of organisational objectives (Wright and Boswell, 2002). The adoption of certain bundles of human resource management practices has the ability to positively influence organisation performance by creating powerful connections or to detract from performance when certain combinations of practices are inadvertently placed in the mix (Wagar and Rondeau, 2006). So if we think human resource management as just the services any manager may provide in recruiting and selecting, appraising, training and compensating employees, then we rather would have to take the backseat for those who understand the influence HRM has on corporate performance to take the centre stage. Research has recorded a positive relationship between human resource management practices and corporate performance. Thus in order to stimulate corporate performance, management is required to develop skilled and talented employees who are capable of performing their jobs successfully (Klein, 2004).

Human resource management is one of the major business issues in the current market. Globally, organizations have been focusing on profit maximization and increase in wealth of the owners leaving out the key factors that ensures business growth such as human resource management practices. The demographic reality is that organizations will have a shrinking pool of labour from which to draw on and this will impact operations at all levels, from the receptionist to the CEO. It is this reality that has pushed Human

resource management practices – an important issue in normal times to the forefront (Yamamoto, 2011). Different authors have defined Human resource management practices in various ways. Tith (2010), defines Human resource management practices as a deliberate and systematic effort to identify leadership requirements, identify pools of high-potential candidates at all levels, accelerate the development of mission-critical leadership competencies in the candidates through intentional development, select leaders from the candidate pools for pivotal roles and then, regularly measure progress.

### **The Role of Human Resource Management**

#### **Performance Appraisal**

Performance appraisal deals with sanction, discrete and formal in an organization. This is not a daily routine in an organization but it is done once in a year in an organization which defines the performance needed for the evaluation process (Angelo and Robert, 2006). In this performance appraisal, scores are been assigned to employees base on the job been performed as defined by the organization for evaluation process. Performance appraisal is the judgment of an employee's performance in a job based on certain considerations apart from productivity alone (Atakpa, 2011). This is also process by which a manager or consultant examines and evaluates an employees work behavior by comparing it with preset standards.

#### **Career Management**

Armstrong (2009), posits that career management deals with providing opportunities for people or individuals to develop their careers and abilities with the aim of ensuring that the firm or organization have the flow of talent it needs and to satisfy their own aspirations. It deals with bringing firm needs and the individual needs together. Career management ensures others know about you and your value, although career management is one of the five phases of career development planning. Career management is the blend of active management choice and structured planning of

professional career. Employees will be encouraged to develop new product ideas through innovation. Career management develop the skills and competency of the employees to deliver task assign to them to achieve the goal of the organization which pave way for the employees to also develop new process of achieving the task assign to them. Career management of employee in an organization can also pave way for administrative innovation such that it will aid the organization to have a routine procedure in place design and produce product or creative services and how to get this product to end users. Process innovation also deals with new processes with improved production method with the aid of new techniques, equipment and skills etc.

Career management is a human resource approach to the management of individuals aimed at increasing organizational effectiveness, and satisfy the needs of individual employees (Cummings and Worley, 1993). Mayo (1991) defines career management as the design and implementation of organizational processes that enable the careers to be planned and managed in a way that optimizes both the needs of the organization and the preferences and capabilities of employees. Byars and Rue (2000) suggests that successful career management should include actions from three sources: the employee, the organization, and the employee's immediate manager. The management of careers in an organization has benefits for both organizations and individual employees. Careers enable the organization to take care of, and further develop, its most important and valuable assets in the form of its human resources for continued future benefit. By developing a well- structured system for, amongst other things, filling job openings and moving employees to managerial positions, the need for high potential employees can more easily be fulfilled through career management (Herriot & Pemberton, 1995). Proper management of careers increases the organizations' chances to achieve their objectives by ensuring a

competent work force that experiences high job satisfaction and commitment to its employer.

Career management is also beneficial to the employee as it can assist them by offering structure, direction, meaning, and purpose to their daily activities (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2000). For employees, having a career can furthermore imply other important consequences such as the financial return after having invested time and labour in the employing organization. A well-functioning career management system ensures both an organised working environment as well as the satisfaction of basic economic needs and other higher needs such as for example self-actualization and personal development needs (Cummings and Worley, 1993).

### **Human Resource Planning**

Human resource planning has to do with forecasting demand for manpower based on its business needs and employing strategies required to meet these needs. The dimensions for the study include forecasting manpower demand and strategic action. Forecasting manpower demand involves the estimation of the number and type of human resource required at different levels in different departments in an organization (Pradeesh, 2011). Strategic actions for human resource entails staffing activities carried out in order to achieve organizational success in the long run. It is a disciplinary and creative process for determining where the organization should be in the future and how to take to the future with the help of human resource staffing activities (Graf, Hemmasi & Strong, 1996). There must be a proper utilization of human resources in organizations in order to achieve high performance standard (Lunenburg, 2012). Organizations may have adequate non-human resources like machines; materials and money but inadequate human resources cannot achieve high performance. Human resources are the main asset of an organization.

Organizations need to know how many people and what sort of people they need to meet present and future business requirements. Human resource

planning is one of the most important elements in a successful human resource management program (De cenzo & Robbins, 1988). Human resource planning is the core of human resource management. It determines that the right number of people with the right skills, in the right job position at the right time is employed in the organizations. Human resource planning aids organizations to forecast, recruit and retain competent workforce in order to meet the organizational goals.

### **Human Capital Development (HCD)**

Human capital development according to Healthfield (2011) is the framework for helping employees develop their personal and organizational skills, knowledge, and abilities. It is about recruiting, supporting and investing in people through education, training, coaching, mentoring, internship, organizational development and human resource management (Sullivan and Stere, 2003). It can be understood from the above definition that human capital development is the process in an organization that enhances the skills, knowledge, competencies of employees through education and training, for optimum performance of the employees and overall competitive advantage of the firm.

Human capital development includes such opportunities as: employees' training, career development, coaching, mentoring, succession planning, key employees' identification, performance management and organizational development (Health field, 2011). Marimuthu et al, (2009) opines that it is the process that relate to training, education and other professional initiatives in order to increase the levels of knowledge, skills, abilities, values and social asset of an employee, which will lead to employee's satisfaction and performance.

Human capital development is essential for developing a superior workforce and the growth of the organization. Healthy organizations believe and invest in their human capital for overall competitive advantage and sustainability. The shortage of skilled individuals act as a limiting factor to organization and the economy as a whole (Health field 2011). Bolander

and Snell, (2007) assert that 'Human capital development is primarily designed to benefit both organizations and employees, through improving employees' task performance and supporting employees knowledge and experience development.

This implies that the employees as well as the organization benefits from HCD. This is also affirmed by Armstrong (2006) who considers human capital development as the 'process that direct and guides individuals and so that they are equipped with the requisite skills, knowledge and competence needed to undertake organizational task. And Han et al, (2008) who also considers HCD as organizational learning activities aimed at improving performance and personal development in order to improve individual, his job and the organization.

### **Training and Development**

Okuwa, Nwuche and Anyanwu, (2016) refers to training as teaching and learning given to employees which enables them acquire knowledge, skills and abilities required for a particular job. Training plays a complementary role in accelerating learning (Reynolds, 2004). It is the impartation of knowledge, skills and abilities to employees for better performance. Flippo (1971), Opines that organizations should ensure that, their employees are trained irrespective of their qualification and skills. This is so that organizations will increase productivity, gain competitive advantage and survive in turbulent times.

McGehee and Thayer (1961) see training as the formal procedures which an organization uses to facilitate employees' learning so that their resultant behavior contributes to the attainment of the organizations as well as the individuals goals and objectives. Training has been an important variable in increasing organizational productivity. Many researchers showed training is a fundamental and effectual instrument in successful accomplishment. Jones George and Hill (2000) believe that training primarily focuses on teaching organizational members how to perform their current jobs and helping them acquire the knowledge and skills they need to be effective performers. "Organizational growth on the other hand focuses on building the

knowledge and skills of organizational members so that they will be prepared to take on new responsibilities and challenges. Training and development enhance employee innovativeness. Innovativeness is the firm's tendency to engage in and support new idea, novelty experimentation and creative processes (Adim, Tamunomiebi & Akintokunbo, 2018). These may result in new products, services, or technological processes and which may take the organization to a new paradigm of success (Adim, Tamunomiebi & Akintokunbo, 2018).

### **HRM and Office Operational Effectiveness**

The alignment of human resource management and office operations can be beneficial for an organization in many ways. According to Bierly Daly (2002) organizations that are able to link their human resource management and office operations practices can be more successful in achieving their key objectives. This is because they are able to utilize the resources they have more effectively and efficiently. By linking these two practices, organizations can gain better visibility into their workforce, allowing them to better understand each employee's strengths and weaknesses and how they can be best used to achieve the organization's goals. Additionally, this alignment of HRM and office operations can help to improve organizational morale and productivity by creating a more positive work environment and providing employees with the tools and resources they need to do their jobs effectively. Furthermore, when HRM and office operations are aligned, organizations are better able to manage their costs and reduce their expenditures, allowing them to improve their bottom line. In short, the alignment of human resource management and office operations can be beneficial for organizations in a variety of ways, and organizations should look to take advantage of these benefits by implementing strategies to ensure that their HRM and office operations are aligned.

Achieving better corporate performance requires successful, effective and efficient exploit of

organisation resources and competencies in order to create and sustain competitive position locally and globally. HRM policies on selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, promotion, incentives, work design, participation, involvement, communication, employment security, etc must be formulated and implemented by HRM specialist with the help of line managers to achieve the following outcomes: competence, cooperation with management, cooperation among employees, motivation, commitment, satisfaction, retention, presence, etc.

In fact, Ahmad and Schroeder (2003) found a positive influence of human resource management practices (information sharing, extensive training, selective hiring, compensation and incentives, status differences, employment security, and decentralization and use of teams) on organisational performance as operational performance (quality, cost reduction, flexibility, deliverability and commitment). In furtherance of this assertion, Sang (2005) also found a positive influence of human resource management practices (namely, human resource planning, staffing, incentives, appraisal, training, team work, employee participation, status difference, employment security) on organisation performance.

HRM can enable firms to sustain their growth, maximize their economic opportunities, build the capability to meet the social goals in order to critically challenge the twenty-first century. It is necessary to see that in which way HRM can be a source of competitive advantage. Competitiveness refers to a firm's ability to maintain and gain market share in its industry. It is related to firm's effectiveness, which is determined by whether the firm satisfies the needs of stakeholders. According to the resource-based view, in order for a resource to qualify as a source of sustained competitive advantage, the resource must add value to the firm, it must be rare, it must be inimitable, and there must be no adequate substitutes for the resource (Barney, 1991).

In order for human resources to be a source of sustained competitive advantage, they must provide value to the firm. Steffy and Maurer (1988), pointed out that Firm Specific Human Capital Theory (Hashimoto, 1981 & Mangan, 1983) provides an examination of the conditions under which human value creation is and is not possible. According to this theory, when both the demand for labour is homogeneous (i.e., employees are perfectly substitutable) and supply of labour is also homogeneous (all employees and potential employees are equal in their productive capacity), there is no variance in individual contribution to the firm. In this situation, it is not possible to create value through investment in human assets.

Competitiveness refers to a company's ability and performance to gain and maintain market share in its industry (Easterly and Levine, 2002). Human resource management practices, therefore, must help support the company's strategy and provide services with customer value. The value of a product or service is determined by its quality and how closely the product fits customer needs. Competitiveness is related to company effectiveness which is determined by whether the company satisfies the needs of stakeholders (Barney, 1991). Important stakeholders include: stockholders who want a return on the investments; customers, who want a high-quality product or service; an employees, who desire interesting work and reasonable compensation for their services and the community, which wants the company to contribute to activities and projects and minimal pollution of the environment. Companies that do not meet stake holder's needs are unlikely to have a competitive advantage over other firms in the industry.

Miles and Snow (1984) argued that HRM practices must be tailored to the demands of business strategy. They noted that successful firms display a consistent strategy supported by complimentary organization structures and management processes. Schuler and Jackson (1987) provided a detailed treatment of the three competitive

strategies (innovative, quality enhancement and cost reduction) and the required role behaviors. They argued that it is more useful to think about what is needed from an employee who works with other employees in a social environment and the required employee behavior.

Globally competitive organizations depend on the uniqueness of their human resources and the systems for managing human resources effectively to gain a competitive advantage (Pfeffer, 2008). Human resources are not only the drivers and principal value creators of the output of the knowledge industry, but they are also the intellectual capital or the infrastructure investment. Therefore, attracting, training, retaining and motivating employees are the critical success determinants for any knowledge-founded organization. A firm that aspires to perform well has to ensure that its HRM practices are synergistic and consistent with its organizational strategy (Nzuve, 2007), like its competitive strategy in order to spur both individual and organizational Performance (Robin, 2007).

There has been much research that attempts to establish a positive link between HRM practices and firm Performance. According to Ulrich (2003) HR practices seem to matter and survey findings confirm it, though direct relationships between investments and attention to HR practices are often fuzzy, and tend to vary according to the population sampled and the measures used. Other scholars like (Purcell et al., 2003) have cast doubts on the validity of some of the attempts through research to make the connection. In the current study, employment security, recruitment, self-managed teams, Performance related pay, workforce training, status differentials and sharing information were used as indicators of human resource management practices. According to Ahmad and Schroeder (2003) sophisticated technologies and innovative manufacturing practices alone can do very little to enhance operational Performance unless there are requisite human resource management practices that can be

used to form a consistent socio-technical system in a workplace.

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The changing competitive realities have provided the HRM function with unprecedented opportunities to create significant shareholder value, through effective and efficient management of the firm's HRM system. The importance of the global or overall HRM system is emphasized because it is believed to be systematic and interrelated influence of HRM policies and practices that provide their inimitability, and therefore provides a strategic lever for the firm that is internally consistent and externally aligned (with the competitive strategy). Work systems are generally thought to include rigorous recruitment and selection procedures, performance contingent incentive compensation systems, management development and training activities linked to the needs of the business, and significant commitment to employee involvement (Arthur, 1994; Pfeffer, 1994).

Human resource management practices can affect the performance of an organization. According to Pfeffer (1994), a particular set of HR best practices can increase company profits and the impact is more pronounced when HR practices are integrated and used together. Such a conclusion holds good for all companies and industries irrespective of their



context. Firms need to build long-term commitment to retaining their work force. This can be achieved through more rigorous recruitment and selection and greater investment by firms in training and developing their work force. Many organizations need to change their philosophy to regarding people as assets rather than costs (Fruin, 2000).

The results from the survey by Patterson et al., (1997) put forward evidence for the importance of HRM as a driver of, and contributor to, improved performance. The research was based on longitudinal studies of 67 UK manufacturing that were predominantly single site and single product operations. It has been claimed – on the basis of this research– that HRM had a greater impact on productivity and profits than a range of other factors including strategy, R&D and quality. For example, it was argued that 17 per cent of the variation in company profitability could be explained by HRM practices and job design, as opposed to just 8 per cent from research and development, 2 per cent from strategy and 1 per cent from both quality and technology. Similar results were indicated for productivity from studies

undertaken in the United Kingdom by Guest et al., (2000a, and 2000b); Guest et al., (2003) and Purcell et al., (2003) that focused on the HRM–performance link. On the basis of these studies some forceful claims have been made about the impact of high commitment HRM on performance.

## CONCLUSION

Human resource management and effective office operations are essential components for a successful business. By effectively managing human resources with well-defined job descriptions, hiring processes, and disciplinary policies, companies are able to ensure that the best candidates are adequately trained and motivated. Likewise, by developing efficient office operations such as proper filing systems and clear communication channels, companies are able to maximize their productivity and ensure that all employees have access to the resources they need to get their jobs done. It is clear that Human Resource Management and Effective Office Operations are key to running a successful business and must be a priority for any organization.

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