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EFFECT OF HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES ON STAFF PERFORMANCE IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: A CASE STUDY OF STAFF OF OSUN STATE PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, OSOGBO

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ABSTRACT :

This study examined the effect of human resource practices on staff performance in the public sector. Three objectives guided the research: to investigate HR practices adopted by the public sector in Nigeria, assess their influence on staff performance, and identify challenges affecting HR practices. The study adopted both primary and secondary data collection. Primary data were collected through questionnaires, while secondary data were sourced from textbooks, journals, and online materials. A descriptive research design was used, with a population comprising all Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC) staff across six departments. A sample of 35 respondents was drawn from a population of 63 using simple random sampling. Data were analysed using frequencies, percentages, and chi-square to determine the relationship between HR practices and staff performance. Analysis revealed that staff agreed on the existence of HR practices in OSPDC, with over 80% acknowledging performance appraisal and 68%, 75%, and 68% recognising rewards and compensation, training and development, and recruitment, respectively. Findings also showed that professional training, recruitment, and performance appraisal significantly affected staff performance. Challenges included lacking superior support, poor management, inadequate compensation, and a poor work environment. The study concluded that while certain HR practices positively impact staff performance, OSPDC and other public sector organisations must intensify efforts to improve HR policies and practices.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

To carry out any activity, one would require the services of humans as they constitute the drive behind actions. Over the years, organisations have realised this, which is why firms' importance on human resources is relatively unrivalled. Every organisation, irrespective of size or nature, is either set up to deliver service and make a profit or both organisations strive to do this most efficiently. In a bid to attain efficiency, managers have consistently emphasised the correct utilisation of all factors of production, including human resources. Human resources are the most vital factor of production; their reasons for holding this position are almost un-debatable because, with every look at the production process in any organisation, it becomes more apparent how instrumental human resources are to a company. The importance of human resources to every organisation cannot be denied. It becomes the backbone and the pillar of any successful organisation. Managing employees in the organisation is not an easy thing. This is because employees are viewed as a key resource that can attain a competitive advantage. Indeed, employees are the organisation's greatest asset as they are the most reliable resource for keeping an organisation away from its rivals. The field of human resource management (HRM) has attracted significant attention from different disciplines because of its contribution and impact on issues within organisations.

Employers of labour are left with no choice but to care for their workforce and ensure their employees work under the best conditions possible. Understandably, this is because employees or human resources are the life wire of any organisation, as stated by Mrinmoy Rabha (2021), who defined human resources as the heart of any organisation. This is also the position of many scholars and thought leaders in this discourse; they all believe that any other factor of production cannot rival the place of human resources in an organisation. Despite the immense importance of human resource management (HRM) practices in realising employees' job performance and organisational performance, many organisations do not emphasise its effective utilisation to ensure organisational performance in developing countries like Nigeria. In Nigeria, most establishments do not really emphasise human resources, and rather than cater to their workforce, most of these organisations manipulate, cheat, and undermine staff. In most cases, this is the state of things, but it is not the same across the board. This erratic nature is prevalent more in public institutions than in government-owned establishments; it is an issue of general knowledge of how workers employed by the government in Nigeria are poorly treated.

While workers in some parts of the country are battling unpaid salaries, some are battling underpaid salaries, and others are battling half salaries. This

does not exclude workers battling a lack of promotions forced into forceful retirement with little and no incentives. These unhealthy treatments have, over the years, had a negative impact on the productivity of staff; year in and year out, they keep underperforming when compared to their foreign counterparts. In 2020 alone, the Ministry of Tourism in Germany contributed over 358.3 billion Euros to their GDP. According to the FIRS, Nigeria made a meagre 10.9 billion Euros from tourism in 2020. This alone highlights the lack of productivity and below-par performances in various industries in Nigeria. The underperformance of workers in various government-led industries in Nigeria cannot be disconnected from the unacceptable way workers are treated. Human resource management in this country has been sidelined for too long, and the resultant effect is evident in the difference between the productive capacity of works and the actual production.

Proceeding from the above, another problem characterising the life of human resources, especially in the public sector, is non-payment and underpayment of salaries, a situation where workers are not paid salaries at all or are paid salaries that are less in value when compared to the services they are rendering to the firm. Though the public sector prides itself on job security and workers knowing that they can't just be laid off at the will of some managers, to some extent, this is true as rarely do workers in the public get dismissed without due cause. Still, one would be obliged to think of what use a job you can have for a lifetime without adequate promotions, where some workers do not even have a work desk or computer assigned to them; how then are they expected to function? The bulk of the bureaucratic setup in the Nigerian public sector has stiffened communication lines. It has made it almost impossible for the lowest officials in the institutions to be heard, as the communication lines are not open. Owing to the above justifications, this study will examine these problems faced by human resources in the public sector and also study the effect of proper usage of human resource practices in organisations, mainly in Nigeria's public sector.

The following research questions guide the study.

1. What are the Human Resource Practices adopted by the public sector in Nigeria to ensure productivity?
2. In what way have human resource practices affected staff performance in the public sector?
3. What are the challenges affecting better human resource practices in the public sector?

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of human resources and their management has evolved in recent years. A particular area that has received considerable attention through theoretical debate is the relationship between Human resource management practices and organisational performance (OP). Researchers are constantly trying to analyse and explain the impact of HRM practices on Organizational performance, often taking into account one of two perspectives: systemic or strategic. However, recently, the debate has shifted towards a more integrated approach to management on how a universal set of human resource management practices can contribute to Organisational performance. After an expose of achievements to date on theoretical approaches and achievements empirical concepts of human resource management and performance, the impact and nature of the link between the two, through this study will argue the theoretical and practical existence of ways and mechanisms to explain the impact of human resource management on organisational performance.

Human resource management (HRM) also refers to the design of formal systems in an organisation to ensure the effective and efficient use of human talents to accomplish the organisational goals without sacrificing the needs of the organisational human element (Mathis and Jackson (1999). Storey (1995) also defined human resources management as a distinctive approach to employment management that seeks to achieve competitive advantage by strategically deploying a highly committed and capable workforce using various cultural, structural, and personnel techniques. Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, & Wright (2010) defined human resource management as a philosophy, policy, system and practice that can affect employees' behaviour, attitudes and performance. Human resource management activities include planning, staffing, training and development, performance management, compensation management, safety and health and employee relations. In an early stage, the organisation's management has ignored the function of human resource management practices as a primary driver of organisational success. Only lately has human resource management's potential role in enhancing organisational performance been realised. Human resource management practices can improve the performance of organisations by contributing to employee and customer satisfaction, innovation, productivity, and the development of a good reputation among the firm's community (Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Noe et al., 2010). According to Bratton and Gold (2007), human resources management is a strategic approach to managing employment relations which emphasises that leveraging people's capabilities is critical to achieving competitive advantage, achieved through a distinctive set of integrated employment policies, programs and practices.

Human resource management and practices are targeted towards improved staff performance. Cooke F L. (2000) defined performance as achieving a specific task measured against predetermined accuracy, completeness, speed and cost standards. He added that performance in an employment contract is considered an achievement of the staff commitment that releases the performer from all liabilities designed under the contract. Staff performance is the terminology used to describe staff meeting up with the job targets set for them. Technically, staff performance in an organisation is a variable whose extent depends on other factors in place. Staff performance is how employees fulfil their duties and execute their required tasks. It refers to the effectiveness, quality, and efficiency of their output. The performance also contributes to assessing how valuable an employee is to the organisation.

Each employee is a serious investment for a company, so the return that each employee provides must be significant. Staff performance refers to how your workers behave in the workplace and how well they perform the job duties you've obligated them to do. Your company typically sets performance targets for individual employees and the company as a whole in hopes that your business offers good value to customers, minimises waste and operates efficiently. For an individual employee, performance may refer to work effectiveness, quality and efficiency at the task level. Your salesperson, for example, may be expected to complete a certain quota of calls to potential leads per hour, with a specific portion of those resulting in closed sales. On the other hand, a production worker may have performance requirements for product quality and hourly output.

Human resource practices such as Providing security to employees, Selective hiring: Hiring the right people, Self-managed and effective teams, Fair and performance-based compensation, Training in relevant skills, Creating a flat and egalitarian organisation, and Opening up communication and information sharing lines are instrumental to ensuring that employees are in the best possible shape to carry out their duties. When human resources managers are allowed to function fully from recruiting workers to the tail end of laying off or retiring workers, the company is bound to progress because with the selection of the right staff and equally efficient management of those staff, productivity and performance will skyrocket. From the above discussions, it follows correctly that any organisation or employer of labour that wants effective performance from its workforce must prioritise their employees' development and technical advancement, which will be done by ensuring that human resource practices are adopted.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive research design to investigate the effect of human resource practices on staff performance at the Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC) in Osogbo, Nigeria. The research utilised both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire designed on a 5-point Likert scale, while secondary data were obtained from journals, textbooks, and online publications. The study population comprised 63 staff members from six departments within OSPDC, including both full-time and part-time employees. A simple random sampling technique was employed to select 35 respondents, representing 55% of the population, ensuring equal representation across management, senior, and junior staff levels.

The questionnaire assessed human resource practices such as training, performance appraisal, recruitment, and compensation and their impact on staff performance. To ensure validity, the questionnaire was carefully tailored to reflect the research objectives, with questions designed to measure the intended variables accurately. Data analysis involved both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, and means, were used to summarise the data, while inferential statistics, such as Pearson correlation coefficients and regression analysis, were employed to examine relationships between variables. These analytical techniques allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of the effect of HR practices on staff performance and the identification of challenges affecting HR implementation in the corporation.

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

This section analyses and interprets the data collected through questionnaires. The respondents were senior and junior staff of Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC). A total of 35 questionnaires were administered, and 32 were completed and returned.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4.1 shows the respondents' groupings by sex, age, educational qualification, and years of service.

The table revealed that a higher percentage of the respondents were male (56.3%), while 43.8% were female. In addition, 12.5% of the respondents were between the ages of 21 and 30, 28.1% were between the ages of 31 and 40, 37.5% were between the ages of 41 and 50, and 21.9% were between the ages of 51 and 60.

Furthermore, the table revealed that 21.9% of the respondents had OND/NCE qualifications, 28.1% had a Higher National Diploma (HND), and 46.9% had a BSc. /BA qualification, and 3.1% had MSc. /MBA/MPA qualification. Also, the table revealed that 15.6% of the respondents had spent 0-5 years in service, 34.4% have spent 6-10 years in service, 25% have spent 11-15 years in service, 6.3% have spent 16-20 years in service; 12.5% have spent 21-25 years in service, and 6.3% have spent 26-30 years in service.

Table 4.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Characteristics			
Response Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	18	56.3

	Female	14	43.8
	TOTAL	32	100
Age	21-30	4	12.5
	31-40	9	28.1
	41-50	12	37.5
	51-60	7	21.9
	TOTAL	32	100
Educational Background	ND/NCE	7	21.9
	HND	9	28.1
	BSc./BA	15	46.9
	MSc./MBA/MPA	1	3.1
	TOTAL	32	100
Years of Service	0-5 years	5	15.6
	6-10 years	11	34.4
	11-15 years	8	25
	16-20 years	2	6.3
	21-25 years	4	12.5
	26-30 years	2	6.3
	TOTAL	32	100

Source: Fieldwork, November, 2021

Human Resource Practices Adopted by Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC)

Table 4.2 below shows the human resource practices adopted by Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC).

The results revealed that 68.8% of the respondents asserted that the OSPDC adopts human resource practices such as rewards and compensation. Similarly, 84.4% of the responses showed that the OSPDC adopts performance appraisal. The results also revealed that 75% of the respondents opined that the OSPDC adopts human resource practices such as staff training and development. In addition, 68.8% of the responses revealed that the OSPDC adopts human resource practices such as recruitment and selection.

Table 4.2 Human Resource Practice Adopted by Osun State Property Development

S/N	Practices	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Do you agree that rewards and compensations are human resource practices adopted by the OSPDC?	7	21.9	22	68.8	1	3.1	2	6.3	0	0
2	Do you agree that performance appraisal is a human resource practice adopted by OSPDC?	3	9.4	27	84.4	2	6.3	0	0	0	0
3	Do you agree that training and development is a human resource practice adopted by the OSPDC?	3	9.4	24	75	4	12.5	0	0	1	3.1
4	Do you agree that recruitment and selection is a human resource practice adopted by the OSPDC?	10	31.3	22	68.8	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Fieldwork, November, 2021

Effect of Human Resource Practices on Staff Performance in Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC)

This section assessed the effect of human resources practices on staff performance in Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC). The results of the findings are presented in Table 4.3.

The results revealed that on-the-job training had aided the immediate performance of employees ($B=.370$, $t= 1.858$, $p>.05$, which) is positive and statistically insignificant. This implies that on-the-job training has no significant effect on the immediate performance of employees in OSPDC. The results also showed that professional courses and training have enhanced workers' productivity ($B=.421$, $t=2.816$, $p<.05$), which is positive and statistically significant. Professional courses and training significantly improve workers' productivity in OSPDC. In addition, the results showed that the recruitment and selection process affected the staff performance ($B=.516$, $t= 5.491$, $p<.05$), which is positive and statistically significant. This shows that the recruitment and selection process significantly impacts the staff performance in OSPDC. The results showed that performance appraisal affects staff performance ($B= .516$, $t= 3.358$, $p<.05$) is positive and statistically significant. This means that performance appraisal significantly affects staff performance in OSPDC. Furthermore, the results showed that staff compensation influences staff performance in the Corporation ($B= .000$, $t= .000$, $p>.05$) is positive and statistically insignificant. This implies that staff compensation does not significantly influence staff performance in the Corporation. The table also showed that the reward system adopted by the Corporation influences the staff performance ($B= -.000$, $t= 1.000$, $p>.05$), which is positive and statistically insignificant. This implies that the reward system adopted by the Corporation has no adequate influence on the staff performance.

Table 4.3: Regression Analysis Showing Effect of Human Resource Practices on Staff Performance in Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC)

Dependent Variable	Predictor	Beta (β)	Standard Error (SE)	t	p	R
On-the-job training	Constant	2.402	0.522	4.597	0	0.103
	Training	0.37	0.199	1.858	0.073	
Professional courses	Constant	2.782	0.392	7.098	0	0.209
	Training	0.421	0.149	2.816	0.009	
Recruitment and selection process	Constant	0.744	0.246	3.019	0.005	0.501
	Training	0.516	0.094	5.491	0	
Performance appraisal	Constant	0.494	0.403	1.226	0.23	0.273
	Training	0.516	0.154	3.358	0.002	
Staff compensation	Constant	3.5	0.457	7.658	0	0
	Training	0	0.174	0	1	
Reward system	Constant	3.5	0.457	7.658	0	0
	Training	0	0.174	0	1	

Source: Fieldwork, November, 2021

Challenges Affecting Human Resources Practices in Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC)

Several challenges affect human resource practices in Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC). Table 4.4 below presents some results, showing the varying strengths of the association between challenges affecting human resource practices in Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC). Poor management style ($r=.500$) shows a strong positive relationship with a lack of support from superiors and colleagues. Lack of promotion opportunities ($r=-.274$) shows a weak negative relationship with poor management style. Some of the junior staff interviewed complained that the junior staff do not get promoted as quickly as their superiors. Inadequate compensations and benefits ($r=.091$) show a weak positive relationship with a lack of promotion opportunities. This was in agreement with the views of a junior staff, who lamented the poor compensation and benefits given to the staff. Poor work environment ($r=.323$) shows a weak negative relationship with poor management style. The absence of job satisfaction ($r=-.098$) shows a weak negative relationship with a poor work environment.

Table 4.4 Correlation estimates showing the Challenges affecting Human Resources Practices in Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC)

Challenges	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Lack of support from superiors and colleagues	1	-	-	-	-	-
2. Poor management style	0.500	1	-	-	-	-
3. Lack of promotion opportunities	.00	-0.274	1	-	-	-
4. Inadequate compensations and benefits	0.317	0.386	0.091	1	-	-
5. Poor work environment	0.290	-0.200	0.066	-0.323	1	-
6. Absence of job satisfaction	-0.408	0.68	-0.671	-0.315	-0.98	1

Source: Fieldwork, November, 2021

5.0 SUMMARY CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarises the study's key findings and presents its conclusion. It also makes recommendations and provides directions for future research on the effect of human resource practices on staff performance in the public sector.

Summary

The study investigated the human resource practices adopted by Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC). It also assessed the effect of human resource practices on staff performance in the study area. In addition, it ascertained the challenges affecting human resources practices in Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC). The study revealed that rewards and compensations, performance appraisal, training and development, recruitment and selection are all human resource practices adopted by the Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC). In addition, the study revealed that professional courses and training, professional courses and training and performance appraisal have a significant impact/effect on staff performance in OSPDC. However, on-the-job training, staff compensation and reward systems have no significant impact on the staff performance in OSPDC. The results also revealed that lack of support from superiors and colleagues, poor management style, lack of promotion opportunities, inadequate compensations and benefits, poor work environment, and absence of job satisfaction are the significant challenges affecting human resources practices in Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis based on the data collected from the respondents showed that on-the-job training, staff compensation and reward systems have no significant impact on improving the staff performance in OSPDC. However, professional courses and training, as well as performance appraisal, have a significant impact/effect on improved staff performance in Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC). This showed that human resource practices do not significantly affect the overall staff performance in Osun State Property Development Corporation (OSPDC).

Recommendations

The recommendations below were made based on the study findings.

- Formulation of consistent human resource practices/policies: The corporation's management and human Resources (HR) department must develop consistent motivational practices to improve staff performance. These practices should also be consistent over time and seasons.
- Provision of adequate training and development programs: The HR department's responsibility is not limited to recruiting staff but also to developing and improving them. Therefore, the department must regularly organise training, seminars, symposiums, etc., to improve the capacity of its various staff. This training and development should be conducted at all levels of the corporation's department.
- Provision of adequate funds for training and development programs: It was realised that many of the organisation's training programmes lacked adequate funding. Therefore, to achieve the organisational goals and productivity, the management and the State government must provide sufficient funds for these training and development programmes.
- Creating a conducive work environment: Maximum productivity and hard work can only be found in a conducive and peaceful work environment. The management should always strive to eliminate any actions that may lead to the absence of job satisfaction. In addition, the management should provide good health insurance, remuneration, compensation and rewards for their staff. This is only how the staff can

commit to their work. Concisely, a well-motivated staff is a happy staff.

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