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Influence of Human Resources Management Practices on Organisational Performance of Construction Firms in Lagos State – Nigeria

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Abstract: The success of any organisation depends on the effective and efficient utilisation of its human resources. In every project-based industry, such as the construction industry, project performance is tied to the effectiveness of its human resources. Labour turnover in the Nigerian construction industry and the poor performance of the Nigerian construction industry in terms of project delay, cost uncertainty, and quality deficiency is caused by inadequate utilisation of human resources management practices. The study aimed to assess the influence of human resources management practices on the organisational performance of construction firms in Lagos State in order to improve their competitive edge. A quantitative research method was adopted involving administration of 140 well-structured questionnaires to registered construction firms. The results revealed that human resources management practices (selection, training, development and reward) have a positive and statistically significant influence on organisational performance, with a p-value of <.001, <.003, <.003 and <.002 respectively. While the other practices (recruitment and compensation) did not significantly influence organisational performance. This indicates that human resources management practices are important to the success of organisations. Therefore, in order to overcome the challenges of labour dissatisfaction at work resulting from organisational instability, poor working conditions, lack of training, and reducing the low performance of the employees in the construction industry, appropriate and adequate human resources management strategies, policies, and action plan provisions should be put in place in order to improve organisational performance and to maintain competitive advantages.

Keywords: Human resources, practices, selection, training, development; reward, organisational performance, Nigeria

1. Introduction

In recent years, the world has witnessed an upsurge in globalisation where the economies of many countries are intertwining to boost foreign trade through technological advancement and connectivity (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). This surge has also fuelled increased competition in both domestic and international markets, encouraging organisations to attract and retain highly skilled workforce. Several organisations rely on their employees to gain a competitive edge in the marketplace. Hence, they are inextricably tied to the effectiveness of their human resources and human resource management (Collins, 2021). Modern theoretical philosophy agrees that the human element needs to be

taken care of; this element is more important than all business-related. One success criterion for organisations and institutions is measured by how the human element is taken care of. In particular, top managers are becoming more cognizant of the vital role of HR in the success of their organisations to achieve better performance (Al-Hawary & Shdefat, 2016).

Organisational performance refers to a company's capacity to accomplish some organisational objectives that are critical to the company's survival and success, such as expanding business share, maintaining profit, and maintaining a competitive advantage. It focuses on an organisation's long-term survival, which is dependent on the implementation of appropriate strategies and better plans. An organisation's core goal is to achieve peak performance. Thus, firms that operate in a variety of industries are continuously competing to improve their performance by establishing advantages that set them apart from their competitors (Oyemomi *et al.*, 2016). Overall, the performance management process for elevating organisational performance entails development, synchronisation, technological progression, a stronger competitive advantage, and the capacity to create economic value.

However, it should be noted that from the perspective of the construction industry, the definition of efficient performance can vary from one firm to another. Thus, each firm should put in place a performance management system that is tailored to its situation (Vermeeren *et al.*, 2014; Roshartini *et al.*, 2020). The ability of an organisation to increase their organisational performance relies on sound management choices and precise financial and non-financial information (Saeidi & Othman, 2017). Organisations usually assess performance based on outlined objectives related to their bottom line, or overall goals, establishing the level of performance they expect to accomplish (Amini *et al.*, 2017).

The senior management has come to the conclusion that a company's most important differentiators are its people, not its goods, markets, capital, buildings, or machines. Any organisation's assets all depend on human application to generate their value. In order to increase employee effort and work-related activities, which will ultimately improve organisational performance, efforts have been made in this regard (Shaukat *et al.*, 2015). The general decline in industrial works and subsequent economic crisis Nigeria currently experienced is as a result of organisations' apparent neglect of human resource management. Organisational performance is impacted by a variety of HRM-related problems, concerns, and challenges in Nigerian firms (Joseph & Chima, 2020).

Researchers and stakeholders have long been concerned about Nigeria's construction industry's poor performance in terms of project delays, cost uncertainty, and quality deficiencies caused on by inadequate use of HRMP. Despite many study initiatives aimed at addressing issues of HRMP in relation to subpar project performance, the issue still exists (Ayanda *et al.*, 2014; Muhammad. *et al.*, 2015). According to Ameh and Daniel (2017), it is believed that increased labour turnover in the construction industry is a result of ineffective human resources management, which is characterised by subpar training or a lack of opportunities for training, poor wages and compensation issues, irregular workloads, and safety issues, among other things. The high labour costs associated with building projects cause project delays as a result of lost productivity and increasing labour cost. Therefore, good human resources management could save unnecessary costs (Argaw & Citra, 2019).

The fundamental driver of an organisation's physical capital, according to contemporary administrative theory, is its human capital (Islam *et al.*, 2016). One of the functional departments that deal with human capital management is HRM, which does so through a variety of practices and strategies. With the use of these practices, workers' performance levels are meant to be enhanced so they can fully perform their functions (Islam *et al.*, 2016). Human resources practises and organisational performance across settings have a favourable and significant association, according to Tzabbar *et al.* (2017) There is conflicting evidence to support the idea that several of the methods under investigation, including as training, profit sharing, and voice, have a significant positive impact on performance. In contrast to other practises like staffing, job security, and training and development, they do not, however, have a stronger correlation with organisational performance. By assessing the effect size of the link between high-performance work practises and organisational performance metrics through the use of a meta-analysis technique, Saridakis *et al.* (2017) obtained comparable results. According to the findings, mutually reinforcing, integrated high-performance work practises have a greater impact on an organisation's performance than do separate human resources strategies. Thus, this study will assess the influence of human resources management practices on the organisational performance of construction firms in Lagos State.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Human Resource Management (HRM) Practices

Human resources management practices refer to the actions taken by an organisation to accomplish its objectives, including hiring, selecting, training and development, reviewing performance, and compensating employees. Other human resources management practices include recruiting potential employees, choosing employees through selection, instructing employees on how to do their jobs and preparing them for changes in the future through training and development, evaluating employees' performance through performance appraisal, compensating employees for their work, analysing and designing work, identifying human resources needs, and developing a good working environment (Abubakar & Abubakar, 2013; Al-Sarayrah *et al.*, 2016; Bisharat *et al.*, 2017). The terms skills, abilities, tendencies, and values are used to describe human resources management practices. In order to improve human capital and achieve

the organisation's goals, human resources management strategies combine several policies and procedures (Arbab & Mahdi, 2018). Also, it involves taking a general steps to organisational development with a distinct focus on the implementation of strategic change and the development of the organisational skills base to ensure that the organisation can compete successfully in the future through some aspects, such organisational effectiveness, as well as more specific aspects, like personnel management, resources, learning and development, incentives, and employee relations, as well as procedural aspects (Luftim, 2016; Stoev & Mujtaba, 2016; Swies *et al*., 2020). These are the practices used by business organisations' human resources departments to find, choose, train, and develop the human resources employed by those organisations in order to meet their objectives (Kumar, 2014). Human resource management practises are all tasks carried out by managers, including hiring, training, communicating, evaluating, and terminating employees, according to Ruwaini (2014). Planning, job analysis, recruiting and selection, incentives, and employee training are all implemented by the organisation's administrative body (Al Hosani *et al*., 2017).

Human resources should be used effectively from the time they are hired until the conclusion of their employment, according to earlier definitions of HRMP. Human resources department is trying to keep an eye on the fact that this utilisation of workforce is geared toward directly or indirectly achieving institutional goals during this time. Since promotion, success, and development rely heavily on the human element in the first place, the management of human resources inside the organisation is therefore a crucial component of its advancement (Luftim, 2016; Khanna & Sehgal., 2016; Sweis *et al*., 2020).

According to Gurhan (2015), the major goal of human resources management inside organisations, is to achieve objectives and success by putting a strong emphasis on human element. AlMannai *et al*. (2017) stated that human resources management performs a number of crucial tasks, including performance review, incentive and reward programmes, and employee promotions based on skills, and fostering a competitive environment for efficiently and effectively attaining organisational goals.

As the main goal is to meet the established goals and boost productivity, Noe *et al*. (2008) shown that decisions made regarding HRM have an influence on employees' performance and behaviour within the organisation. These are accomplished by fostering constant rivalry among those who possess information and experience. Additionally, human resources management will enhance employees' drive to provide the necessary profit for the organisation (Danish & Ushman, 2010; Omar *et al*., 2018).

2.2 Organisational Performance

The goal of organisational performance is to ensure the long-term survival of business that depends on the deployment of effective strategies and plans of action. The main objective of any organisation is to achieve peak performance. Thus, organisations in many fields strive continually to improve their performance by creating advantages that set them apart from rivals (Oyemomi *et al*., 2016). OP measurement is essential, it helps companies to assess how work is completed and focus on where there is improvement. Furthermore, a performance measurement system evaluates the accomplishment of organisational objectives and offers feedback on the effectiveness of procedures being carried out inside the organisation. Both internal and external factors might have an impact on an organisation's performance. Internal characteristics are unique to the organisation and include leadership style, organisational culture, job design, and HR rules. All businesses are subject to the same external variables, which include market preferences and views, country laws and regulations, and an entire nation's economy (Alrowwad *et al*., 2017; Sweis *et al*., 2020).

In the past, managers have placed a lot of emphasis on financial metrics like actual costs, sales volume, or income generated compared to the budgeted amount. These financial metrics, however, are incredibly flawed because they cannot distinguish between various organisations. They spread misinformation regarding innovation and on-going improvement, which is contrary to management's expectations (Harden & Upton, 2016). Additionally, they fail to effectively define organisational priorities and strategies (Alrowwad *et al*., 2017).

Due to their emphasis on transient indicators like turnover, profit, and cash flow, financial measurements are no longer practical for evaluating performance. Hence, non-financial measures have gained importance. They incorporate elements that can enhance organisational and financial performance and focus on achieving long-term success (Chahal *et al*., 2016; Alrowwad *et al*., 2017). Using financial and non-financial metrics, managers have recently started using the balanced scorecard to assess the performance of their organisations. This has improved managerial focus and resource measurement. In other words, organisations must place more emphasis on capital resources, which are crucial to ensuring an organisation's longevity. Organisational performance measurement helps senior management in performance evaluation and improvement (Harden & Upton, 2016).

Organisational performance can be difficult due to its many standards, which include sustainability, profitability, group approval, and a willingness to adapt to environmental changes. Financial measurements, which are typically considered of as imagined on paper rather than in actuality, can, nevertheless, be used to calculate organisational performance. The mix, product variety of stakeholders, and non-output measurements are just a few of the other ways in which the results can be seen (Anwar, 2017). According to Abdullah and Abdul Rahman (2015), human resources management is regarded as the most important component of an organisation since it influences the productivity and behaviour of employees. In other words, ensuring that the management of human resources and business procedures are

crucial to the success of the company. When employees are not dedicated to their employment, Cooke *et al.* (2020) revealed that there would be a rise in organisational staff turnover, inefficiency, poor service quality, and a greater workload on management with less employee involvement in their workplaces.

3. Research Design

The research design embraces the methodology and procedures employed to conduct a scientific research study. It provides details on the study's data collection techniques and statistical analysis strategy (Quansah, 2013; Atmowardoyo, 2018). This study, therefore, adopted a descriptive research design. Descriptive research design sought employers' opinions on human resources management practices and their satisfaction (Loice, 2016). According to Creswell (2014), descriptive studies present facts, current conditions pertaining to the nature of people, and various objectives or classifications of events. To fulfil the necessary goals and evaluate the hypotheses using analytical approaches like correlation and regression analysis, quantitative methodology gives the data needed (Amin, 2005; Loice, 2016). Hence, a quantitative research approach was adopted for the study using a well-structured questionnaire designed to meet proven practical information necessary for the study analysis. One hundred and forty (140) construction companies that were registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission and the Lagos State Ministry of Works made up the population for this study. The sample size for the study was the 140 construction firms. All the questionnaires were self-administered to the various construction firms. The various registered construction firms and their addresses were obtained from the Federation of Construction Industry (FOCI), Finelib, and Business Directory in Lagos State. Questions in the survey were on a five-point Likert scale for ease and uniformity of response.

4. Results and Discussion

The results for each of the six variables are presented in detail in Table 1 below. Regarding year of practice, the highest percentage of respondents (35.7%) are people between 11-15yrs of practice, followed by (27.9%) of respondents with greater than 16yrs of practice. On the organisational year of practice, the highest percentage of firms (35%) with 16-20yrs of practice, followed by (28.6%) of firms with more than 20yrs of practice. The table showed that many of the respondents had at least a BSc/BTech degree in relevant fields (47.9%), followed by (25.7%) of the respondents with HND in relevant fields. Finally, 67.1% of the construction firms undertake both building and civil engineering works, followed by 25.7% and 7.1% for firms that undertake only building and civil engineering works. In all, the results of the survey could be deemed to be reliable based on the academic qualifications and the years of experience of the respondents.

Table 1 - The Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative
Year of practice			
1-5	15	10.7	10.7
6-10	26	18.6	29.3
11-15	50	35.7	65.0
16-20	39	27.9	92.9
Above 20	10	7.1	100
Organisational year of practice			
1-5	1	0.7	0.7
6-10	14	10	10.7
11-15	36	25.7	36.4
16-20	49	35	71.4
Above 20	40	28.6	100
Highest academic qualification			
HND	36	25.7	25.7
BSc/BTech	67	47.7	73.6
PGD	12	8.6	82.1
MSc/MTech	25	17.9	100
Organisational workforce			
10-49	15	10.7	10.7
50-199	52	37.1	47.9
200 and above	73	52.1	100
Nature of work undertaken			
Building works	36	25.7	25.7
Civil engineering works	10	7.1	32.9
Both civil and building	94		100

Recruitment/Selection and Organisational Performance

The variables of human resources management practices (recruitment and selection) were correlated with organisational performance. Table 2 showed a positive relationship between recruitment and organisational performance, but the relationship is not significant (rho = .10; n = 140; P <.221). Also, the result in Table 2 showed that selection has a positive significant relationship with organisational performance, (rho = .27; n = 140; P <.001). These denoted a small direct and perfect relationship measuring it on Cohen (1988) and Pallant (2011). These criteria asserted that a correlation of 0 means no relationship, 1.0 means a perfect positive correlation, and a value of −1.0 means a perfect negative correlation. This is in line with Delaney and Huselid (1999), Taylor and Collins (2000), Amin *et al.* (2014), and Raineri (2016), who stated that there is a significant positive correlation between selection and organisational performance. According to the study conducted by Sweis *et al.* (2020) in Jordanian construction companies found no connection between organisational performance and recruitment. The result can be attributed to the fact that construction companies operate in a highly dynamic, competitive environment, which means that even if the companies use efficient hiring practises to find the best candidates for open positions to achieve superior performance on projects, they will still need to take other factors (especially external ones) into account that could have a significant impact on financial and non-financial performance (Sweis *et al.*, 2020). Realistic job descriptions, a variety of applicant sources, legitimate and trustworthy selection criteria, and effective HR planning are all necessary for effective recruitment and selection methods (Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2015).

Table 2 - Relationship between recruitment/selection and organisational performance

		Performance	
Performance	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	
	Significant (2-tailed)		_
	N		140
Recruitment	Correlation Coefficient	.104	
	Significant (2-tailed)		.221
	N		140
Selection	Correlation Coefficient	.268**	
	Significant (2-tailed)		.001
	N		140

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

In a related development, linear regression analysis was carried out to determine the effects/influence recruitment/selection has over organisational performance. The model tested how the two variables of human resources management practices (recruitment and selection) can predict organisational performance. The model offers a predictive power of 12.0% (R = .346; R2 = .120; F = 9.320 [with p = .732, p = .000], with beta values (beta = -.029 for recruitment, beta = .353 for selection). This outcome revealed that recruitment had negative relationship/effects with organisational performance but was not significant. However, the regression analysis showed that selection had a positive significant relationship/effect with organisational performance. Thus, the regression model implied that selection contributed more to the model measuring it on Pallant (2011) criteria which stated that variables are making significant contributions to a prediction of dependent variables when the significant value is less than .05. But if the significant value is greater than .05; then, the variables are not contributing significantly to the prediction of the dependent variable. These, therefore, justified the correlation result.

Table 3 - Regression model summary on the relationship/influence of recruitment/selection on the organisational performance

Organisational performance Independent variables		
Recruitment		-.029
Selection		.353
R		.346
R2		.120
F		9.320
Sig (Recruitment)	.732	
Sig (Selection)		.000

Training/Development and Organisational Performance

The variables of HRMP (training and development) were correlated with organisational performance. The result in Table 3 showed that there is positive significant relationship between training and development and organisational performance (rho = .35; n = 140; P <.003) and (rho = .38; n = 140; P <.003) respectively. These denoted a small direct and perfect relationship measuring it on Cohen (1988) and Pallant (2011) criteria. According to Amin *et al*. (2014), Raineri (2016), Sabiu *et al*. (2016), and Sweis *et al*. (2020), there is a strong relationship between training and development and organisational performance. Skilled worker training increased labour productivity by 5%, decreased turnover by 10%, and decreased absenteeism by 2.5% (Wang *et al*., 2010). Construction labour productivity can be raised by teaching employees' multiple skills. Importantly, one of the strategies that can increase labour productivity on construction projects is activity-oriented training (Allmon *et al*., 2000). Due to shortage of skilled workforce, attracting and keeping skilled employees is the key to attaining organisational success. However, investing in training involves a series of on-going investments rather than a single one. The highly dynamic, constantly changing workplace demands a high level of abilities, thus training is crucial for producing talented workers as well as keeping those high levels of skills (Kumari, 2017).

Table 4 - Relationship between training/development and organisational performance

Performance		
Performance	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
	Significant (2-tailed)	_
	N	140
Training	Correlation Coefficient	.348**
	Significant (2-tailed)	.000
	N	140
Development	Correlation Coefficient	.382**
	Significant (2-tailed)	.000
	N	140

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Furthermore, linear regression analysis as shown in Table 5 was carried out to determine the effects/influence training/development has over organisational performance. The model tested how the two variables of human resources management practices (training and development) can predict organisational performance (non-financial). The model offers a predictive power of 21% (R = .458; R2 = .210; F = 18.157 [with p = .001], with beta values (beta = .189 for training, beta = .324 for development). This outcome revealed that training and development had a significant relationship/effect on organisational performance. Thus, the regression model implied that development contributed more to the model with a beta value of .324 than training .189. This is also in line with Pallant (2011) criteria which stated that variables are making significant contributions to a prediction of dependent variables when the significant value is less than .05. But if the significant value is greater than .05; then, the variables are not contributing significantly to the prediction of the dependent variable.

Table 5 - Regression model summary on the relationship/influence of training/development on the organisational performance

Organisational performance	
Independent variables	
Training	.189
Development	.324
R	.458
R2	.210
F	18.157
Sig (Training)	.042
Sig (Development)	.001

Compensation/Reward and Organisational Performance

The variables of human resources management practices (compensation and reward) were correlated with organisational performance. Table 6 showed a relationship between compensation and organisational performance, but the relationship is not significant (rho = .09; n = 140; P <.310). Also, the result in the table showed a positive significant relationship between reward and organisational performance (rho = .26; n = 140; P <.002). These denoted a small direct and perfect significant correlation measuring it on Cohen (1988) and Pallant (2011) criteria which asserted that a correlation of 0 means no relationship, and a correlation of 1.0 means a perfect positive correlation. A value of −1.0 means a perfect negative correlation. This is in line with Fey *et al.* (1999), Way (2002), Amin *et al.* (2014), and Sabiu *et al.* (2016), who found a significant positive correlation between reward and organisational performance. A compensation system is a framework for compensating employees based on their engagement and efficiency, which contribute to the successful performance of the organisation. Pay, commissions, bonuses, and other incentives are usually included in the rewards. It is argued that compensation systems are now viewed by organisations as a way to improve organisational performance rather than just a way to keep employees. Employers should also think about implementing strategies to support organisational culture so they can use it to attract in, retain, and motivate workers (Dessler, 2007).

Table 6 - Relationship between compensation/reward and organisational performance

Performance		
Performance	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
	Significant (2-tailed)	_
	N	140
Compensation	Correlation Coefficient	.086
	Significant (2-tailed)	.310
	N	140
Reward	Correlation Coefficient	.261**
	Significant (2-tailed)	.002
	N	140

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Linear regression analysis as shown in Table 7 was carried out to determine the effects/influence compensation/reward has over organisational performance. The model tested how the two variables of human resources management practices (compensation and reward) can predict organisational performance (non-financial). The model offers a predictive power of 10.8% (R = .328; R2 = .108; F = 8.262 [with p = .000], with beta values (beta = .320 for reward, beta = .033 for compensation). This outcome revealed that reward had a positive significant relationship/effect with organisational performance, while compensation had no significant relationship/effect with the organisational performance. However, the regression model implied that reward contributed more to the model measuring it on Pallant (2011) criteria which stated that variables are making significant contributions to a prediction of dependent variables when the significant value is less than .05. But if the significant value is greater than .05; then, the variables are not contributing significantly to the prediction of the dependent variable. According to Sweis *et al.* (2020), salary has little to no influence on an organisation's success. These are a result of how the respondents felt about the pay plans in their organisations. Workers agreed that employers do not employ reasonable wage practises and do not take into account the qualifications, skills, and talents of employees. The incentives given to employees are opaque and inconsistent with their abilities, performance, and contributions to the job. Employee involvement in quality improvements was not encouraged by the wage and promotion structure that their firms presented. As a result, there will eventually be more employee turnover, less employee loyalty, and less performance.

Table 7 - Regression model summary on the relationship/influence of compensation and reward on the organisational performance

Organisational performance		
Independent variables		
Reward	.320	
Compensation	.033	
R		.328
R2		.108

F	8.262
Sig (Reward)	.000
Sig (Compensation)	.687

5. Conclusion

The study assessed the influence of human resources management practices on the organisational performance of construction firms in Lagos State using questionnaire survey. The findings indicated the relationship between recruitment and organisational performance is negative but not significant, while there is a significant positive relationship between selection and organisational performance. There is a significant positive relationship between training/development and organisational performance. The relationship between compensation and organisational performance is positive but not significant, while there is a significant positive relationship between reward and organisational performance. Thus, HRMP such as development, job orientation, reward, selection, and training influence the organisational performance of construction firms in Lagos State. Therefore, leading to client satisfaction, employee effectiveness, employee performance, employee participation, and innovation. The following recommendations are made in order to improve the competitiveness of the construction firms in terms of their human resources.

1. To overcome the challenges of labour dissatisfaction at work resulting from organisational instability, terrible working conditions, organisational culture, lack of training, nepotism, sociocultural and reducing the low performance of the employees in the construction industry, appropriate and adequate human resources management strategies, policies, and action plan provisions should be put in place in order to improve organisational performance and to maintain competitive advantages.

2. Welfare provisions and packages for employees in the construction industry are not utilised moderately. The study recommends that adequate and appropriate welfare measures be put in place to reduce labour turnover, low morale, and absenteeism while retaining a highly talented and committed workforce.

3. In order to retain a quality and efficient workforce in the construction industry, there should be appropriate job security. Employees could have a sense of belonging in their place of work through adequate job insurance, involvement in decision making, employment security and job promotion.

4. It has been established that people (employees) and not products are regarded as the most valuable element in the construction industry. Since they contribute immensely to the success and development of the industry, there should be adequate and appropriate incentive schemes for the employees in construction organisations as motivational drivers.

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