

An Assessment of the Complexities of Contemporary Issues in Human Resource Management

Amanawa, David Ebiegbere

(Ph.D. Candidate), Department of Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Abstract: *The ability of the Human Resource manager to function is continually challenged by changes in the corporate environment/society. This is mostly owing to concerns about data security, diversity, discrimination, and, on occasion, legal requirements. As such understanding that management is about knowing all the available resources and creating a mix that is appropriate for business growth and sustainability is key. Money, materials, people, ideas, market, and nature are among the sorts of resources that a human resource manager must comprehend and use, according to existing literature. Secondary data was taken from the KPMG Future of HR 2020 study as well as the Glassdoor purpose and culture survey. Given that HRM objectives are based on four key folds: societal, functional, organizational, and personal, we may infer that the great majority of workers would examine the company's culture before applying for a job there, as well as the company's mission and purpose. Finally, it is critical for employers to convey the organization's ideals to potential workers, as well as to live according to those values long after they have left the company. It is recommended that HR Managers examine their organization's structure and mission, analyze its business environment, and approach it with the understanding that: Shaping the workforce is HR's defining issue, and passing the "culture/mission test" is crucial.*

Keyword: Management, Human Resource Management, HRM, HR, Managers

INTRODUCTION

I walked into my postgraduate faculty office a few weeks ago for the required academic clearance, and the lady behind the desk asked what my area of specialisation was, and I smiled and said 'Human Resource Management (HRM)'; she gave me a long stare, shook her head, and said, "All of you keep studying HRM, but the majority of you are unable to solve our management challenges." I was stunned for a moment because this was not what I had expected to hear from her. However, I recognised she was speaking as a result of her organization's numerous management issues. It is important to highlight that it would be incorrect to argue that her organization's management have failed; nonetheless, problems will always arise in different forms owing to the ever-changing nature of the business environment. Nwoka (2019) in his book stated that there are changes in the society which affect organizations, which HR managers must monitor closely to be able to position their workforce for the necessary change, and this changes include globalization, increased competition, as well as changes in product, service delivery and processes.

Regulations governing equality, diversity, discrimination, and data protection have an impact on today's workplaces. This may be a difficult undertaking, given the various factors that go into appropriate workplace behaviour, such as charges of bullying and failing to achieve quality standards. Human resource professionals draught codes of conduct as part of any recruitment process, and employers are expected to pay greater attention to standards of behaviour than in the past (Arbor, 2020).

The phrase 'Human Resource' was coined by American economist John Rojers Commons in his book 'The Distribution of Wealth' (Commons, 1893). In his 1958 report titled 'The Human Resource Function,' Edward Wight Bakke (sociologist and economist) provided a more updated perspective.

Taking a few steps back, we can see that the essential word that underpins all of the other terminologies used in this study is 'management.' A definition of management as a process has three parts: first, resource coordination; second, the execution of managerial duties as a method of attaining coordination; and third, determining the goal or aim of the management process (Chetana, 2020). From the above description of management we can deduce that in order to efficiently co-ordinate resources we must identify the type of resources we are dealing with.

The broad sorts of activity in any function of management, whether it be manufacturing, sales, engineering, finance, or whatever, according to Bakke (1958), arises from the fact that management's general duty is to employ resources efficiently for organisational goals. Money, materials (i.e., plant, equipment, raw materials), people, ideas, the market, and, in some situations, nature are the six primary resources. In regard to certain of these resources, every manager will identify the nature of the managerial tasks connected with undertaking such operations (see Table 1.).

Table 1. Functions of Management

THE FUNCTIONS OF	ARE RELATED PRIMARIY TO THE RESOURCE OF
Production, plant and product engineering	Materials
Financing and Budgeting	Money
Marketing and public relations	Market
Research, design and development	Ideas
Conservation	Nature

Source: (Bakke, 1958)

The failure of an organization's effort to achieve its specified objectives can be attributed to a lack of attention or success with respect to the functions dealing with any of these six resources mentioned above. Assume there is sufficient information about the upkeep, development, exploitation, and coordination of all of the foregoing resources relating to money, materials, people, ideas, and nature, but not those linked to the market; the consequence might be disastrous. A single weak functional region undermines the whole system. The weakest link in the chain is the weakest link in the chain. Table 2. shows a detailed description of 11 types of resource management as listed by (Spacey, 2017).

Table 2. Types of Resource Management

TYPES OF MANAGEMENT RESOURCES	FUNCTIONS
Human Resource Management	Organizational structure, recruiting, on boarding, training and development, performance management, remuneration, payroll, benefits, industrial relations, and compliance are all aspects of managing people.
Natural Resource Management	Natural resources, such as land, water, soil, trees, plants, and animals, must be stewarded to guarantee that they are preserved for future generations.
Project Resource Management	Resource levelling is a strategy for allocating resources given to a project.
Financial Resource Management	Managing financial assets and liabilities.
Infrastructural Resource Management	Deployment, operation, and maintenance of basic infrastructure such as bridges and electric grids.
Facility Resource Management	Taking care of a facility like an office building or a data centre.
Enterprise Asset Management	Managing the capital assets of an organization
Public Asset Management	Managing the capital assets of a nation, region or city.
Digital Asset Management	Managing digital assets such as documents and media.
Inventory Management	Control and optimization of inventory.
Information Technology Service Management	As a collecting service specified by a service level agreement, managing information technology assets

Source: compiled by author

The Human Resource Department (HRD) is a department inside the corporation that deals with issues that affect the employees. HRM is the responsibility for an organization's productive use of and constructive dealings with its employees, according to the Dictionary of Human Resources and Personnel Management, while a Human Resource Manager is a person who is responsible for an organization's productive use of its employees; furthermore, a Human Resource Officer is a person who deals with the staff in a company, particularly interviewing candidates for new positions (Collin, 2006).

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

It goes without saying that when the objective of HRM is unknown, abuse is bound to occur. This is why the manager must understand the strategic position to be gained or the purpose to be achieved by HRM.

According to the findings of Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler Int. Ltd., commonly known as KPMG's 'Future of HR 2020' survey, which included over 1,300 HR executives from around the world, about 3 in 5 HR leaders believe that the HR function will quickly become irrelevant if it does not modernise its approach to understanding and planning for the future needs of the workforce. In summary, enterprises of all shapes and sizes throughout the world agree that if the HR function continues to operate or deliver in the same way, it will cease to exist in its conventional form. CEOs are also concerned about the impending condition of insignificance.

According to Spears (2019), two-thirds of respondents to their 2019 Global CEO Outlook¹ believe that their firm would become obsolete if they do not adapt to the changing environment. The HR function's goals become irrelevant in this situation.

OBJECTIVES OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

HRM's major goal is to ensuring that an organization's personnel is competent and willing to work. Other goals exist in addition to these. HRM goals are divided into four categories: Personal, societal, organisational, functional, and organisational (Sampras, 2019).

Table. 3 Categories of HRM and their Objectives

SOCIETAL	Measures taken in response to the company's and its workers' ethical and social demands or problems. Equal opportunity and equal compensation for equal labour are examples of legal concerns.
ORGANIZATIONAL	Actions made to assist assure the organization's efficiency. This involves things like staff training, recruiting the correct amount of people for the job, and keeping high employee retention rates.
FUNCTIONAL	These are the policies and procedures in place to ensure that HR is running smoothly throughout the business. This involves ensuring that all of HR's resources are being utilised to their fullest extent.
PERSONAL	Employees' personal aspirations are supported by resources. Offering opportunities for education or professional advancement, as well as preserving employee happiness, are all part of this.

Source: Compiled by author

The general manager's task is to successfully manage the six resources listed above in order to achieve corporate goals. What does this entail in terms of money, materials, the market, people, ideas, and the natural world? It entails:

- To understand the nature, potentialities, and limitations of the resource, as well as the circumstances of its usage, in depth, objectively, and realistically.
- To maintain and retain a sufficient number and quality of resource for the organization's demands.
- To use the resource's potential to the utmost degree feasible.
- To make the most use of a resource in the organization's activities and operations.
- To weave together the efforts in relation to each resource such that a well-organized and well-integrated overall outcome is achieved.

The management duties of understanding, maintaining, developing, employing or utilising, and integrating these resources into a functional whole outline the sorts of actions management must carry out with respect to each of these resources.

When a company expands its activities into other nations, globalisation has a substantial influence on HR development and management. Companies must consider a variety of practical adaptations in order to employ, train, retrain, and maintain a workforce that is frequently dispersed across many nations.

The human resource department must adjust to new ways of thinking and practises, such as international rules and technology advancements (Nwoka, 2019).

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

HRM may be a major difficulty for small businesses, which sometimes lack an HR department or rely on a single HR officer, or where HRM tasks are still delegated to the CEO. What they need to realise is that smaller businesses must also recognise the obstacles they face in order to plan for HR concerns.

Ten of today's most prevalent human resource difficulties are mentioned below, along with solutions that you may rapidly adopt in your firm, as suggested by (Staffing, 2020).

- **Compliance with Laws and Regulation:** For company owners, keeping up with changing labour rules is a challenge. Many people opt to ignore employment rules because they believe they do not apply to their company. However, doing so may result in audits, litigation, and, in the worst-case scenario, your company's collapse. It's critical to ensure that your company complies with local, state, and federal labour regulations, no matter how big or small it is. Everything from hiring methods to salary payment to workplace safety is governed by legislation. The Nigerian Labour Act is the fundamental piece of law that governs the interaction between employers and employees in Nigeria. It comprises a number of laws that control this dynamic of relationships, as well as all of the regulatory processes that apply to employers. It appears that the Labour Act is not applicable to all classes of employees in Nigeria; The Act uses the word 'workers' in describing employees, and defines workers as not including persons exercising administrative, executive, technical or professional functions as public officers or otherwise. This implies you are not protected by the Labour Act if your job is administrative, executive, technical, or professional. (Lawpadi, 2020). Other laws that are of importance are the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Promulgation) Act (Chapter C23, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004, as amended) and the National Industrial Court of Nigeria Act 2006, which prescribes the jurisdiction of the National Industrial Court of Nigeria (NICN); Unlike the Labour Act, which is limited in its scope of application as it regulates only the employment of 'workers' defined in the act as employees who perform manual labour or clerical work – the Constitution, the NICN Act, the Trade Unions Act and the Personal Income Tax Act apply to all categories of employee, with some exceptions (Lexology, 2020).
- **Management Changes:** As a company expands, so do its strategies, structure, and internal procedures. Some staff are finding it difficult to adjust to the changes. During times of upheaval, many businesses see a drop in production and morale. This is why business leaders should concentrate on explaining the change's advantages to all stakeholders. Staff meetings on a regular basis are a wonderful place to start. Your team will be more likely to accept the change if they understand why, how, and when it will happen.
- **Leadership Development:** According to a recent research, more than a third of businesses are only doing a fair job of implementing leadership development programmes (Loew, 2015). In Brandon Hall Group's State of Leadership Development Study, 36% of firms confessed that their leadership development procedures are below average. Leadership development is important for keeping your management team engaged and motivated, as well as preparing them for future responsibilities. Make it a part of the community's culture. Every day, provide opportunities for them to use their strengths. Achieving objectives would encourage them and provide them with opportunities to improve their talents.
- **Workforce Training and Development:** Another prevalent HR issue is not investing in the training and development of lower-level employees. Some firms are having difficulty obtaining the necessary resources. Front-line employees are some of your hardest workers, yet they may not have time to attend a training course. Training and development don't have to be time-consuming or expensive. Managers and senior leadership should be encouraged to mentor their subordinates. You may also offer customers the option of doing online training courses at their own speed. If you invest in your employees, you will have a devoted and productive workforce.
- **Adapting to Innovation:** Technology evolves at a rapid pace. Businesses must change quickly or risk being left behind by their competition. Getting staff to accept innovation and understand new technologies is a struggle for small business owners. It's crucial to communicate. Make sure your staff knows the why, when, and how of any change. Set clear goals for initiative acceptance and provide staff the training they need to feel comfortable with it.
- **Compensation:** Many businesses are unsure how to appropriately organise employee remuneration. Small firms must compete not just with other small enterprises, but also with large organisations with large payroll expenditures. Benefits, training, taxes, and other expenditures, which can vary from 1.5 to 3 times the employee's income, must also be considered (Mueller, 2020). Salary is crucial, but it isn't necessarily the most significant aspect for job seekers. One method to compensate for a decreased income is to set up a system that rewards staff for exceptional performance (Entrepreneur, 2020). Consider implementing incentive programmes such as profit sharing or bonuses, which may benefit both the individual and the organisation.
- **Understanding Benefits Packages:** In the United States, the Affordable Care Act has been a source of frustration for many small companies in recent years. Companies must either pass on rising healthcare expenses to employees or absorb a hit to their bottom line as a result of rising healthcare expenditures. Understanding benefits packages is critical since they might be a determining factor for new recruits. There are several choices for delivering healthcare coverage to small businesses with less than 50 workers. Buying a plan through the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) marketplace is one alternative. This allows you to take advantage of a tax credit, which can help offset expenditures. In Nigeria, the federal government established the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), which is a corporate body established by the Federal Government of Nigeria under Act 35 of the 1999 Constitution to improve the health of all Nigerians at an affordable cost. NHIS also regulates private health insurance provided by HMOs (NHIS, 2020). At the state level, Bayelsa State (in

Nigeria) stands out since the Bayelsa Health Insurance Scheme (BHIS) was founded by legislation on the 19th of July, 2013 with the goal of providing healthcare to the state's inhabitants and residents. Its mission is to guarantee that healthcare services are provided to state residents first in the official sector, then to private individuals and enterprises (BHIS, 2020). Other advantages to consider include vacation time, flex time, complimentary snacks, wellness initiatives, and commuting benefits. These benefits are a cost-effective method to provide additional bonuses, and they're quite popular among today's workforce!

- **Recruiting Talented Employees:** Attracting talent necessitates a significant commitment of both time and money. It's challenging for business owners to strike a balance between keeping their company functioning and recruiting the appropriate individuals at the right moment. Furthermore, unless a candidate has worked for you for a length of time, it is hard to determine whether or not they will be a good fit. Using a recruitment firm is one of the most effective methods to discover the perfect personnel for your organisation. They provide temp-to-hire services that allow you to test out new staff with minimal risk. You'll save time, money, and aggravation, and you could even meet a potential executive or business partner as a result.
- **Retaining Talented Employees:** Talented employees are hard to come by. Start-ups and small businesses don't have the same vast resources as their larger rivals for retirement plans, pricey insurance plans, and other high-cost things, at least not yet. Employee turnover is costly and can have a detrimental influence on a company's success. Employee on boarding is really beneficial. According to research, employees who go through a systematic on boarding process are 58 percent more likely to stay with a firm for three years or longer (Snow, 2020). Staffing (2020) wrote an article titled "5 Employee on boarding Technology Solutions Your Company Needs to Be Using" to learn about your options.
- **Work Place Diversity:** Ethnic and cultural diversity, different ages, these are just a few of the numerous variables that contribute to workplace diversity being a constant struggle for small organisations. Litigation is a serious possibility if you don't safeguard your employees from harassment. The solution is to foster a healthy and productive work environment by fostering a culture of cooperation and respect. Furthermore, a diversity training programme must be implemented (Duggan, 2020). Employers are in charge of establishing workplace behaviour norms. Early on, standards and a system of accountability should be established.

GAP IN LITERATURE

As previously stated, the corporate environment has a significant impact on the difficulties that test the human resource manager's position and performance. Employees increasingly place a high value on corporate culture as well as mission.

When it comes to attracting top talent, having a strong mission and culture is vital, with the wider employer value offer becoming increasingly valuable in today's competitive employment market.

According to Glassdoor's Mission & Culture Survey 2019, conducted online by The Harris Poll in June 2019, over three-quarters (77%) of adults in four countries (the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany) would consider a company's culture before applying for a job there, and 79 percent would consider a company's mission and purpose before applying for a job there (Glassdoor, 2019). (See Tables 4&5).

Table 4. Mission Survey Data

	All Countries	United States	United Kingdom	France	Germany
It is important for an employer to have a clear mission and purpose	89%	89%	89%	91%	88%
I would consider a company's mission and purpose before applying for a job there	79%	80%	77%	81%	79%
Employers are becoming more mission-driven to recruit and retain employees	77%	78%	78%	75%	76%
People where I work are more motivated and engaged because of our strong company mission (Base: Employed)	66%	69%	66%	66%	65%
My company's mission is one of the main reasons I stay in my job (Base: Employed)	64%	64%	60%	70%	63%

Source: (Glassdoor, 2019)

Table 5. Culture Survey Data

	All Countries	United States	United Kingdom	France	Germany
I would consider a company's culture before applying there	77%	77%	75%	79%	77%
I would not apply to a company unless its values align with my own personal values	73%	70%	69%	76%	76%
If my current company's culture deteriorates, I would look for a job elsewhere (Base: Employed)	71%	74%	70%	75%	67%
My company's culture is one of the main reasons I stay in my job (Base: Employed)	65%	66%	63%	69%	61%
Company culture is more important than salary when it comes to being satisfied at work	56%	58%	57%	56%	54%

Source: (Glassdoor, 2019)

The importance of culture and corporate mission in both employee recruitment and retention, as well as the extent to which candidates are increasingly seeking for companies whose beliefs coincide with their own personal values, were among the key results of Glassdoor's poll. The glassdoor survey also discovered the following:

- Millennials (18-34 years old) are more likely than those 45 and older to choose company culture above money in two of the four nations surveyed: the United States (65% vs. 52 % age 45+) and the United Kingdom (66 % vs. % age 45+).
- Before applying for a job, 79 % would think about a company's mission and purpose, and over three quarters (77 %) would think about its culture.
- One of the key reasons that nearly two-thirds of employees (65%) stay in their jobs is because of the company culture.

- Employees would vote with their feet if their present company's culture deteriorated: 71% of employees would search for new possibilities elsewhere if their current company's culture deteriorated.
- More than three-quarters of individuals (77%) say that firms are becoming more mission-driven in their efforts to recruit and retain employees.

If this type of study can be reproduced across Nigeria, we may be able to significantly close the gap between employers and employees, improving productivity and service delivery.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION

Finally, when it comes to addressing the ever-changing current difficulties in human resource management, it is critical for smaller firms to stand on the shoulders of giants.

The corporate environment has changed dramatically in recent years and continues to do so, and employee behaviours and incentives have shifted along with it. Employees of all ages and nationalities now place a high importance on values, which is reflected in the rise of passion-driven causes throughout the world. It's vital for an employer to be able to identify and convey its values, as well as continuously demonstrate that they are being followed (Glassdoor, 2019).

As a result of everything that has been discussed thus far, I strongly advise HR managers to examine their organization's structure and mission, analyse its business environment, and approach it with the understanding that: Shaping the workforce is HR's defining challenge, and passing the "culture/mission test" is critical.

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