HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT AND EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE IN NIGERIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Itunu Olu-Ogunleye[1*], James Akinbode[2], Opeyemi Oyelude[3] & Oluwole Ogunleye[4]

[1,2,3]Department of Industrial Relations and Personnel Management
Bowen University, Iwo, Osun State, Nigeria

[4]Department of Social Development, Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo

*Corresponding Author's Email: itunu.olu-ogunleye@bowen.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

Human capital has been found to be essential in any establishment, manufacturing and service organisation inclusive. In service organisations such as local government, which is the third tier of a federal system of government, human capital has been the bedrock of service delivery. The availability of human capital is of less an issue compared to the management of human capital because this often makes the difference in organisations. Employee sourcing, engagement, and disengagement are critical activities of human capital management (HCM) that influence employee performance as established in extant studies. This suggests that one of the reasons some organisations are high performers can be attributed to the human capital management approach. However, the growing deficiencies, incoherence and incompetence of many local government employees indicate that the existing human capital management approaches are ineffective and cannot guarantee effective and efficient employee performance. With extensive literature review on human capital management and employee performance, local governments in Nigeria were found to be indecisive in human capital management approaches and this has not driven desired employees' performance level. The paper concludes that human capital management at the local government level in Nigeria is not well-positioned to drive employees' performance. To change the narrative of the unimpressive performance of employees at that tier of government, appropriate HCM approaches must be adopted. As a result of this submission; objective recruitment and selection, employees' professional and career development should be given priority.

Keywords: Employee performance; Human capital management; Local government; Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Government of any nation have as top priority need to protect and care for the welfare of her citizens. This seems to apply to all forms of governmental systems. For instance, in federalism where tiers of government are operated, the three tiers of government have their different

mandates which would not be possibly achieved without efficient mobilisation of employees. This is the area in which human capital management is known for. The critical role of human capital management has been challenged owing to the performance of governments around the world. Although some governments especially those in the developed climes are outstanding in delivering their mandates, those in developing climes appear to be unimpressive. A clear pointer of difference in the performance of governments across the globe has been linked to human capital management.

Employee sourcing, engagement, and disengagement are activities at the centre of human capital management in this contemporary age (Ebeloku et al., 2018). This is because managers and administrators have found that these activities are critical to employees and the organisation's performance. In context, employee performance refers to an employee's work accomplishments after putting in the necessary effort to accomplish a task (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). Therefore, for governments to achieve their goals and objectives it is expected that the employees' performance is of significant input. At the local government level, more is expected of the employees because they operate at the grassroots. However, in Nigeria, little impact on local government service delivery has been felt by citizens and residents over the years. This can be linked to unimpressive employees' performance in a way and an inappropriate human capital management approach.

On the first hand, existing employees' culture of inefficiency and maladministration is assumed to have been a factor. On the other hand, it is possible that employees have not been objectively sourced, engaged and disengaged appropriately (Onyekwelu & Nwoke, 2021). The human capital management approach is weak in this instance. Therefore, effective human capital management would be required to correct the anomaly. This view requires literature backing and that is why this review looked into extant studies on human capital management and employees' performance in the Nigerian local governments.

METHODOLOGY

This is a systematic literature review which targeted human capital management and employees' performance in the Nigerian local governments. The review used keyword searches like human capital management, employee disengagement, employee engagement, employee performance, and employee sourcing from reputable journal outlets to have evolved extensive literature review. The search was divided into phases according to the study's variables. All of the articles were found to be pertinent and appropriate for the review. Journal quality and publication year were used as inclusion criteria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Local Government in Nigeria

Local government in Nigeria is a creation of British colonial rule which has evolved in terms of name, structure, composition and administration in the early period of the nation's independence, military rules and democratic eras with different agitations. Specifically, between the 1930s and 1940s, local government was with the nomenclature chief-in-council and chief-and-council. During this era, traditional rulers occupy a fundamental place in the running of the local government system.

Ayayi (2000), opined that a major reform of local government administration was witnessed in Nigeria in the year 1991 with the introduction legislative arm. In addition, the number of local governments increased to 589. In 1994, it was increased to 774 and this is what holds till date. Regrettably, local governments in Nigeria today are weak and ineffective a situation which summarises the abysmal failure of the governmental tier and a fundamental issue to this is human capital management.

Performance of Employees in Nigerian Local Governments

Performance is a multifaceted concept with each perspective attempting to clarify outcomes from efforts. Performance is the actual output or results measured against its expected outputs in a certain period. It is about the output of a given task or assignment.

Within human capital management parlance, performance encapsulates a record of outcomes resulting from the activity for a certain period. In this study, employee performance in local government refers to service delivery to citizens in terms of relationship, quality of service delivery, knowledge of work and skills, sense of creativity in solving problems, cooperation with other employees in solving issues, dependability that is attendance and completion of work and personal qualities is regarding personality, leadership, courteous, and personal integrity.

Some studies have suggested the above measures of performance. Most studies have agreed that performance measurement is multifaceted but agreed that it is about service delivery, improved product and profitability (Ali, 2020). However, the presence of multiple dimensions to performance in public service organisations like the local government has made the implementation of performance measurement problematic.

Human Capital Management

Ugbo (2014) defines human capital as a representation of human skills and capabilities generated by investment in education and health. Increasing man's educational levels is critical to human capital development. Individuals' skills, judgement, abilities, knowledge, wisdom,

and competencies for the production of goods and services will undoubtedly improve as education develops. Sampson et al., (2016) opined that human capital management is focused on the collection, analysis, and presentation of data that influences the direction of significant corporate strategy, investment, and operational people management decisions at the corporate and frontline management levels.

Human capital management encompasses employee training, career development, performance management, coaching, mentoring, organisational development, and other related concepts (Onyekwelu & Nwoke 2021). Human capital management acknowledges that not all labour is equal and that investing in employees can improve their quality of life. An employee's educational experience and abilities have monetary value for both the employee and the organisation as a whole. Human resources, like any other capital, can be invested in through education and training (Akhigbe & Chibuogwu 2017). This type of exercise improves the quality and level of production.

To sum up the concept of 'human capital management' thereafter referred to as HCM, is the act of sourcing, engaging and disengagement individuals in a system in an efficient manner. Such a system could be a microsystem 'organisation' or a macro system 'nation'. In an organisation like local government, individuals referred to as civil servants are men and women, young and old who render services of the local government on the grass root. Therefore, their performance in terms of service delivery which is a function of commitment is fundamental to the day-to-day running of the local government. The opinion suggests that HCM "is a process by which we achieve desired results through efficient utilization of human resources".

Activities of Human Capital Management

Extant studies (S. Mahmood et al., 2021; Suta, 2018; Tizhe-oaya et al., 2017) have suggested what human capital management entails such as employee sourcing, engagement (training, performance review, among others) and disengagement (termination).

Employee Sourcing

Employee sourcing is the process of identifying potential employees and encouraging them to apply for positions within the organisation. It all comes down to recruitment and selection. Recruitment is the process of gathering a pool of applicants to facilitate selection. Recruitment is the process of identifying, selecting, and hiring the most qualified applicant for a job opening from within or outside of an organisation. Evaluating job requirements, attracting employees to that occupation, vetting and selecting the right candidates, contracting, and coordinating the new employee with the organisation are all part of the recruitment process (Hamza et al., 2021). Subjective recruitment and selection is one of the most important aspects of becoming a successful business.

The process of selecting individuals with relevant qualifications to fill existing or anticipated openings is known as selection. The goal of selection is to match people with jobs (Akhigbe & Chibuogwu, 2017). Finally, if the selection decision is to contribute to the success of the organisation, it must focus on performance-related issues. In the views of AlShaikhly & AlTaher (2017), the process of selecting the best candidate to fill a vacant position entails selecting the best candidate for the vacant position. The process of selecting qualified individuals who are available to fill positions in an organisation is known as human resource selection. Selection is a critical function of business enterprise management that necessitates special skills and expertise if a business organisation is to remain competitive (Nor, 2018).

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is literarily about the involvement of employees with work and passion for work. Vance (2016) defines employee engagement as the employee's positive attitude toward the organisation and its value." An engaged employee is aware of the business context and collaborates with colleagues to improve job performance for the benefit of the organisation. Employee engagement is defined as a person's cognitive, emotional, and behavioural energy directed toward achieving positive organisations observers' outcomes (Imandin et al., 2014).

Employee engagement is defined as employees' emotional attachment to their organisation and the actions they take to ensure the organisation's success; engaged employees show care, dedication, enthusiasm, accountability, and a focus on results (Allen, 2014). Employee engagement is the result of a two-way relationship between employer and employee. Engaged employees show care, dedication, enthusiasm, accountability, and a focus on results. The organisation must work to foster and develop employee engagement.

Extant studies (Hermina & Yosepha, 2019; S. Mahmood et al., 2021; Teo & Low, 2016) have identified factors such as compensation and performance appraisal that propel employee engagement. Compensation, for example, has a significant impact on employee engagement because it energises employees and provides a sense of organisational belonging. Mahmood et al., (2014) variables such as salary, rewards, and indirect compensation should be given high priority because they have a significant impact on employee performance. Furthermore, the compensation structure is critical for improving organisational performance Ahmad et al., (2019).

Employee performance appraisal is also the methodical assessment of employees' continuous quality improvement prospect over time by managers or other persons or bodies assigned with the task. Performance management refers to the process of planning performance, conducting assessments, providing feedback, and mentoring an employee or team on how to improve performance (Kundu & Mor 2016). Organisations that want to improve their performance must

create a well-structured and comprehensive performance management system (Budriene & Diskiene 2020).

Employee Disengagement

Employee disengagement is a disconnect of an employee from work roles, precisely the physical, cognitive or emotional withdrawal of employees during role performances (Kahn 1990). Employees who show a lack of interest, commitment, and enthusiasm in the workplace are referred to as disinterested (Allam 2017). From the employer's perspective, it is the discontinuation of an employment contract.

Employee disengagement can manifest in different ways, from the side employees such as employee unwillingness to take part in problem-solving, less loyalty to the organisation, work within and display an unwillingness to extend beyond, the stipulated organisational standards, showing negative attitude to the vision, purpose and values of the organisation, doing less to accomplish tasks, showing lack of commitment, interest and enthusiasm to work, and increased absenteeism and presenteeism, among others (Allam, 2017; Govindarajo et al., 2014; Osborne & Hammoud, 2017).

Moyo (2020) opined that employees who are disengaged do not advocate for their company as a place to work and are less likely to recommend their company's products or services (Wolff, 2014). hey are less innovative and creative, and they are less likely to share new ideas with colleagues (Pratima & Bhagirathi, 2016). Employees who are disengaged are frequently dissatisfied, uncommitted, and intend to leave their organisation. As a result, organisations must pay attention to the employee disengagement phenomenon, as it has a significant impact on both the worker and the employer, just as employee engagement does (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017).

Problems of Human Capital Management in the Nigerian Local Government

Local government is a grassroots government that is tasked with protecting and providing social services to residents of communities. It has been discovered that people in the localities face the challenge of attracting the attention of upper governments, which continually exposes the residents' vulnerabilities. It is worth noting that efforts to meet the needs of remote dwellers, along with other factors, necessitated the establishment of local government in Nigeria (Ajulor et al., 2021). Government activities at the grassroots such as the provision of basic amenities, primary healthcare, and education among others have been hampered in many developing countries including Nigeria due to inefficient human capital management.

Dibie (2003) opines that the problem of local governments in Nigeria is one of personnel. Studies have identified one of the factors responsible for the unimpressive performance of employees at the local government levels to be ineffective human capital management. These

include but are not limited to objective employee sourcing, inappropriate and undefined employee engagement, and retention of low morale employees, among others.

Specifically, employee sourcing was identified by Oviasuyi et al., (2010) as an unorganized activity at the local government level in Nigeria. According to the authors, this activity is subject to favouritism, man knows man and all other forms of subjective connotations. Whereas it should be objectively carried out to get the best the employee into a particular position in the local government. In other sectors, when this happens it comes with an adverse effect on performance as those individuals often fell short of competence to deliver on the job and as such affects performance on the job. This is assumed to be a factor plaguing the performance of employees at the local government level and deserves some empirical investigation.

The study of Murana (2015) condemned inadequate engagement of employees at the local government level as many do not show up in the office at all while those around engage in personal business activities or hang around discussing irrelevant issues. It is a common trend in the public service in Nigeria but worst at the local government level. From the human capital management perspective, employees need to be on the ground to deliver service but in this case, when some employees do not come to the office regularly or do not show up, it will be appropriate to investigate how employee engagement is related to service delivery at the local government level.

Also, frequent political interference has made employee separation untidy without following due process (Musa & Ajibade, 2017). Resignation, termination and other forms of separation means have been abused at the local government levels in Nigeria with employees not well guided about how to through in their separation notice or how they should be properly disengaged from the service of the local government. It is in this regard that the study investigated the impact of HCM on the performance of employees' local government in Nigeria.

Empirical Review

There are specific studies (Ajulor et al., 2021; Madubueze et al., 2015; Onyekwelu & Nwoke, 2021) that have been carried out on human capital management and employee performance. The study of Onyekwelu and Nwoke (2021) investigated human resource development and employee performance in Anambra state's Idemili south local government Council (2006-2018). The study is based on Theodore Schultz's Human Capital Development Theory, which he proposed in 1961. The findings indicate a link between human resource development and the quality of service delivery provided by the staff of Idemili South Local Government Council in Anambra State. The study also recommended that the Local Government's management ensure that all employees are aware of, and have adequate knowledge of, its human resource

development policy. To improve the effectiveness of human resource development programmes, post-training evaluation should be implemented.

Ajulor et al., (2021) examine human capital development and service delivery in Ojo Local Government. Local governments in Nigeria, according to the findings, have neglected human capital. The survey design was used, and the data were analysed using SPSS 18 with chi-square at the 0.05 level of significance. Inadequate human capital development, as well as retention strategies for experienced employees, contribute to poor service delivery in local governments. Employees who want to advance in their careers often look for better opportunities in the state, federal, or private sectors. It suggests that adequate attention be paid to the capacity development of employees in local government.

Madubueze et al., (2015) researched "Manpower Development and Utilization in Nigeria's Local Government System: A Study of Ayamelum Local Government Area, Anambra State." Its goal is to investigate human resource development and utilisation. The findings revealed that the selection of staff for training is not a true reflection of the council's actual manpower training needs. Similarly, Agboola (2016) investigated the challenges of state/local government creation in Nigeria: a critical analysis. The study looked at the politics of local government formation in Nigeria and the nature of the Nigerian state. Local governments are seen as a catalyst for rural development in most of the world, but in Nigeria, they are viewed as an afterthought with no decision-making power.

Ugbo, (2014) conducted research on human capital development and service delivery in the Nigerian local government system. In most developing countries, the government is primarily responsible for providing public goods such as health care, education, potable water, electricity, sanitation, and security. Local governments are supposed to bring about positive change in their communities. The relationship between human capital development and efficient service delivery in Nigerian local governments was investigated in this paper. One of the major causes of poor service delivery at the grassroots is inadequate human capital development. It advocated for deliberate policies to encourage the training, development, and retention of skilled/professional labour for long-term development at the local level.

Ali (2020) studied human capital development and employee job performance in selected local government areas in rivers state, Nigeria. The research looked at the connection between talent management strategies and employee job performance. The population consisted of 144 senior staff and heads of departments from eight Rivers State Local Government Areas. The sample size was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula. There is a significant relationship between talent management strategies and employee job performance in Rivers State Local Government Areas. The study discovered that career development should be prioritised for employees to be efficient in their functions and careers.

The effects of human capital development on organisational performance was investigated by Daniel (2019). The goal of the study is to highlight the effects of human capital development on Trust Fund Pension Limited's organisational performance. The modern business world is chaotic and fraught with competition. Failure to adapt to change may result in an organisation's closure. The study's population was 152 people, and a sample size of 110 was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula with a 5% error to tolerance and a 95% level of confidence. Human capital management and organisational performance have a significant relationship, according to the findings.

Theoretical Review

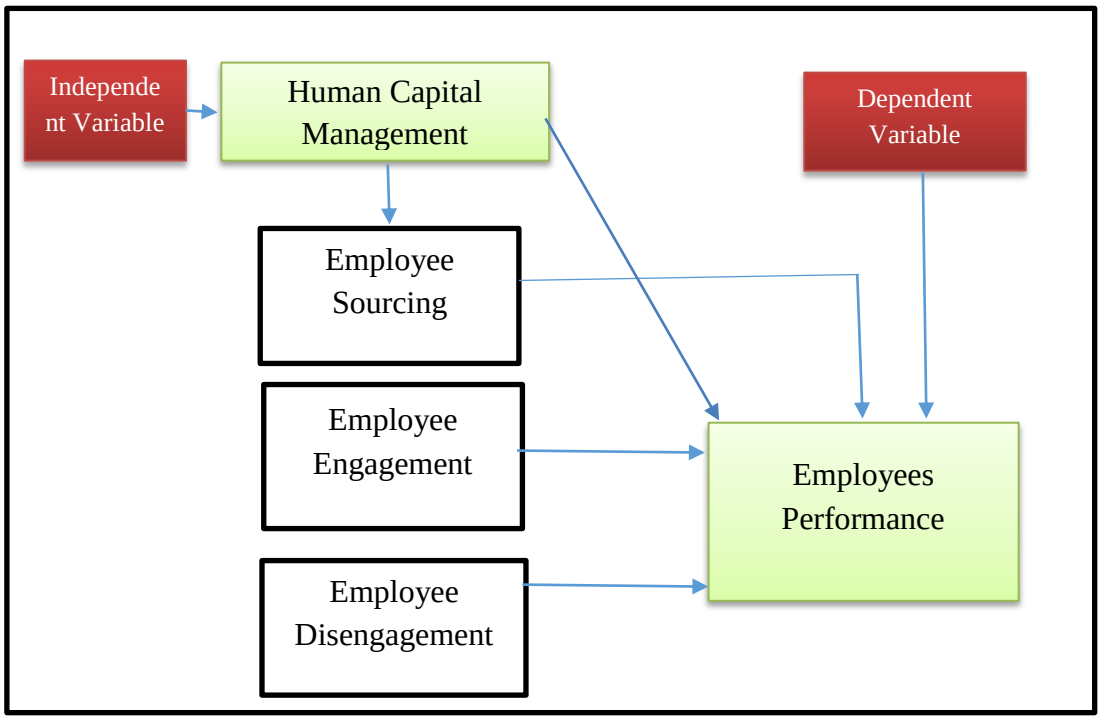
Equity theory was proposed by Adams (1963), It is stated that people evaluate their job inputs and results to those of others and then react to avoid inequalities. The greater a person's sense of equity, the more motivated they will be. Someone who perceives an unfair environment will be demotivated (Al-Zawahreh & Al-Madi, 2012).

Sultan (2016), assert that organisational equity theory is based on the idea that employees believe they are paid equally for work done when compared to those in similar categories, and that they are treated equally in terms of other benefits (Badubi, 2017). Equity is a major concern for labour and business. Equity theory can be applied to any situation, particularly when there is a form of exchange, such as between couples, teammates, or an employer and an employee. In these various situations, feelings of inequity may arise (Ogolo et al., 2016).

Therefore, local government as a system has various departments (units) that interact and inter-depend on each other for the effectiveness of local governments. As a system, the local governments are bound by internal and external environments, which regulate their activities determined by human capital management. The activities of human capital management in the local governments are carried out by Personnel Administration Department under the supervision of the State Local Government Service Commission. The implication is that the Department is not an independent unit in the Council, and therefore, its human capital management activities are influenced by the activities of other interacting units and such enabling environments in the local government.

Conceptual Framework

As shown in the figure below the conceptual framework for the study, Human capital management and employee performance.



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aimed to find out how human capital management affects performance in Nigerian local governments. Based on the literature review, it is concluded that human capital management is related to performance in local governments and has an impact on creating trust and satisfaction among citizens who look up to local government authorities to ensure that their constitutional rights and privileges are exercised within the limits of the local government's powers. Poor employee performance in local governments is a result of inadequate human capital management, inadequate employee sourcing strategies as well as undefined employee engagement. A local government is a grassroots government tasked with protecting and providing social welfare to residents of communities and it must live up to the task and function.

Employees who are competent, talented, and well-trained are required to provide effective service to the general public. The availability of human capital management in local

government has come under scrutiny. In light of this, the study makes the recommendations listed below.

- Local governments should encourage high-potential employees, and conduct objective recruitment and selection to ensure that qualified employees are recruited.
- A framework or unit for identifying and supporting talent-driven employees should be established in the local governments.
- The local governments should also make certain that funds for development programmes are allotted and made accessible so that such managed personnel can influence effective and efficient service delivery.
- Local governments should support employees' professional and career development. Professional training and certification will help employees' growth and development, but many employees cannot afford to sponsor their career development. A mechanism that would help in employee growth and development should be put in place. The local government should view employee training as a responsibility so that well-trained employees do not have to leave for better jobs after they have been trained.

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