COVID-19 PROTOCOLS AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN NIGERIAN ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of Covid-19 Protocols on two key Human Resource Management Practices using the responses of some Nigerian professional managers as a unit of study. In the study, two dimensions of human resource management practices, employee training/development and performance appraisal, were used as measurements of lockdown of cities and restrictions of movement as an indicator of Covid-19. The exploratory research design was adopted for this study, and a well-crafted E-copy questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert measurement scale was used to collect data. Two hundred and one respondents (201) completed the Google form survey representing 90% of the total sample size. Inferential statistical tools such as correlation and regression analysis were used in testing the stated research hypotheses at a significant level of 0.5. The findings of this study revealed the effect of COVID-19 Protocols on the selected dimensions of human resource management practices, especially the restriction of movement to the workplace, as it affects employee performance measurement, training, and development during the Covid-19 pandemic era. Findings from the study revealed that restriction of movement does have a significant effect on employees' performance measurement appraisal but does not significantly influence employees' training. This could be due to the provision of platforms for effective virtual training by the management of the selected organizations in Nigeria. The study further suggests that future research should be conducted in specific organizations in Nigeria using other dimensions of HRM Practices to acquiesce to the authors' stance in this study.

Keywords: COVID-19, HRM Practices, Performance Measurement, Employees Training.

INTRODUCTION

The new coronavirus pandemic was fully disclosed to the general public for the first time in December of 2019 in the Chinese province of Wuhan (Gondauri, Mikautadze, & Batiashvili, 2020). Generally, the virus's disease is referred to as COVID-19, an acronym for "coronavirus disease 2019." The year that the sickness was identified for the first time is represented by the number "2019." The World Health Organization (WHO) announced that the disease constituted a global health emergency towards the end of January 2020 (Yuen, Ye, Fung, Chan, & Jin, 2020). When people come into too close contact with one another, the virus can transfer from one person to another through the respiratory droplets released into the air by an infected person(s) when they cough or sneeze (Ramesh, Siddaiah & Joseph, 2018). There is a possibility that droplets from an infected person could land on various surfaces, putting everyone who touches those surfaces at risk of getting the virus if they then touch their face (ILO, 2020).

The World Health Organisation (WHO) 11 March 2020, declared Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) a serious health hazard that calls for public concern (Wong et al., 2020). The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic affected the global economy in many ways and has changed the workplace rules and procedures because of its connection with the domestic and worldwide economy. Changes in lifestyles of employees and customers to cope with the new work-life style have caused serious health crises for workers and severe setbacks to organizations. The pandemic, according to (Ewepu, 2020), caused working distractions in the lives of workers and organizations across the globe, and this call for urgent alternative ways of managing the plague as well as its effects on business and all stakeholders (business investors, employers, employees, customers & government alike. Employee training sessions that had been planned before the disease outbreak had to be cancelled as a result of this to safeguard staff from becoming infected with the sickness. Since the dreaded disease created interruptions in the workplace, employees could not accomplish the goals or targets established in the past, making performance evaluation and appraisal more difficult (Gondauri, Mikautadze, & Batiashvili, 2020).

Numerous policies and precautionary measures were implemented by national and state governments, including the closure of borders, the imposition of compulsory quarantines, movement restrictions, large gatherings prohibitions, the use of face masks, hand sanitizers, and temperature measuring devices, etc. on people, as well as the lockdown of cities or entire nations, which resulted in widespread adjustments to everyday life and business operations (ILO, 2020). Employees were caught off guard and unprepared for the new work regulations and procedures implemented in their companies due to recent organizational changes. Because the primary responsibility of Human resource management is to recruit, retain, train, retrain, and develop employees' skills and competencies, as well as manage people in the workplace, it

was anticipated that HR would be responsible for managing a significant number of the impacts that COVID-19 has on human resource management practises. There is a high probability that employees in businesses will interact with clients, and there is also the possibility that employees may have direct contact with one another during employee training, which may appear unavoidable. Working from home has become a new work order for some companies as one of the effective ways of helping employees avoid physical interactions and unnecessary movements to reduce the risk of contracting the virus.

Organizations that allow their employees to work from home have reported difficulties in monitoring their employees' performance, and the trend has given rise to severe concerns over work-life balance issues (Olanipekun, Sokefun, and Akinlabi, 2021). Working from home created certain difficulties in managing the operations related to human resources, particularly with regard to the problem of measuring and appraising the performance of employees and providing them with training. Supervisors/Managers could not effectively monitor their subordinates to ensure set targets are met within the time frame; hence, measuring/evaluating employees' performance and rewarding them become very subjective and raised serious concerns for organizational managers. Also, some assigned jobs require learning on the job and mentorship, which was seriously affected by the pandemic. On the issue of work-life balance, working from home brought about distraction and loss of concentration, resulting in serious and unavoidable mistakes that jeopardized the set target and organizational productivity. Thus, the pandemic brought the HR managers to the forefront with the new policies and strategies for adjusting or adapting to the new work order. On this premise, this study intends to look at Covid-19 Protocols as it affects two key Human Resource Management Practices, i.e. (employee training and performance measurement) in the Nigerian context.

Generally speaking, the study seeks to examine the effects of COVID-19 Protocols in two key Human Resource Management Practices in Nigerian organizations (that is, employee training and performance management measurement). Specifically, the study aims to achieve the following objectives:

i. To evaluate the effect of the lockdown of cities on employees training in Nigerian Organizations
ii. To determine the effect of restriction of movement on employees performance appraisal in Nigeria organization.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Lockdown of Cities

The lockdown has been conceptualized as a government-mandated emergency reaction that instructs individuals to remain indoors in the event of an outbreak. In the instance of COVID-

19, the ultimate objective of a lockdown is to flatten the virus's growth curve. The exercise requires the closure of all activity-based centres, such as religious buildings, clubs, hotels, sports centres and schools that could bring together a significant number of people. In addition to the closure of activity-based facilities, other directives such as social distancing, the prohibition of gatherings of more than 20 individuals, and the mandatory use of face masks in public places were strictly enforced (WHO, 2020; CDC, 2020; NCDC, 2020). It is noteworthy that the pandemic was first discovered through an expatriate worker in one of the Multinational manufacturing firms in Ogun State.

In response to the continuing increase and spread of the COVID-19 virus in Nigeria, the federal government ordered a nationwide lockdown on March 30, 2020, effective immediately in Lagos, Ogun, and Abuja (Adekoya & Daka, 2020). This lockdown exercise could not be continued in the face of mounting public unrest caused by the exercise's severe socio-economic implications, resulting in the lockdown being lifted in these states on May 4, 2020. This decision led to the spread of the virus throughout the United States. The recorded daily case on the first day of easing, May 4, 2020, increased to 245 instances, the greatest number since the first index case was reported for the country (NCDC situation report, 2020).

Restriction of Movement

Restriction of Movement refers to the limitation of personal liberty and should be narrowly tailored to ensure the people's health, safety, and welfare. Restriction of Movement orders may include (1) orders for medical quarantine, (2) orders to restrict certain activities, and (3) orders to restrict travel. On Monday, May 18, 2020, the Federal Government of Nigeria approved an extension to movement restrictions introduced due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) through Monday, June 1, 2020. The government stated that the phases of reopening lockdown measures in Lagos, Ogun and Abuja states would proceed more slowly and would not be lifted until June 1, 2020, at the earliest.

Movement restrictions were also implemented in places with a rapid increase in reported cases of COVID-19. There was also a statewide overnight curfew between 20:00 and 06:00 (local time), during which gyms, bars, spas, and clubhouses were closed. On Monday, May 4, 2020, the government progressively relaxed the 24-hour stay-at-home order in Abuja and Lagos. Certain businesses and workplaces were permitted to remain open from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., but they are required to disinfect their workstations and severely enforce social distance and hygiene regulations. Wearing face masks and using hand sanitizers in public became required, while prohibitions on social and religious meetings remain in effect; anyone discovered in violation was prosecuted with a fine, business closure, or imprisonment (Ewepu, 2020).

While Schools and Bars/restaurants remain closed, the government banned interstate passengers from travelling until further notice. The company's activities also operated for only

three days per week (Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays) between the hours of 07:00 and 16:00 with a compulsory mandate by the NCDC to provide liquid soap and running water at all business premises, while supermarkets were also mandated to limit the number of customers in their stores to ten people. Companies found not complying with these measures were to be shut down for six months. Nigeria's airports (international/local flights) also remained closed except for emergency and other essential flights, like cargo transportation and security patrol, until Sunday, June 7, 2020 (Allen, Gabriel-Kona, Gontor, Okafor & Olanipekun, 2022).

As a result of these measures adopted by the government, employee movement was restricted, and employers adopted strategies to work from home in most cases hence, supervisors/managers could not effectively supervise or monitor worker's output to objectively appraise, identify gaps and reward their performance as well as design training needs that will be executed to close employee's identified work deficiencies or gaps.

Employees Development and Training

Development and training are the formal activities conducted by a company to assist employees in acquiring the skills and expertise necessary to fulfil current or future roles (Budd & Bhave, 2010). Generally speaking, development and training activities are intended to help employees continue to make positive contributions in the form of good performance by acquiring new information, skills, and talents (Ivancevich, 2001). According to Mookherjee (2005), on-the-job training is one of the most popular training methods. Additionally, it is an efficient means of training operational people. The employee is trained at their workplace or station. Similarly, Mookherjee (2005) elaborated that off-the-job training is a sort of training that can be administered in various methods. It focuses on lectures, case studies, group discussions, conferences, programmers' instructions, etc. This strategy is typically employed by government and public organizations.

According to Ojo, (2009), training is the process of increasing an employee's knowledge and skills to perform a specific job. This is true regardless of the number of years an employee has spent in the service or the qualification attainment of the workers. The trend in the services will always protrude towards development in the societies and changes in customers' tastes, which organizations need to promptly respond to by training their workers with the most recent techniques, tools, and approaches. According to Peretomode (2001), training is a planned organizational effort or activity concerned with assisting an employee in acquiring specific behaviours, attitudes, concepts, knowledge, and skills immediately to enable them to perform more efficiently and effectively in their current job.

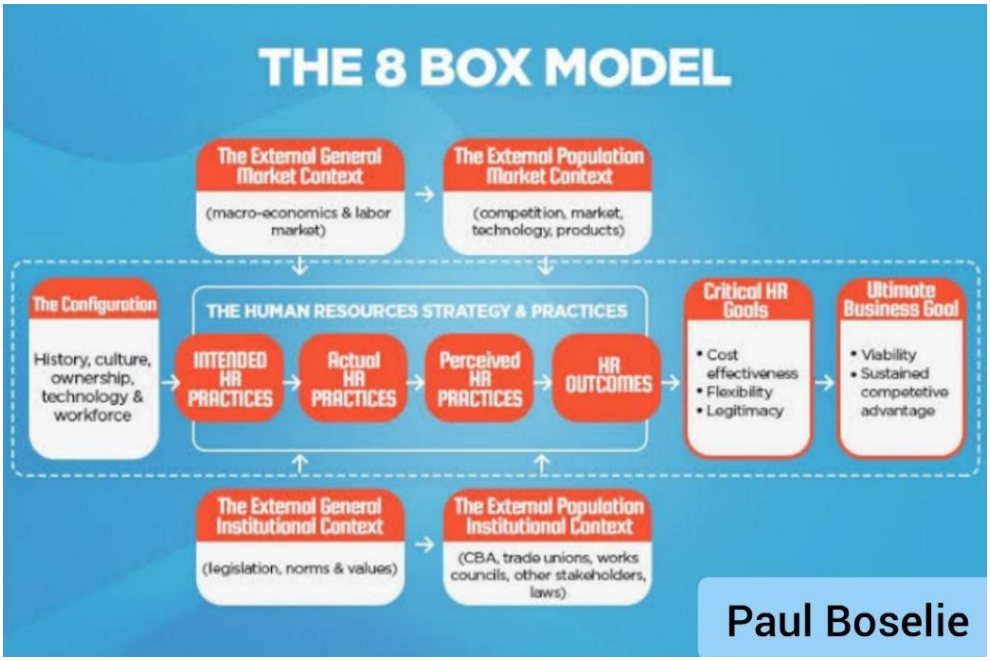
Employees Performance Measurement

Measuring employee performance enables the organization to provide equitable compensation to deserving employees based on established criteria such as ethics, soft skills, initiative, collaborative ability, and employee competency (Lillian, Mathooko, & Sitati, 2012). Performance evaluation processes identify measurements, evaluate, enhance, motivate, and compensate employees for their performance (Mondy & Noe, 2005). Specifically, performance appraisal is a formal technique used by a company to examine and assess its employees' performance periodically. In other words, employees are appraised or evaluated depending on how each person performs their duties relative to a set of standards originally established by the firm's manager. Brown and Heywood (2005) claim that the likelihood of performance evaluation is increased by complementing human resource management strategies such as training and other incentives such as salary, which serve as motivation and can substantially impact employee productivity. With a performance evaluation system, employee productivity, dedication, and retention can be enhanced. Therefore, performance evaluation must be presented to employees to attain the aforementioned results. This can be accomplished internally, and it improves crucial bottom-line outcomes for a firm, such as greater production and profitability (Gallup, 2012). Internal communication increases productivity by streamlining the roles and responsibilities of individuals within businesses (Benner & Tushman, 2003).

Theoretical Review

This section presented a model of human resource management practices with specific reference to two key HR practices (i.e. employees' training and performance measurement appraisal) on how they can be affected positively or negatively due to unexpected external occurrences emanated from the COVID-19 pandemics and its protocols (i.e. lockdown of cities and restriction of movement). The theoretical review presented is borrowed from the 8-box model of Boselie, (2006) to explain how human resource management practices can impair or contributes to external factors such as the covid-19 protocols (Coombs, 2007).

There are diverse kinds of HR models but that of Paul Boselie is being employed in this study due to its comprehensive and explanatory attention to the external factors, such as "The COVID-19 Protocols". As a fact, Boselie's, (2006) model shows important inner and outer factors which had a greater influence on human resources (David De Cenzo et. al, 2016) such that the macroeconomics, the legislation, the market dynamics, etc are all affected by this pandemic globally. For example, the changes in legislation during the pandemic outbreak like the working hours, and the percentage of staff allowed to be in the workplace all impact the HR struggles and goals.



Source: Boselie, (2006) 8 Box Model

Firstly, The 8 Box model above depicts the external population institutional context, the external general institutional context, and the entire external population market context. All these institutions exert greater impacts on HR practices within the organizational context. These external forces influence HR practices in many ways. For example, suppose there are shortages of certain skills in the labour market. In that case, this will affect how labour is sourced, recruited, and hired compared to when there is an availability of qualified workers in abundance. Also, in this study, the institutional context, for example, will bring about certain changes in work regulations and legislation, as was the case of the Covid19 pandemic, where government legislation seriously impacted day-to-day HR practices and organizational activities (Schoukens & Barrio, 2017).

The company's culture, history, and technology affect how HR communicates, what they want to achieve, and how effective the HR policies and rules are. All these factors affect HR strategies and policies in different ways. Therefore, the basic six parts of the model: (1) the intended HR practices, (2) the actual HR practices (3) the Perceived HR practices (4) The HR outcomes (5) the critical HR goals (6) the Ultimate business goals. All have been affected and need to be attuned to match the new challenges provoked by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Anticipated HR practices: This explains the human resources management intention for training, recruitment, and other HR activities but this model shows it is only a starting point.

Real HR practices: The goals outlined in HR policies are admirable; nevertheless, in order to put those policies into practice, HR and managers need to work together. When the HR manager decides to conduct things differently, the goal behind the decision may be positive, but the actual practises may vary.

Perceived HR practices: This provided insight into the employee's perspective regarding the actions taken by the organization. It doesn't matter how hard HR and managers try; if their actions are interpreted in a manner that isn't consistent with what they intend or how they carry them out, the final result won't be an impression that accurately reflects actual HR procedures.

HR outcomes: These are perceived HR practices (hopefully) that lead to certain HR outcomes. These are similar to the ones in the Standard Causal Model of HR described above.

HR outcomes lead to critical HR goals (i.e. legitimacy, flexibility, cost-effectiveness, and so on), which in turn lead to Ultimate business goals (i.e. market capitalization, market share, and profit all related to the viability of the organization, and other factors that help to build competitive advantage (Boselie, 2006). This model was selected to provide a broader possible perspective on the two key HRM practices used in this study, i.e. employee training and development; and performance measurement appraisal as a whole. This provides the basis for a deeper but more robust theoretical foundation for explaining the best way to manage the Covid-19 pandemic as an external factor by adopting social distancing in the Nigerian organization's setting (Akanni & Gabriel, 2020).

Empirical Review

In Gigauri's (2020) study on the effects of COVID-19 on Human Resource Management, the quantitative research practice investigation approach was used to collect primary data from Georgian HR managers. A Google survey and email were used to disseminate a self-administered questionnaire to collect data in June 2020. In total, managers from 48 firms participated in the survey and filled out the questionnaire. The public sector was represented by eight human resource managers, while the others were from private firms. Financial, e-commerce, transportation, construction, manufacturing, tourism and hospitality, and service industry managers were surveyed. Multiple response questions, multiple-choice, closed-ended questions, dichotomous questions, and 5-point Likert scale items with 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree were included in the survey questionnaire. Using IBM SPSS (2020) and Microsoft Excel, descriptive statistics were employed to examine the collected quantitative data.

Reliability statistics Cronbach's alpha demonstrated the high internal consistency of the questionnaire. Thus, the study's findings suggest that constant formal training with employees through virtual communication can be beneficial in overcoming unforeseen events such as the

Covid-19 plague. Also, the HRM strategy could have focused more on employee wellbeing during the pandemic crisis as they are considered more valuable assets. (Mwita, 2019) a study, on Effects of Corona Virus Pandemic (COVID-19) in Selected HRM Practices in Tanzania averred that some key HR functions like recruitment and hiring in the majority of the organizations did not either take place in 35 percent of cases or used only a few instances of (29%) to recruit and select the needed human resources.

This study incorporated both quantitative and qualitative data to analyze and draw conclusions. Interviews with a more open-ended format were used to acquire qualitative data, whilst a questionnaire with predetermined questions was used to collect quantitative data. Due to the fact that this research was carried out during the COVID-19 epidemic, the researchers chose to conduct the online survey through telephone interviews to prevent themselves from becoming infected with the virus from the respondents. During the data gathering process, a sample size of 250 human resource practitioners working in Tanzania was utilized. The use of HR practitioners was deliberate due to the fact that they are actively involved in the day-to-day routines of human resource management activities in organizations. As a result, it is reasonable to assume that HR practitioners know the impacts and contributions of HRM practices in their respective organizations.

It was requested that each of the 250 respondents complete an online survey, and 8 of the respondents were chosen randomly to also participate in an interview. The period of time for data collection was from April 6th to May 10th, 2020. Data was obtained through interviews using content analysis, whilst analysis of the data obtained through online surveys was carried out using descriptive analysis. Based on the findings of this study, COVID-19 had an impact on the management practises of Tanzania's human resources. The majority of these effects were beyond the control of the organizations, but in order to effectively manage a crisis such as this one, human resources departments must act as strategic partners and devise alternative work rules and orders that will allow the business to continue operating normally. Organizations were affected regardless of the sector they operate in, the sector or kind of their production line or services given, the capacity of management to handle crises, or the crisis management readiness of the organizations. According to the findings of the statistical survey, 169 respondents, or 69.8 percent, agreed that employee selection and recruitment activities were being discouraged to avoid any physical or bodily contacts/ interactions and movements that could result in the transmission of COVID-19.

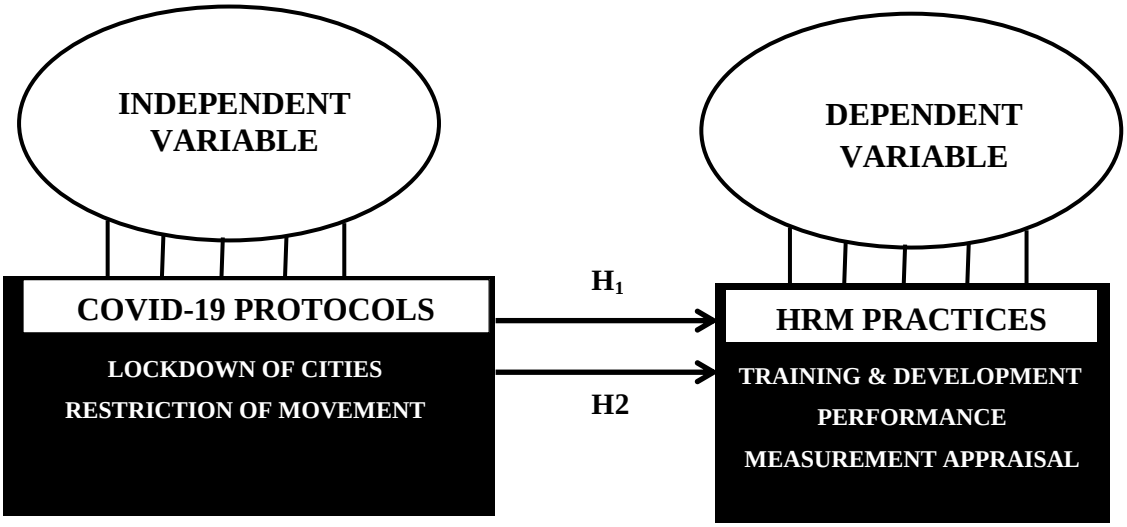
The essence of every research work is to find out certain things for the first time or to improve on certain assumptions put forward by certain authorities (Olorunninsola, 2007). The improvement is either in form of upholding such assumptions or disproving them. However, to

carry out this research work and achieve the stated objectives, it is imperative to restate hypotheses developed to test the assumptions. Thus, the researchers hypothesized as follows:

$H1_o$: Lockdown of cities does not have a significant effect on employees' training and development

$H2_o$: Restriction of movement does not significantly affect employees' performance measurement appraisal.

Conceptual Framework



Source: Researchers' construct (2021)

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The exploratory research design was used for this study. It is conducted about a research problem when there are few or no earlier studies (Bukhari, 2020). Data was collected based on the concepts defined in the research model and tested hypotheses.

Population of the Study: According to Burns and Grove (2003), a population is all of the elements that satisfy the criteria for inclusion in a study. The study population considered was 506 operational managers from different fields in an online HR Forum Platform from various organizations to get in-depth, multi-faceted explorations of the research findings in their real-life settings.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques: "Sampling" is defined as "the process of selecting a group of individuals, events, or behaviours with which to conduct a study (Burns and Grove's, 2003). In order to acquire information that may be generalized about a large population, it is

necessary to pick a specific number of people from that population, or any fraction of that population. The population is typically sampled in order to reduce the likelihood of making mistakes when working with the population. The population size was reduced to determine the appropriate sample size.

Convenience sampling is a method in which the first primary data source was used for the research without any additional requirements being met. This sampling method frequently relies on collecting data from members of the population who are conveniently available to participate in the study. In light of this, the population for the study consists of 506 Nigerian Professional Managers working in various disciplines. The sample size of two hundred and twenty-three (223) was determined by applying Taro Yamane's technique for determining sample size.

Instrumentation: In order to collect the necessary information for this investigation, a questionnaire in the form of a Google survey and an email were sent out over the internet to participants and asked them to fill it out on their own. The purpose of the questionnaire was to elicit replies that would provide the researchers with information that would assist them in addressing the research topic, objectives, questions, and hypotheses. In order to prevent any confusion, the questions were posed in language that was uncomplicated and unambiguous.

The structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data for the study, and it was divided into two sections: the first section sought respondents' demographic information such as years of experience, educational qualifications, marital status, sex, and age; the second part contained items structured around the hypothesized statements; and research questions were based on a five-point Likert scale; (1 = Strongly Disagreed; 2 = Disagreed; 3 = Undecided; 4 = Agree); the first section In order to improve the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, the researchers conducted a pilot study with 42 respondents who are HR practitioners in a variety of Nigerian organizations. This number was chosen to represent 20 percent of the sample size according to the criteria established by the researchers (Israel, 2013).

Validity, as defined by Somekh and Cathy (2005), refers to the extent to which the selection of test items accurately reflects the content that the test is intended to measure. The term "content validity" refers to a measurement that determines the extent to which data gathered with a certain instrument represents a particular aspect of the content of a particular concept. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), the standard practice for determining whether or not the content of a measure is valid is to employ the services of an expert or a professional in the relevant subject. Therefore, to establish the research instrument's validity, the researcher solicited the advice and assistance of the industry experts to validate the measurement. This made the necessary tweaks and modifications to the research instrument easier, ultimately leading to an increase in validity before the instrument was field-tested.

According to Wallman (2001), reliability refers to the consistency of measurement, and the test-retest reliability method is widely used in order to evaluate this aspect of reliability. The instrument's result was analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha Statistic, a measure used to assess the reliability or internal consistency of a set of scales. The result of Cronbach's Alpha for the overall scale of the variables was greater than 0.7, this indicates that the internal reliability of the scale is satisfactory which shows that the instrument is reliable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To further validate the hypotheses set out to answer the study's research questions on Covid-19 Protocols (lockdown of cities and restrictions of movement) on two key HR practices (Employee Training and Performance measurements Appraisal), empirical evidence from Nigeria was tested using the regression analysis. All statistical tests and analyses were conducted using a conventional 95% significance level. The data entry was conducted using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Two hundred and one respondents (201) completed the Google form representing 90% of the total sample size and regression was adopted to test the hypotheses to determine the influence/effect of the dependent and independent variables.

Descriptive Analysis of the Bio-Data

This dealt with the data presentation and analysis of the respondents' demographical variables. The researchers made use of Google forms/e-copies of the questionnaire, the link of which was forwarded to the different Professional Managers in their various disciplines. The results of the analysis are presented, beginning with demographical characteristics of the respondents age, gender, marital status, academic qualifications, years of work experience, and the department of the respondents in the organization as shown in the tables below:

Table 1: The Age distribution of the respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
20-29 Years	77	38.3	38.3	38.3
30-39 Years	87	43.3	43.3	81.6
40-49 Years	26	12.9	12.9	94.5
50 Years and Above	11	5.5	5.5	100.0
Total	201	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey. September 2021.

The table above portrayed that only 77 respondents representing 38.3% falls between the age bracket of 20-29 years, 87 respondents representing 43.3% are in the age bracket of 30-39

years, 26 respondents representing 12.9% are between the age bracket of 40-49 years, and 11 respondents representing 5.5% are 50 years and above. Hence, more respondents within the 30-39 years age bracket participated more in the research, suggesting their availability for the research exercise which could be attributed to their interests in the research topic among other reasons.

Table 2: Gender distribution of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	104	51.7	51.7	51.7
Female	97	48.3	48.3	100.0
Total	201	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey. September 2021.

The table above portrayed that 104 respondents representing 51.7% are male while the remaining 97 respondents representing 48.3% are female. Hence the males participated more in the research suggesting their availability for the research exercise which could be attributed to the feeling that their opinions are very important in the study, among other

reasons.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by marital status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Married	126	62.7	62.7	62.7
Single	73	36.3	36.3	99.0
Widowed	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	201	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey. September 2021.

Table 3 shows 126 respondents representing 62.7% as married, 73 respondents representing 36.3 % as single, and 2 respondents representing 1.0% as widowed. Hence, respondents who are married participated more in the research, suggesting their availability for the research exercise which could be attributed to the feeling that their opinion was important for the study among other reasons.

Table 4: Distribution by academic qualifications of respondent

Academic Qualifications	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
WAEC/GCE	7	3.5	3.5	3.5
OND/NCE	11	5.5	5.5	9.0
HND/B.Sc	123	61.2	61.2	70.1
M.Sc/M.ED/MBA	57	28.4	28.4	98.5
PhD	3	1.5	1.5	100.0
Total	201	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey. September 2021.

Table 4 shows that 7 respondents representing 3.5% possess the WAEC/GCE (school leaving) certificate, 11 respondents representing 5.5% possess the OND/ NCE certificate, and 123 respondents representing 61.2% possess the HND/B.Sc, 57 respondents representing 28.4% possess the M.Sc/M.ED/MBA certificate and 3 respondents representing 1.5% possess the Doctor of Philosophy Certificate. It is clear from the above table that respondents with HND/B.Sc participated more in this research, suggesting their availability for the research exercise which could be attributed to their interest in the research topic among other reasons.

Table 5: Distribution by years of work experience

Years of Work Experience	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1-3 Years	73	36.3	36.3	36.3
4-6 Years	49	24.4	24.4	60.7
7-9 Years	24	11.9	11.9	72.6
10 Years and Above	55	27.4	27.4	100.0
Total	201	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey. September 2021.

Table 5 shows that 73 respondents representing 36.3% possess 1-3 years of experience, 49 respondents representing 24.4% possess 4-6 years of experience, 24 respondents representing 11.9% possess 7-9 years of experience and 55 respondents representing 27.4% possess 10 years

and above experience. It is clear from the above table that respondents with 1-3 years of experience participated more in this study, suggesting their availability for the research exercise which could be attributed to their feelings that their opinions were important in the study, among other reasons.

Table 6: Distribution by department in organization

Department in the Organization	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Human Resource	50	24.9	24.9	24.9
Accounting and Finance	17	8.5	8.5	33.3
Sales and Marketing	16	8.0	8.0	41.3
Media and Publicity	12	6.0	6.0	47.3
Others	106	52.7	52.7	100.0
Total	201	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey. September 2021.

Table 6 indicates that 50 respondents representing 24.9% are from the human resource department, 17 respondents representing 8.5% are in Accounting and Finance department, 16 respondents representing 8% are in the Sales and Marketing department while 106 respondents representing 52.7% are from other departments in their respective organizations and are saddle with the responsibility of managing the workforce in their various units/departments. Hence respondents from other departments not listed above participated more in this study, suggesting their availability for the research exercise which could be attributed to their work schedule.

Model Estimation and Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1:

H_0: Lockdown of cities does not have a significant influence on employees' training and development

H_1: Lockdown of cities does have a significant influence on employees' training and development

Table 7: Model summary of lockdown of cities on employees' training and development

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.058[a]	**.003**	-.002	.74287

a. Predictors: (Constant), LC_M

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	3.860	.199		19.394	.000	3.468	4.253
	LC_M	.045	.054	.058	.819	.414	-.063	.152

a. Dependent Variable: Employees training and development

The table with the heading "Model Summary" revealed the Correlation coefficient of 0.058 and its squared value of 0.003 (0.3%), meaning that the lockdown of cities accounts for only 3 percent influence in the variation of employees' training and development while more than 97% variations in employees training and development are being accounted for by other factors.

The table with the heading "Coefficients[a]" shows the regression is constant/ intercept of 3.860, meaning that with zero lockdowns of cities, employees training and development is 3.860, and regression coefficient/ slope of 0.045 meaning that for each increase in the independent variable (lockdown of cities) the dependent variable (employees training and development) will increase by (0.045). Further, it also reveals a p-value of 0.414 (greater than 0.05) suggesting that the p-value is statistically not significant. Hence, the null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is rejected, thus confirming that the lockdown of cities does not significantly influence employees' training and development.

Hypothesis 2:

H_0- Restriction of movement does not have a significant effect on the performance appraisal of the employees.

H_1- Restriction of movement does have a significant effect on the performance appraisal of the employees.

Table 8: Model summary of restriction of movement of performance appraisal of the employees

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.173[a]	**.030**	.025	.72136

a. Predictors: (Constant), RM_M

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	3.215	.212		15.159	.000	2.796	3.633
	RM_M	.140	.056	**.173**	2.480	**.014**	.029	.251

a. Dependent Variable: PM_M

The table with the heading "Model Summary" revealed the Correlation coefficient of 0.173 and its squared value of 0.030 (3%) meaning that restriction of movement accounts for a 3 percent effect of the variation in performance appraisal of employees while other factors are accounting for 97% in variation in performance appraisal.

The table with the heading "Coefficients[a]" shows the regression constant/ intercept of 3.215 meaning that with zero restriction of movement, performance appraisal is 3.215, and regression coefficient/ slope of 0.140 meaning that for each increase in the independent variable (Restriction of movement) the dependent variable (performance appraisal of employees) will increase by (0.140). The table also reveals a p-value of 0.014 (less than 0.05) suggesting that the p-value is statistically significant. Hence, the null hypothesis (Ho) is therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted, thus confirming that restriction of movement significantly affects employees' performance measurements appraisal.

Discussion of Findings

Below is the discussion of findings as they relate to the two key hypotheses that were formulated and tested.

H_0- Lockdown of cities does not have a significant influence on employees' training and development

This hypothesis and research question sought to examine the influence of the lockdown of cities on employees' training and development. The findings of this study reveal that a weak but positive relationship exists between lockdown of cities and employees' training and development with a Correlation coefficient, r = 0.058 and a statistically insignificant probability value of 0.414 greater than 0.05. Hence, this study accepts the null hypothesis, thus confirming that the lockdown of cities does not significantly influence training and development. In as much as this research confirms a statistically insignificant relationship between lockdown of cities and employees' training and development, it is the respondents' perspective that a positive relationship exists between both variables.

Hence the findings in this study differ from the findings of Mwita, (2019) on the effects of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) on selected HRM practices in Tanzania, this could be due to provisions of platforms for effective virtual training by the management of the selected organizations in Nigeria. Also, this study finding contradicts the study of Gigauri, (2020) on the implications of COVID-19 for Human Resource Management which shows that the majority of business trips were either canceled or suspended globally due to the Lockdown and restrictions of movement as a measure to stop further spread of the dreaded pandemic.

H_0: Restriction of movement does not significantly affect the performance measurement or appraisal of the employees

This hypothesis and research question sought to examine the effect of restriction of movement on performance measurements appraisal of employees. The findings of this study reveal a weak but positive correlation coefficient of 0.173 and its squared value of 0.030 (3%) meaning that restriction of movement accounts for just 3% variation in the performance measurement appraisal of employees while other factors are accounting for 97% variation.

This study also confirms the relationship between the sub-variables, with a probability value of 0.014; to be statistically significant. This means that there is enough evidence to justify the position. Hence, the null hypothesis (Ho) is therefore rejected and accepts the alternative hypothesis (H1), thus confirming that restriction of movement significantly affects employees' performance measurements appraisal.

This study's findings were comparable to those of Mwita, (2019) on the effects of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) on selected human resource management practices in Tanzania, which determined that some employee targets appeared difficult and, in some cases, impossible to achieve due to the pandemic disease's disruptions. Another reason to support this finding is the difficulty in monitoring and coordinating different employees' activities under the mantra of a new normal work style (working from home).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aimed to examine COVID-19 Protocols in Nigerian organizations on two key HRM practices, i.e. employee training/development & performance measurements appraisal. Two indicators of COVID-19 in the study are the lockdown of cities and the restriction of movement. In terms of human resource management practices, the study employs two key HRM practices; employee training and performance measurement appraisal. The research hypotheses were tested through the regression analysis at a significant level of 0.5 computed with the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The exploratory research design was adopted for this study and a well-crafted E-copies of questionnaire on a 5-point Likert measurement scale was used to collect data. The study tested the hypothesized influence and effect of the independent variables and dependent variables on a sample of 201 different professional managers in Nigeria.

The results of this study revealed and established the following as answers to the research questions;

- The Lockdown of cities does not significantly influence employees' training and development.
- Restriction of movement does have a significant effect on the performance appraisal of the employees.

In the light of the above, the study recommends the following:

- Employers should be proactive always by ensuring they create a flexible work arrangement with a variation of working hours for employees to enhance better work-life balance; this will improve performance irrespective of the circumstance and situation.
- Employers should also continue to invest in technological acquisition, create (an e-hrm databank for storing and retrieving employees' past performance records); keep training and re-training their workforce to improve their productivity while giving employees autonomy to work remotely if the need arises.
- Employees should on their own constantly seek avenues to improve their skills and competencies by taking advantage of various online programs for optimal performance with less supervision.
- The government, through its various agencies, such as the Ministry of Humanitarian and Disaster Management, should formulate policies that will help organizations with tax relief and provide special funds for training their employees to cushion the effect of the pandemic on organizational effectiveness.

Thus, future research into other Covid-19 Protocols that link business outcomes to wider HR practices and the program should be conducted to highlight more dimensions that could affect

the variables. It is also important to conduct studies of this nature in specific organizations in Nigeria to confirm the result of this study and give it more credibility by affirming or disproving its findings.

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