

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL SURVIVAL OF SELECTED PUBLIC AGENCIES IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study focused on Human Resource Development and Organizational Survival of selected Public agencies in Rivers State. The main objective of the study was to determine the major factors contributing to the inability of the public agencies in Rivers State to meet the challenges of the market competitiveness in the economy, given the measures of human resource management as considered independent variable, which consists of compensation, development, and performance appraisal. While dependent variables are; Innovativeness, Adaptability and Resilience. The study adopted qualitative and quantitative approach and used both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected from management, Senior Managers and Middle managers of the state agencies. Four research questions, and ten hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study was 9 agencies and the sample size of 108 respondents was used for the study. The Instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled; "Human Resource development and Organizational Survival Questionnaire" (HRDOSQ). The reliability of the research instrument was obtained using Cronbach alpha at a 0.70 threshold. The instrument was validated by my supervisor. The data retrieved was analyzed using frequencies and mean distributions at the demographic and univariate level, Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient for the test of bivariate hypotheses, and the partial correlation for the multivariate level. Findings revealed that there are constraints to effective human resource management of Public agencies in Rivers State. It also revealed that effective human resource management enhances organizational survival of public agencies. Thus, the researcher recommended that Management of public agencies should recognize and allow HRD to carry out their functions, application of strategic human resource management policies, removed conflict responsibilities amongst the agencies in order to empower the employees for the organizational survival.

Keywords: Human Resource Development, Organizational survival, Adaptability, Service Delivery

INTRODUCTION

Public agencies to survive in this era is a problem. There are agencies in Rivers State that lacks innovations; in forms of no incremental innovation, no service innovation and no sustainable innovation. Further, the issue of low base pay and absent merit pay and overtime pay are killing our agencies in Nigeria particularly in Rivers State. Given it fit, agencies are static in terms of behaviour, physiological and structural adaptabilities. Abdulkadir, Isiaka and Adedoyin (2012) maintained that, for an organization to survive and sustains in its position lies on how well the organization itself developed and compensate the employees.

Despite several theoretical and empirical investigation, attention paid to the employee agencies are folding off, why, due to lack of conflict responsibilities such as Rivers State

Sustainable Development Agency (RSSDA) and Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC); NDDC gives scholarships, while RSSDA also gave. But now RSSDA has faced off. They failed to prepare for the sudden disruptions, cause by lack of resilience, innovativeness and adaptability.

See Ezigbo (2007) said Organizational; is the process of looking for prospective employees and motivating them to apply for jobs in the organization. Obi (2004) said Survival; is the focuses on building the knowledge and skills of organizational employees so that they will be prepared to take on new responsibilities and challenges. Not only building the employees skills and knowledge for new challenges, but agencies lack the need to practice compensation scheme as to increase the morale of employees.

Agencies in their operational levels could not survive. At the manager's level, organizations overlook general appraisal, manager performance appraisal and technological performance appraisal. Furthermore, there are absence of exempt development, complying development and integrated development. It is an essential tool of an organization for strategic survival (Ulrich, 2011). He maintains that the perception of survival is an unwritten law of every organization. And this suggests that every organization must regard survival as an absolute precondition for serving any interest whatsoever.

Besides, any type of organization that is established, there are chances that employers or employee's actions, inactions or counteractions could be a threat to its existence and survival. Decision-makers in various organizations should have a wider perspective of behaviours to get out the best competences that exist among the workforce. Employees' behaviours are likely to be demonstrated in various ways such as corporate benevolence, market portions level and progression rate, which will probably improve competitiveness (McDaniel and Gitman, 2008). These scholars did not look at the management behavior towards their employees. For employee to react positively or negatively it linked to the management responsibility. Organization needs competent employees but failed to develop resilience, compensate and appraise them. The focus of global competition and present day certainties facing initiatives appear difficult for managers. The chances may be for managers to develop policies that will accommodate the conflicting tastes and preferences of their end users which agencies are lacking. See Okpu and Jaja (2014) had regrettably noted that there is still a problem of seeing agencies surviving, especially in Rivers State.

Researcher's interaction with some managers of the agencies revealed that despite stringent measures such as absence of base pay, merit pay, overtime, exempt development, complying development, neglect of service innovation and anticipation resilience, yet they are unable to survive in Rivers State.

In this research, empirical solutions suggest that human resource need to be adequately employed in handling the issues of persistent, disruptive and threatening of the survival of organizations.

Researcher's observation and experience have also proved that many of the agencies in Rivers State do not appreciate the importance of human resource for their survival. No attempt is made to spring up human experience with activities such as base pay, merit pay, overtime pay, exempt development, complying development, integrated development, general appraisal, manager performance appraisal and technological performance appraisal. Management kept investing on resources, project and maintaining infrastructures with little or no room for innovativeness such as incremental innovation, service innovation, and sustainable innovation.

Management has also failed to be 'cogemodise' in their adaptability such as behavioural, physiological and structural for the agencies survival. Public agencies have not made provision for resilience in the system. Their managers are also not making adequate input for the survival of the agencies. These have resulted to a disruptive and threaten of survival and unbalanced human resource duties capable of making managers feel alienated and neglected. According to Jaja and Okpu (2014), researchers have studied several organizational climate that could sustain the survival of public agencies. Olughor and Oke (2014) also asserted that the survival of any organization lies on team work of the workforce and management's interests shared. Both must work for the actualization of the organizational goals and objectives, otherwise, organizational activities will fail.

Isaiah (2012) asserted that certain constraints such as economic system, legal system, political system, education system and socio-cultural and ethnic environment seem to affect the effective management of human resources. Thus, research is set out to investigate and to determine on how the problems of Human Resources Management could suddenly be handled for the survival of organizations to achieving its desire goals and objectives. However, poor attention has been given to survival ability as many public agencies have come up only to fold up in a short while.

Another issue that led to this study is the perceived lack of facts of empirical studies on the relationship between human resource management and organizational survival of public agencies in Rivers State. Thus, there is a knowledge gap. These issues give the researcher quality idea and true believe to this study.

Hypotheses

- HO₁: development has no significant relationship with innovativeness of public agencies in Rivers State.
- HO₂: Development has no significant relationship with adaptability of public agencies in Rivers State.
- HO₃: Development has no significant relationship with resilience of public agencies in Rivers State.

DEVELOPMENT

Development takes the form of learning activities that prepare people to exercise wider or increased responsibilities. Development is one of the major ways public agencies invests in the workforce for greater outcome today and foreseeable future (Williams, 2007). Development is concerned with ensuring that a person's ability and potential are grown and realized through the provision of learning experiences or through self-directed learning. Development refers to activities leading to the acquisition of new knowledge or skills for purposes of growing. Organizations provide staff with development programmes in order to enhance their capabilities. Employee development is gaining an increasingly critical and strategic imperative in organizations in the current business environment (Sheri-lyne 2007). Thus organizations need to invest in continuous employee development in order to maintain employees for the organization to survival (Khawaja & Nadeem 2013). Development seems to reduce the turnover rate of employees (Deckop et al. 2006). According to Cole (1993) said development refers to any learning activity which is directed towards future needs other than present needs and which is concerned more with career

growth than immediate performance. Development refers to an integrated set of planned programs, scheduled overtime to help assure that all staff have the competence needed to perform their duties professionally gears towards the organizational survival. For public agency to maximize its productivity and efficiency, every executive, manager or supervisor has the responsibility and indeed the bounding duty to ensure the development of their staff who have requisite knowledge and expertise (Dada, 2004). Development as a process, it encompasses the learning of all staff in public agencies including frontline staffs, professionals or managers which can be delivered through several approaches, including off-the-job and on-the-job training programs, educational programs and seminars, job rotations, self-study materials and mentoring programs, etc. Thus, in this study, development can be defined both by the staff level being served and the methods used to deliver programs to the staff. According to Akinola (2007), the principal intention of development is to equip staff with the knowledge required to qualify them for a specific position of employment, or to improve staff skills and efficiency in the position already occupied. Development in other word, implies growth and the acquisition of wide experience for future strategic advantages of the public sector. Development therefore, improves the effectiveness and efficiency of the staff. Therefore, the aim of this research is to know the current state, nature, procedure and method of development used by the Public agencies for their staff and do not forget that any agency that has no plan for the development of its staff is less than change for learning, a continuous process and acquired skills get obsolete when the environment changes. Therefore, staff in HRD must be updated on constant basis or else, they end up becoming obsolete or misfit (Muhtar, 2007). The development of internal manpower to serve as the propelling force for national growth and development is no doubt a key to Public agencies socio-economic and political development (Ake 2009). More emphasize, the concept development of staff could be viewed as a typical dimension of human resource focus on turning on the need for the development in public agency (Drucker 2009). As a fruit met for organizational survival, development of staff in the system is the most important asset in the public agency (Chalofsky and Reinhart 2008; Ekpo 2009; Drucker 2009; Muchinsky 2004).

Adaptability:

Adaptability is defined by Buch (2009) as an organization's capacity to embrace change or be changed to fit an altered environment. Adaptation is not viewed as a one stop process of organizational change but as a continuous process during an organization's life cycle. Adaptability simply means being flexible when things change, adaptability as used in contemporary generation in management phrase emerges from the field of biology. By means of organizations progressing from side to side of its social economic improvement stage, the significance of long-standing survival and enlargement come to be alive. An adaptable organization is one that is exposed to new philosophies and theories, to functioning individually or as a group. Organizations nowadays by market investigation and environmental X-ray recognize, understand, and transform indications of hesitation in the environs into intimate behavioural modifications that advances their likelihoods of development, growth and survival. Denison (1990) opined that adaptability has three features that influence organization's efficiency. The first among them is the talent to identify and react to external environs. The Second feature is the ability of organization to react to internal customers. While the third feature is ability of organization to reorganize set of behavior and practices that permit the organization to adapt.

Adaptability has been defined as the capacity of actors in a system to influence resilience" (Walker, Holling, Carpenter and Kinzrg, 2004:5). The values, elements factors or dimensions used to describe and measure adaptability differ from study to study, as do the survey methods, sample characteristics and statistical techniques employed. Given it fit, a major contribution of this research is to rigorously develop the adaptability construct. According to strategic choice theorists, adaptability is the ability to adjust to changes in the external environment in order to maintain organizational viability (Child, 1972; Miles, Snow, Meyer and Coleman, 1978). Child (1972) sees an adaptive organization as one whose roles are open to continual redefinition and colure coordination is achieved by frequent meetings and considerable lateral communication. Miles, Snour, Meyer and Coleman (1978) describe an adaptive cycle where managers solve three fundamental organizational problems: entrepreneurial, engineering and administrative.

Organizational Embeddedness Theory

Embeddedness is the process by which social relations shape economic action in ways that some mainstream economic schemes overlook or miss-specify when they assume that social ties affect economic behavior only minimally (Uzzi 2000). That means for organization to survive it rest on team work or networks of the employees. Hager (2004), argue that linkages to the broader environment are essential for organizational survival. Given it fit, organizations that are likely to survive within a given population of organizations will, of important, must be concentrated on the population of the employees and clients of the FIRS. This is ground on the theory of organizational Embeddedness is built. According to Uzzi (2000) organizational Embeddedness is that economic action is embedded in social relations which sometimes facilitate and at other times derail exchange. That means, the implication of this, is that organizations that are not embedded in their population are vulnerable. Thus, organizations strive to develop dense webs of exchange, to facilitate with centres of power, and to acquire an aura of inevitability (Hager 2004). According to Azoulay (2000) argues that, embeddedness facilitates the transfer of fine-grained information, joint problem-solving agreements, and coordinated adaptation among other factors. Organizational embeddedness theory has implications for understanding the role of social relationships in economic engagements. Which studies on social capital that enhanced with the application of the Embeddedness perspective. Uzzi (2000) emphasizes this view by identity which is an element of embeddedness relationships assigns value to transaction and enriches the social capital of exchange partners in a network.

DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL SURVIVAL

Survival in public agency business environment need innovation, productive and constant improvement in performance. Indeed is a challenge facing public agency managers, and to succeed and be productive she need first to survive especially in a competitive environment. See Robbins and Coulter (2007) state that if public agency develop it staff, it will manifest staff self-confidence, consistence increase staff morale and power, risk taking and the more they challenge existing knowledge and bring out new product and services through the knowledge and experience acquired as the fruit from development programmes. Researcher observation, development can help public agencies to increase their innovativeness and creative abilities, undoubtedly, it increases public agencies chance of survival. The more staff is properly developed, the level of innovativeness and creative would be very high. When staff are developed, it motivated them to think outside the box and the prevailing

knowledge within the public agency will broaden the solving ability that will prompt to transforming existing knowledge within the agency. This ability in no doubt leads to organizations ability to survive the threats and challenges in the environment. Oforegbunam and Okorafor (2010) viewed that the quality of development available in a public agency affect its chance of survival. See Olufemi (2009) opined that development practice should focus on survive in a competitive environment when same product and services, quality of development become a vital tool for it survival. Nonaka (2002) stated that, where certainty is uncertainty, change in the market; products and services, technology, then consciousness of development would have the chance of surviving. Thus, quality of development does not only emerged staff and make them committed, but it produces new knowledge and when effectively applied it improves the performance of staff for survival. Supported by Obiekwe (2012) stated that innovativeness and creativity is presence through quality development and become essential for organizational survival. Oforegbunam and Okorafor (2010) noted that for any public agencies to survive in a challenges environment, then attention need to be given on development. Development ensure long-term survival of public agencies such as NDDC and FIRS as they tap into acquired knowledge and innovative abilities of staff development to operate efficiently, create new ideas, knowledge and skills to be expertise in solving or provides solution for agency challenges and having edge over their competitors. Given it fit, development plays an essential role for public agency survival and tend to turn HR into more tangible assets for more innovations and reposition for survival in this market competitiveness and environmental dynamics.

Research design

The research design adopted in this study was the cross-sectional survey design. The study considered a quasi-experimental study given its focus and interest in investigating the relationship between social-based constructs within non-contrived settings (Baridam, 2001; Sarantakos, 2005).

Population of study

This study was concerned with the relationship between the variables as they apply to the 9 listed public agencies in Rivers State. Sarantakos (2005) described population in social research as comprising all units, individuals, elements or cases which share particular characteristics or features of which the researcher is interested in investigating.

Hence the study population was purposively designed to capture only senior level officers such as directors or supervisors within each of these 9 public agencies. This study therefore adopts an accessible population of 108 senior level staff from the 9 listed public agencies in Rivers State.

Table 1: Population of the study

S/N	Public Agencies	Population
1	Rivers State Bureau on Public Procurement	12
2	Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Agency	12
3	Road Traffic Management Authority	12
4	Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency	12
5	Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority	12
6	Housing and Property Development Authority	12
7	Rivers State Waste Management Authority	12
8	Rivers State Tourism Development Agency	12

9	Rivers State Internal Revenue Service	12
	Total	108

Source: Researcher's Survey Activities, 2019

Sample Size/sampling technique

The census technique was adopted in this study given the size of the population and the technique (purposive) of selection. This is as the 12 participants are purposively selected from all 9 agencies giving a total of 108. All 108 identified members are to be involved and admitted as part of the study; hence the study covers its entire population in its investigation (Kothari, 2004)

Data Analysis Techniques

Secondary stage of analysis: The secondary stage of analysis was the test for the hypotheses of the study. Tests was carried out using the Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient at a 0.05 level of significance based on the adoption of a 95% confidence interval. The choice of the Spearman's rank order is based on its flexibility in assessments of data scaled on both ordinal and interval scales (Sarantakos, 2005; Sullivan, 2001). The Spearman also makes no assumptions (non-parametric) on the data distributions (e.g. normalcy of distributions, homogeneity of variance) and as such is considered a default tool which is often considered a reliable choice in the test for correlation within the management and social sciences (Sullivan, 2001).

HO₁: development has no significant effect on innovativeness of public agencies in Rivers State.

HO₂: Development has no significant effect on adaptability of public agencies in Rivers State.

HO₃: Development has no significant effect on resilience of public agencies in Rivers State.

Table 4.14: Development on measures of organizational survival

		Developme nt	Innovativen ess	Adaptabil ity	Resilienc e	
Spearma n's rho	Developmen t	Correlation	1.000	.822**	.782**	.845**
		Coefficient				
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	97	97	97	97
	Innovativene ss	Correlation	.822**	1.000	.806**	.875**
		Coefficient				
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	97	97	97	97
	Adaptability	Correlation	.782**	.806**	1.000	.733**
		Coefficient				
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	97	97	97	97
Resilience	Correlation	.845**	.875**	.733**	1.000	
	Coefficient					
	N	97	97	97	97	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.	

	N	97	97	97	97
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** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The result for the hypotheses on the effect of development on the measures of organizational survival is shown in table 4.14. The result shows that development has a significant and positive relationship with innovativeness ($\rho = 0.822$), adaptability ($\rho = 0.782$), and resilience ($\rho = 0.845$). The result indicates that development impacts positively on the survival of the organization (where $P < 0.05$); it does contribute significantly to the organizations innovativeness, adaptability and resilience in significant ways. The result from the analysis shows that the effect of development on the measures of organizational survival is also high where adopted significance is 0.05 and where significance is at 0.01. The extent to which development impacts on the measures of organizational survival indicates that when such practices which reflect development are evident within the organization, it enhances innovativeness, adaptability and resilience. Based on this result, all hypotheses addressing the relationship between development and the measures of organizational resilience are rejected given the significance ($p < 0.05$) in all instances.

Development contributes significantly and positively towards the organizational survival of public agencies in Rivers State

Development is observed in this study to positively contribute towards organizational survival. Manpower is the basis of all resources and it is the indispensable means of converting other resources to man kind's use and benefits. So how well we develop and employ human resources skills is fundamental in deciding how much we will accomplish as a nation. Manpower is the pivot of every human institution. Even in the developed and industrial nations of the world where the use of machines and technology is at an advanced stage, manpower is still very essential (Comma, 2008). Training therefore holds the key to unlock the potential growth and development opportunities to achieve a competitive edge. In this context, organizations train and develop their employees to the fullest advantage in order to enhance their effectiveness (Devi & Shaik, 2012). The importance of training as a central role of management has long been recognized by leading writers (Irene, 2013). Training both physically, socially, intellectually and mentally are very essential in facilitating not only the level of productivity but also the development of personnel in any organization (Olusanya et al, 2012). To manage an organization both large and small requires staffing them with competent personnel. The formal educational system does not adequately teach specific job skills for a position in a particular organization. Few employees have the requisite skills, knowledge, abilities and competencies (SKAC) needed to work. As a result, many require extensive training to acquire the necessary SKAC to be able to make substantive contribution towards the organization's growth (Barron & Hagerty, 2001). In order to sustain economic growth and effective performance, it is important to optimize the contribution of employees to the aims and goals of the organizations.

The need for improved productivity in organization has become universally accepted and that it depends on efficient and effective training. It has further become necessary in view of advancement in modern world to invest in training. Thus, the role played by staff training and development can no longer be over-emphasized. However, the need for organizations to embark on staff development programme for employees has become obvious. Absence of these programme often manifest tripartite problems of incompetence, inefficiency and

ineffectiveness. Oribabor (2000) submitted that training and development aim at developing competences such as technical, human, conceptual and managerial for the furtherance of individual and organization growth, also Isyaku (2000) postulated that the process of training and development is a continuous one. Man is dynamic in nature, the need to be current and relevant in all spheres of human endeavor's make staff development a necessity, to keep track with current event and methods. Griffin, (1978) Ajibade, (1993) Adeniyi, (1995) and Arikewuyo (1999) have drawn the attention of the entire sundry to the inestimable value of training and development. It is an avenue to acquire more and new knowledge and develop further the skills and techniques to function effectively. Scholars, experts, social scientist and school administrators now recognize the fact that training is obviously indispensable not only in the development of the individuals but also facilitate the productive capacity of the workers. Training is not coaxing or persuading people to do what is wanted but rather a process of creating organizational conditions that will cause personnel to strive for better performance.

CONCLUSIONS

This research has provided an overview and a discussion of human resource management (HRM) practices of public agencies in Rivers State. It focused primarily on perception of directors and supervisors on HRM practices, policies and programmes and the impact of such HRM practices on organisational survival. The purpose was to critically evaluate the extent to which established HRM practices impact on the survival of public agencies in Rivers State. In conclusion, it is stated that the proper management of human resources has enormous impact on organisational survival. The principal officers and heads of examined agencies should incorporate HRM thinking into business activities and functions and make the HR function "strategically proactive". The effective management of the human resources of these agencies will create and sustain outcomes which necessitate their survival with regards to enhanced innovativeness, increased adaptability, and higher levels of resilience. It is also imperative for the public agencies to ensure that their HRM practices are effectively institutionalized and supported by adequate policies and cultural frameworks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are premised on the conclusions of the study, and as such are structured to address the adoption of human resource management practices best suited for addressing the organizational survival goals of the organization.

- i. Employee development should be seen not only as the thread that ties together all human resource practices, but also as the instrument for establishing and signalling when and how work practices should change. In other words, employees of public agencies in Rivers State should take on the role of organizational change agents.
- ii. Some key examples of how departments can plan and check for the future training and development needs of the employees must be outlined in a document and should be used to help mitigate any negative impacts as a result of demographics, priorities and competency requirements. As such clear and transparent performance appraisals can also help ensure that employees in public agencies have what they need to get the job done, and that there is efficient matching of skills and competencies to departmental tasks, requirements and outcomes.

- iii. Public agencies should strategize and come up with ways of tackling the various challenges confronting its human resources management processes in order to achieve set objectives and ensure survival.
- iv. Adequate planning should be carried out in terms of hiring, firing and handling other welfare issues relating to staff which often are referred as life-wire of the organization; hence this will ensure the organizational survival.

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