

UNPACKING SELECTED HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES:

A Total Quality Management Perspective

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Abstract: The human resources management (HRM) serves as a primary engine for every organisation, owing to its nature in the ability to attract and retain relevant talent. HRM best practice is predominantly key pillar to organisational development and achieving organizational objectives. Developing and implementing HRM best practices that are integrated with organisational and operational strategy is critical. This ensures contribution to the development of a high-performance culture, and that the organisation has the talented, skilled and engaged people it requires, to create a positive employment relationship between management and employees and further encouraging the application of an ethical approach to people management. However, organisational leadership and processes have always been contended and understood to play a role in employees' lack of trust and performance towards organisational development and transformation. The aim of this paper is to unpack selected HRM best practices from the lenses of total quality management. The study uses a qualitative approach and uses secondary data towards thematic and content analysis as analysis tools. The study concludes that leadership, and processes are key pillars in strengthening implementation of HRM best practices. The study recommends continuous improvement as an underpinning pillar to organisational development, leadership and employees' development to promote effective HRM practices that benefit the organisation and its employees. The study contributes towards effective and efficient HRM practices through empowering the leadership and enhancing processes that govern the effectiveness of the HRM best practices.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of HRM best practices has been a key organizational component to ensure organizational productivity. Organizations rely on HRM practices for the recruitment of best employees from the market and as a result, the study of HRM is concerned with the key aspects of organizational recruitment methodology. Recruiting the best employees ensures organizational stability and contributes to the wellbeing of employees. According to Hennekam, and Follmer, (2024) the HRM best practice is key to supporting the organization to achieve its objectives. This is done through developing and implementing the best HRM practices that are integrated with business strategy, which is likely to contribute to the development of a high-performance culture. The HRM's best practice seeks to ensure that the organization has talented, skilled and engaged people. It also creates a positive employment relationship between management and employees, resulting in a climate of mutual trust, (Karman, Jaya, and Wibowo, 2022).

Accordingly, Aripin, Matriadi, and Ermeila (2024) states that HRM's best practice should be treated as a system of practices which influence and impact the behavior, attitude and performance of employees, because it is a premise that enables the workforce to unleash its full potential to achieve better strategic outcomes. In many cases, organizations spend more time deriving their turnaround strategies as organizations to mitigate possible failures and to resuscitate failing organizations and to ensure organizational survival in general. Jayabalan, et al (2020) highlights that organizational breakdown and employees' lack of interest continues to prevail despite evidence of best HRM practices implemented by organizations. Workforce remains unmotivated and passionless towards productivity despite the supposedly best practices that are put in place by organizations. Votto, et al (2021) posits that organizations need to look at factors that influence effective implementation of HRM's best practice to circumvent a challenge where organizations cannot attract and retain best talent from the workforce market. The aim of the practices is to influence employees' abilities, motivation towards enhanced or best performance (Mahadevan, and Schmitz, 2020).

The study aims to systematically synthesize the existing literature on selected Human Resources Management best practices, and to unpack these practices from the perspective of total quality management.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of this study is to:

- 1) establish how organizational leadership participation influences growth and transformation as a human resources management best practice.
- 2) analyze how process-based approaches strengthens human resource management practices.
- 3) suggest continuous improvement as an effective strategy for organizational human resource best practice.

To unpack the HRM best practices from the lens of total quality management, the paper presents a systematic review of the literature, conceptual framework upon which the research question hinges, research methods and design that were used to collect and analyze the data, presentation of the results, discussion of the results, and finally the presentation of the conclusions and value of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF BEST PRACTICES IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The study hinges on the concept of HRM best practice. According to Otoo (2019), HRM best practices are the organizational engine room and can be considered as an organizational strategic pillar for effective and efficient pillar for competitive advantage. This means that HRM practices exist to excavate excellence in employees' performance so that in turn the organization can progress towards improved performance. Similarly, Aust, Matthews and Muller-Camen, (2020) argue that HRM's best practices exist to achieve competitive advantage and improve the organization's performance.

HRM best practices are applied to achieve continuous improvement of organizational performance and competitiveness through the critical assumption of conceptual and system practices in management of the best organizations in a specific sector or region, (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, and Wright, 2020). Lee, (2021) states that HRM best practices are predominantly used by the organizations that operate within certain conditions to pursue positive strategic goals through continuous improvement of organizational performance and competitiveness by critical assumption of conceptual and system practices in management of the specific sectors or region (Tej et al, 2021).

According to Gadzali (2023), HRM's best practice significantly contributes to shaping an inclusive organizational culture by fostering an environment where diversity is accepted and celebrated. This involves developing and

communicating policies to champion diversity, equity, and inclusion. Farley, Hoenig, and Yang (2020) state that HRM professionals are instrumental in cultivating a workplace atmosphere that values differences, encourages open dialogue, and ensures employees feel a sense of belonging. In addition, effective leadership is essential for driving inclusivity, and HRM plays a crucial role in cultivating and supporting inclusive leadership practices (Maria, 2024). HRM practice professionals collaborate with organizational leaders to develop and implement strategies that promote diversity and inclusion at all levels. This includes advocating for inclusive decision-making processes, leadership development programs, and mentoring initiatives to ensure leaders embody and promote inclusive values (Groenewald, et al 2024).

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION AS AN HRM BEST PRACTICE

Recruitment and selection are key processes to HRM best practice to attract and identify relevant talent. According to Rubina Yeasmin (2024), recruitment and selection in Human Resources Management refers to the systematic approach to solving the strategic problems in any organization, more so that it is concerned with but not limited to recruitment, training and development of staff. Human resources are the most important assets of an organization.

Recruitment and selection process ensure sufficient supply of proper quantity and effective optimization of human resources. An organization will have to meticulously plan human resources to meet organizational needs (Lee and Mao, 2023). Løkke, Villadsen, and Bach (2023) posits that recruitment and selection process' objective is on board candidates with excellent qualifications and experience to avoid investing in people who may not help an organization to achieve their performance goals and objectives. Hamza et al (2021) advocates that the phenomenon of recruitment is often referred to as a positive process because it seeks to attract as many candidates as possible for vacant positions. It is further argued that this is a process of identifying and making potential candidates apply for the jobs. Abugre and Boachie-Ansah (2021) argue for the phenomenon of selection, and advocated that while recruitment is a positive process, selection is a negative process because it eliminates quite number of applicants from the process. Abugre and Boachie-Ansah argue that selection is important because it provides a premise which organizational performance is dependent on.

Accordingly, Wamy, Kethana, and Pradeep, (2023) states that recruitment and selection of individuals from within organizations require a thorough systematic process to ensure recruitment and selection of the right candidates who possess knowledge, skills and experience. Ajayi and Udeh (2024) state that recruitment and selection help the organization to turn the vision into a reality. In addition, a diverse, competent and well-managed workforce, capable and committed workforce that delivers high quality services is central towards

achieving the vision, and this requires a revolution that will shift from administering personnel to managing people, (Khatun, 2024).

It is the process of searching the candidates for employment and encouraging potential candidates to apply for jobs in the organization. The purpose of recruitment is to provide a group of candidates large enough with an opportunity to let managers select employees they need (Natham, and Nadu, 2024). Recruitment and selection as HRM best practices are designed to discover and develop the required personnel so that enough candidates are available for employment in the organization. The purpose of recruitment is to seek out or explore, to evaluate, to induce and to obtain commitment from the prospective employees to fill positions required for successful operation and organization (Biea, et al 2024).

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AS A REQUIREMENT FOR HRM BEST PRACTICE

Organizational training and development are processes of pursuing skills needed by employees to conduct their work, and it provides practical knowledge. Applying training and development practices in the company is conducted with the assumption that productivity and company goals will be achieved. Similarly, Blanchard and Thacker (2023) states that training and development as the HRM's best practices and therefore an organization needs to conduct training needs analysis. This is followed by the design of the training environment and training methods necessary to achieve training goals.

The evaluation of a training program is another critical process aimed at testing and evaluating whether the implemented program achieved the stated goals (Dessler, 2020). According to Kumari, et al (2023), training and development as HR best practices are organized activities aimed at increasing knowledge and skills of people for a definite purpose. This involves systematic procedures for transferring technical know-how to employees doing specific jobs with proficiency. Trainees acquire technical knowledge, skills and problem-solving abilities by undergoing the training programmes (Hadjiiski, et al., 2023). It can be concluded that training and development are part of the best practices and systematic approaches that attract the right people for the right work portfolios.

Nafisa (2024) indicated that the goal for every organization is to have well trained and experienced people to perform the activities towards organizational goals. Failure to train and develop employees is likely to result in job underperformance or a decline in productivity. The importance of employee development is to offset this and is set to increase improve productivity and performance. Along with this argument Al Jubouri (2023), believes that training and development are one of the key HR processes that should not be overlooked. Organizations should look at training and development as a critical activity in organizations.

Finally, Sbusisiwe and Abiso (2021) concluded that for training to be effective, there must be proper training needs analysis, training plan developed, and implementation done to target certain competencies, and most importantly, to develop a culture of a conducive learning environment by an organization. In addition, policies and practices that support training and development can affect employee activity levels, thereby providing opportunities for employees to participate in developmental activities which will increase employee commitment to the organization (Susomrith et al., 2019). The practice of training and development practices are therefore considered as a message to employees that the organization values and cares about their professional development (Kozhakhmet et al., 2022a).

According to Faisal, (2023) training and development as the HRM best practice focus is to develop the latest potential of a workforce so that it can contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. Since the achievement of organizational goals is dependent on skills of the workforce, organizations devote a considerable amount of time and money on effective training and development (Nawangari, Siswanti, and Soelton, 2023).

Training and development are important not only for organizations, but also for its employees/workers. Approaching this from an organizational perspective, training involves imparting skills, knowledge and abilities to enable the worker to work effectively and to positively contribute to the organization (Oyewole, et al 2024). Approaching this from the employees' perspective, training and development is not only about acquiring knowledge, but to enhance the already existing skills. It is therefore critical to systematically plan and design the training and development programmes for the benefit of organizations and workforce (Armstrong, and Taylor, 2023).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Total quality management as a framework for HRM best practice is according to, Al-Hazmi (2020) both a philosophy and a set of management guiding principles for managing an organization. Liu, et al (2023) stated that it is an organizational practice to achieve competitive advantage of any organization. Kaiseroglou and Sfakianaki (2020) stated that total quality management is a complete approach used by organizations to speak to the organization's current and prospective customers' needs and expectations. Ahinful, et al (2024) stated that total quality management is unique in that it is collaborative to encourage teamwork, rather than internal competition.

Table 1: Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management Tool	Description
Customer focus	Organizations depend on their customers and therefore should understand current and future customer needs, should meet customer requirements and strive to exceed customer expectations.
Leadership	Leaders establish unity of purpose and direction. They should create and maintain the internal environment in which people can become fully involved in achieving the organization's objectives
Engagement of people	People at all levels are the essence of an organization and their full involvement enables their abilities to be used for the organization's benefit.
Process approach	A desired result is achieved more efficiently when activities and related resources are managed as a process.
Continuous Improvement	Continual improvement of the organization's overall performance should be a permanent objective of the organization.
Evidence-based decision making	Effective decisions are based on the analysis of data and information in order to provide accurate information to decision makers.

Source: Mohammed, Tibek and Endot (2013)

The study adopts total quality management is a perspective underpinning the analysis of data. Due to the length of the study, only leadership, process approach and continuous improvement forms part of this paper. These three pillars are adopted by the study to explore the role of leadership, activities, and improvement for the overall organizational performance.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

This study is a systematic review of different best practices from the total quality management perspective. Since the study is desktop research, the study draws upon qualitative interpretive approaches. Furthermore, qualitative approach places a researcher as an observer in the world of the text and affords the study an opportunity to adopt interpretive interrogation of the concept of human resources best practices from a perspective of the total quality management. The themes are systematically identified and organized throughout the data set to allow the study to explore and make sense of collective or shared meanings in literature. Therefore, the study adopts an inductive thematic analysis approach to derive meaning, trends and constructed meaning from the data set in line with the themes that were adopted and were extracted from literature review.

The main feature of a generic inductive approach was methodological flexibility, and as a result, it was premised on the data set to themes rather than an imposition of one's preconceived themes.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF BEST PRACTICES IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

This section presents an analysis in line with the first objective, which sought to establish how organizational leadership participation influenced growth and transformation as a human resources management best practice in line with the first objective. Firstly, in quality management, leadership was identified as a key to shaping the outlook of HRM practices. This means effective and efficient organizational culture was born out on the quality of leadership that the organization possessed. Secondly, organizational leadership tends to be the custody of the vision and direction of the organization, through articulating an unclouded vision and the importance of quality, leaders guide employees in understanding how their roles contribute to the organization's overall goals.

Thirdly, leadership is essential in establishing and maintaining a culture that prioritizes quality. Leaders can model behaviors that promote quality, such as diligence, continuous improvement and customer focus. This creates an environment where employees feel empowered to prioritize quality in their work. Fourthly, effective leaders engage employees by encouraging their participation in decision-making processes, especially related to quality improvements. Effective leadership invests in empowerment initiatives that can lead to a more motivated workforce that actively seeks to enhance quality, contributing to better outcomes across the organization.

PROCESS APPROACH AS A KEY QUALITY MANAGEMENT COMPONENT HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

This presentation and analysis are in line with objective number two, which sought to analyze how process-based approaches strengthen human resource management practice. Firstly, it was found that the process approach is a fundamental principle of quality management that emphasizes the need for a systematic understanding and management of processes within an organization. In the context of HRM practice, adopting a process approach provides numerous benefits that enhance the overall effectiveness and efficiency of HRM practice activities.

Secondly, the process approach allows the organization's HRM best practices to view functions as interconnected processes that contribute to the overall objectives of the organization. If the organization understands these interrelationships, HRM best practices can be tools to better manage the flow of information, resources, and tasks, ensuring that each process supports the others and aligns with the organization's strategic goals.

Thirdly, a process-oriented approach outlines clear HRM best practices through processes, such as recruitment, onboarding, training, performance management, and employee engagement. By outlining each process with specific steps, responsibilities, and expected outcomes, organizations can improve clarity and accountability among HR personnel and broader organizational stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study unpacked selected human resources management best practices from a total quality management perspective. A set of recommendations were developed from the literature and previous studies reviewed. It was recommended that:

Continuous improvement be prioritized as the best human resources management tool for skills enhancement and productivity improvement. This recommendation is in line with objective three, which suggested continuous improvement as an effective strategy for organizational human resource best practice. Continuous improvement is a vital concept that focuses on systematically enhancing processes, practices, and overall organizational effectiveness. By fostering a culture of continuous improvement, HR departments in organizations could ensure consistent evolvement and adaptation to meet changing needs of the workforce and the business environment.

Continuous improvement allows voice, participation and involvement from potential improvements to identify the best practices and fosters a sense of ownership and to seek better ways of working, sharing ideas for enhancements, and being open to change. To effect the understanding of the best practice which can be implemented, it would be necessary for organizations to periodically administer regular employee surveys, feedback sessions, and forums that allow employees to share their thoughts on processes, policies, and the work environment.

- Implementation of continuous learning as a best practice would practically commence from the time an employee is recruited and an orientation and induction being the first step to learning. This would be followed by identifying training needs for existing employees. Training needs would be followed by the creation of a continuous improvement plan with steps, timelines and resources linked to implementing the plan. Once the implementation has commenced, an evaluation of implementation is necessary to ensure that what the organization delivers has a positive impact on workforce and organizational performance. A continuous review and upgrade of implementation plans is necessary for alignment of the continuous improvement plan with workforce skills improvement plan and an organization's vision and mission. It will also be important for organizations to ensure the evolution of practices to adapt to innovative technologies,

regulatory changes, or shifts in workforce demographics. Lastly, this paper advocates that continuous improvement must be led from the top, and organization leaders must lead by an example, support the plans and approve resources for continuous improvement.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

This study has implications for management. Organizations aim to achieve goals, yield positive results and provide good to excellent performance. Competition prevails against profit and non-profit organizations. Therefore, organizational leaders must pay attention to continuous changes, and match these with continuous improvement practice as a standing agenda in their annual plans. This is important to meet the workforce and organizational growth changes and to meet competition.

Management requires the optimal system of human resource management based on proven practices in job design, employee selection, performance management, employee compensation or employee training that enables organizations to employ and develop adequately capable and motivated employees to achieve expected organizational performance and competitiveness by achieving desired employee and organizational performance.

CONCLUSION

The study unpacked the HRM best practices through the lenses of total quality management. It sought to systematically synthesize the existing literature on selected Human Resources Management best practices. It further explored total quality management as a conceptual framework that underpinned the study and finally recommended that leadership be at the forefront in process approach for continuous improvement. It viewed this as a critical element towards unpacking the best practices for Human Resources Management from a total quality management perspective. The paper presented a systematic review of the literature, conceptual framework upon which the research objectives hinges, research methods and design that were used to collect and analyze data. Discussion and results were presented leading to the conclusion and the value of the study.

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Contribution

The study is the sole effort of the author.

Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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