

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AS ENTREPRENEURIAL TOOL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

The issue of sustainable development is important that it can be achieved through entrepreneurial programmes influenced by human resource management practices. Human resource (HR) is one of the key resources that any organization needs to succeed. A high performing organization such as the educational institution cannot exist or equip students with entrepreneurial skills and knowledge without an elevated value placed on human resource management (HRM). Based on this, the paper examined human resource management as entrepreneurial tool for sustainable development: a case study of educational institutions. Firstly, it gave a background of the topic, and then went on to define the main concepts. Also, the paper x-rayed the relevant practices of HRM that promote entrepreneurship for sustainable development. Considering the relevance of the HRM practices that enhance entrepreneurship in organizations such as the school, the paper recommended amongst others that educational or school managers should rethink their positions on human resources (HR) as the most critical asset of the school organization in succeeding in entrepreneurship education. This is because some school managers tend to downplay the crucial function of HR. It is essential for school managers to understand that without the people, the other resources of the school organization cannot function, leading to instability, and eventually unsustainable development. Also, the use of compensation and benefits as a sure HRM maintenance strategy for entrepreneurship education should not be compromised by educational managers.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, Entrepreneurship, Sustainable Development

In every organization or institution, the prime goal is to reach and increase profitability. In a school setting, every operation in the system is determined by the resources provided and how they are managed to achieve organizational goals. Organization such as educational institutions can target this goal by growing and therefore by improving their competitiveness on the global educational market: they can enhance their administrative effectiveness and efficiency, as well as increase their quality and value. For these purposes, organizations need to develop new products or services to be innovative. The process of introducing innovative ideas, products or services to the market is known as entrepreneurship (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000), while creativity is the initial inspiration that leads to the

creation of a new product or service. Talent, education, and cognitive skills can drive to an inspiration. However, in order for inspiration to become a daily driving force and therefore to foster continuous innovation within institutions or organization, high levels of ingenuity, resourcefulness and creativeness are needed, and this can only be achieved through motivation. Within such a capricious context, when the people's competence as well as motivation is called to contribute to innovative and uncertain outputs, human resource management (HRM) becomes a crucial factor. It is therefore important and theoretically interesting to explore the contribution of HRM as entrepreneurial tool for sustainable development. Entrepreneurship involves the creation of new ideas or the pursuance of new idea within already existing ideas. Entrepreneurs who choose to create a new idea are usually categorized into novice (founders of their first independent) and habitual entrepreneurs (founders of several enterprises consecutively). In other words, it is assumed that due to the liability of newness, novice entrepreneurs lack human resource management competences. As the organization or enterprise grows, the size of the entrepreneurial team and the dynamics of its composition increase (Chandler, Honig and Wiklund, 2005).

In a school setting, every operation in the system is determined by the resources provided and how they are managed. Current happenings coupled with advances in science and technology mandate the school manager to adopt modern HRM approaches in the management both humanly and materially in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning. This is so because, a direct relationship exists between the quality of human resource management (HRM) in terms of teaching personnel and the education process which will eventually determine the instructional programmes and performance of the school for sustainable development. Personnel are considered a crucial resource for the successful performance of an organization which, if it aims at rapid growth, should manage its employees accordingly (Barringer, Jones & Neubaum, 2005). It will be very difficult for the educational system of any country to rise above the quality of its personnel that are actively involved in its activities. This is because educational personnel occupy a very important position in the scheme of activities in the education industry. Educational personnel are the most important resources in the educational system and to a very large extent, they determine the success and failure of educational programmes. They help students acquire ideas, attitude, values, entrepreneurship knowledge and skills appreciated by the society which stimulate peaceful co-existence and economic growth for development. For the human resource to be active in the school system, there is need to recruit and select the best personnel to man the affairs of the school organization. Recruitment precedes selection in staffing process. Nevertheless, one of the major challenges which has confronted most formal organizations is how workers or personnel can be effectively managed to assist in achieving organizational objectives. This has led to the adoption of rigorous process and methods in the selection of staff. In fact, the educational sector is today more than ever before faced with the challenge of who is or is not qualified to participate in school administration. According to Barringer, Jones & Neubaum (2005), the management of human resources dates back to the work of Peter Drucker as early as 1909. Drucker's work was used to assist manufacturing company to make proper planning for business efficiency and effectiveness. His suggestions preceded the contribution of Frederick W. Taylor who later opined that human beings should be managed like machines for productivity in an organization.

The essence of Taylor's assumption is that the organization should be able to derive maximum output from the activities of workers in the organization. Therefore, for the education system to succeed entrepreneurially for sustainable development, the basic resources needed must be provided in sufficient quantity and quality as well as being well managed. The basic resources needed for the sector to succeed entrepreneurially are human and material resources. However, human resources are the most important in any organization after the availability of capital. The role of the teacher and school administrator to a great extent determines how well the school will meet her overall objectives. Resources are generally referred to those materials that are used for the production of other goods or services. This means that resources can be input or output used in a production process. The management of resources in an organization is important in achievement of its goals and objectives. Meanwhile, students' entrepreneurship learning outcome is influenced by appropriateness of school resources. The physical, human, time and financial resources invested in schools influence not only the education provided to students but also aspects of teachers and students motivation and consequently the educational outcomes. In the same vein, Ebong (2006) opined that resources are entrepreneurial tools or assets for wealth creation, innovation in the process of change which bring about sustainable development. Human resource is all about people in work organizations endowed with a range of potentials, abilities, talents and attitudes, influence, productivity, quality and profitability. Therefore, the totalities of the persons who are productively employed by an organization constitute its human resources. Human resources remain the most important and basic resource needed by an organization among material, financial and natural resources. This is because human resource is needed to co-ordinate and effectively utilize the other forms of resources for goal achievement. Hence, the paper examines the topic "human resource management as entrepreneurial tool for sustainable development."

Conceptual Clarifications

Management

Management can be applied to either a social group or a process. When applied to a process, it invokes in the mind a variety of images of managerial work. It can also be seen as a science as its management is based on the view that experts have accumulated a distinct body of knowledge about management which, if studied and applied, can improve institutional effectiveness (Out, Salawu & Ajadi n.d). This view assumed that people can be trained to be effective managers. Another set of perceptive on the role of management emphasizes that an organization is a purposive miniature society and, as such, power and politics are pervasive in all work organizations. By power it means the capacity of an individual to influence others who are in a state of dependence (Out, Salawu & Ajadi n.d). According to Out, Salawu and Ajadi opined that an alternative image of managerial activity is to view management as art because the managerial abilities and successes depend upon individual traits such as intelligence, charisma, decisiveness, enthusiasm, integrity, dominance and self-confidence. In other words, if management is an art, then managers are born not made. Consequently, management has been defined as the art of getting things done through people. It refers to the process by which managers create, direct, maintain and operate purposive organizations through coordinated, cooperative human efforts (Aguba, 2009 as cited in Aguba, 2021). Flippo (2018) avers that managers are the people who formulate policies, set objectives, identify activities to be performed, organize the activities

into groups, staff the job with people, initiate work activities, supply incentives to stimulate productivity and set up controls to measure the achievement of objectives. Management is thus, regarded as the process undertaken by one or more individuals to coordinate the activities of others to achieve results not achievable by one individual's actions alone. If applied to this topic, management entails the process of mobilizing and coordinating both human and material resources with a view to achieving the objectives of education such as entrepreneurship for the attainment of Sustainable Development.

Human Resource Management

Human resource is one of the most essential elements that provide versatility and variability in an organization (Khatri, 1999 in Neha & Nirmala, 2018). Human Resource Management (HRM) is an approach to the management of an organization's most valued asset; the people working there collectively contribute to the achievement of its objective (Armstrong, 2004 as cited in Efanga&Oleforo, 2014). Human Resource Management in education which includes entrepreneurship education) parlance is not only effective utilization of people at work but helps to harness the totality of the people's skills, energies, talents, social characteristics like belief to achieve educational objectives and at the same time making people to be integral component of organization in fulfilling their life time goals (Efanga&Oleforo, 2014). Human resource management relates to management of personnel in an organization which involves planning, organizing, staffing, leading or directing, controlling and coordinating different activities of the work force within that organization. Planning involves the current estimation of number and type of people needed and to forecast the changing values and behavior of the employees and their impact on other functions of enterprise. In Organizing, different tasks are allocated to different persons, their relationships are determined, and integration of activities is done towards a common goal.

Staffing focuses on the recruitment and selection of required human resource through different sources. Recruitment should be done in a system that enables increased level of employee selection and development. Direction entails encouraging people to work willingly for the accomplishment of the goal through various ways such as career planning, increase in their remuneration for the targets, ensuring the morale of employees, developing cordial relationships and providing safety and welfare facilities to the employees (Neha & Nirmala, 2018). Controlling leads back to planning which is used to compare the standard and actual results achieved and helps to find the deviations. Controlling also involves performance appraisal, auditing and analyses of the personnel records. The objective of HRM practice is to establish a more open and flexible style of management so as to increase the motivation and enthusiasm of employees, and develop them so that they can give their maximum input in achieving their respective departmental goals. The efficiency in achieving the desired outcomes rely on the expertise, size and the budgets of concerned department.

Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship can be seen as an act of being an entrepreneur who undertakes innovations, finance and business in an effort to change innovations into economic goods. The most obvious form of entrepreneurship is that of starting new business which is referred to as start up company (Wikipedia, 2021). Entrepreneurship is seen as the use of human courage to seek investment opportunities and establish a profit-oriented enterprise

(Ediagbonya, 2014). Entrepreneurship can also be perceived as a process of creating something new which may take a lot of time and effort effect some monetary and personal satisfaction. Entrepreneurship involves creation process, conscious devotion of time and effort, involves risk and has some rewards. Gana (2001), defined it as willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run an enterprise successfully based on identified opportunities. Hisrich and Peters (2002), simply captured the term as the dynamic process of creating incremental wealth. They went further to explain that entrepreneurship is the personalized version of actualizing one's desire, ambition, and expression. Also, it can be regarded as the process of identifying, developing and bringing a vision to life. Such vision may be an innovative idea, an opportunity or simply a better way of doing something. Entrepreneurship is the willingness and ability of an individual to seek out investment opportunities in an environment and be able to establish and run as an enterprise successfully based on identified opportunities (Ediagbonya, 2014). In this definition, he noted that words that are integral to the understanding of entrepreneurship which are; willingness, ability and investment opportunities. That is to say that the entrepreneur must first have the ability (technical know - how) as well as the willingness to establish an enterprise. Moreover, it is not all opportunities that appear are actually worth investing in and as such, the entrepreneur has the responsibility to seek for the investment opportunity. Consequently, it can be deduced that entrepreneurship is the process of carefully determining and analyzing unmet needs through creatively satisfying those needs by bearing the attendant risks. These opportunities usually appear in the form of new business ventures or as new goods and services capable of enjoying competitive advantage. The creative element in the definition of entrepreneurship is critical to entrepreneurial success. Creativity is perceived as the ability to produce work or service that is novel that is original or unexpected but above all it must be useful and seek to satisfy unmet needs. Entrepreneurship initiative exists in every individual and most people have the ability to start a business, it may be dormant but needs to be activated. This can be achieved through core knowledge about starting a business (ThankGod-Amadi, 2018).

Sustainable Development

The term 'sustainable development' was first coined in 1972 at the United Nations Conference on Human Environment at Stockholm, where economic growth was seen as an enemy of environment. But prominent meaning of Sustainable development is the Brundtland Report (WCED, 1987) as cited in Okey-Colbert and Ukandu (2019) which proposed that sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present generation while letting future generations meet their own needs. In other words, it is improving the quality of life of the present generation without excessive use or abuse of natural resources, so that they can be preserved for the next generation. Sustainable development can be viewed as a combination of the economy and ecology aimed towards the attainment of economic development without hindering the ecological balance. Sustainable development can be ascertained through Weak Sustainability (WS) and Strong Sustainability (SS). "Weak sustainability" can be seen as non-declining total capital (productive base) in the form of physical, human and natural capital. The WS rents from natural resources could be invested (substituted) in manmade capital and or human capital to ensure sustainable development. Strong sustainability on the other hand, means a threshold level of some forms of capital

(physical, human, social, and natural) to be preserved in physical terms (Okey-Colbert & Ukandu, 2019). According to Amsalu in Okey-Colbert and Ukandu (2019), it is the WS criterion that is being employed most widely because of scarce resource with alternative uses. Weak sustainability is all about forms of capital that are substitutable for each other. More so, requires in addition to WS, the stocks of capital (K) should not be declining. Mann, 2016) added that it is preferred because a situation in which natural capital is preserved while other forms of capital are allowed to decline significantly can hardly be called “sustainable development”. Tern in Okey-Colbert and Ukandu (2019) stated that there is a consensus among a large number of economists that weak sustainability supports the capital theory approach (CTA) and is a useful means of measuring sustainability especially in inform of policy making.

There are three aims of sustainable development:

Economic- to attain balanced growth.

Ecological- to preserve the eco system

Social-guarantying equal access to resources to all human communities

The objectives as outlined in the Brundtland report is as follow:

- Dividing growth.
- Changing the quality of growth.
- Ensuring a sustainable population.
- Conserving and enhancing the resource base.
- Reorienting technology, building technology that is less exploitative

Relevant Practices of HRM that Promote Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Development

The requisite practices of human resource management relevant to entrepreneurship education for sustainable development according to Efang and Oleforo (2014) include planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation and motivation.

- Planning

Human resource planning is the practice of ensuring that the human resource requirements of an organization are identified and plans are made for satisfying these requirements. It is a process by which the management determines how an organization should move from its present manpower position to its expected manpower position which focuses on human resource needs both in quantitative and qualitative terms, which involves answering two basic questions namely; how many people and what sort of people? For entrepreneurship education therefore, human resource planning would as a matter of priority determine what sort of skills and other qualities in humans would be required to achieve the objectives of this education for sustainable development.

- Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment precedes selection in staffing process. Selection can be seen as a process of choosing the best candidate with best abilities, skills and knowledge for the required job (Woodward, 2010). During the recruitment phase of staffing, the organizations personnel attempt to establish contact with potential job applicants by job postings within the organization, advertising to attract external applicants, employee referrals, and other methods, depending on the type of organization and the nature of the job. After the process recruitment, selection becomes the next stage and it involves checking and scrutinizing the

applications tendered by the applicants, the determination of candidates that are qualified for the job and inviting them for interview, testing and assessing them based on characteristics required for effective performance, scoring candidates on each of these characteristics, making choice or choices and then offer of employment. Each of these steps requires high level of competence and rationalism. In the educational system, the school manager and other people in the team should be very fair and honest in their judgment on each of the candidates. Favoritism and nepotism should not be seen in the recruitment and selection process. If this is allowed, unqualified applicants or candidates may be selected or employed for the job and this will have an adverse effect to the system especially when it has to do with personnel to mind entrepreneurship activities in the school. Recruitment as a tool for entrepreneurship education must follow relevant recruitment policy of an organization providing the education. Mann (2016). on recruitment and selection, stated that managers must adhere to the recruitment regulations of the country of operations. For example, managers of schools should be careful not to recruit an employee without a working experience in teaching especially when it has to do with empowering students with skills. According to Ekwoaba, Ikeije, and Ufoma (2015), recruitment and selection are the most important tasks an organization such as the school can do to ensure the right types of people by hiring the right kinds of individuals performing the right task at the right place. Florea and Mihai (2014) elaborated that human factor are key to success of an organizations for sustainable development.

- **Training and Development**

These are human resource management functions that are relevant entrepreneurial tool for sustainable development in any given society. According to Bolton (1997) as cited in Efanga and Oleforo (2014), decision makers on training of entrepreneurship education should ask themselves some basic questions – Why do we want to train and for what purpose are we training the person? Who do we train and when do we train? Those who facilitate entrepreneurship education must be in constant touch with the state-of-the-art. It has been identified that education (entrepreneurship education) is human resource development. Thus, for entrepreneurship education to develop functional useful human capacity for sustainable development, it must be of a good quality. This suggests that those who instruct the students must be continuously improved so that they (teachers and supervisory agencies) do not impart obsolete or outdated skills and knowledge to the students.

Serving as teacher and coach to learners in order to develop them as leaders is considered to be one of the self-competencies that encompass entrepreneurial leadership. Personnel development appears to be an important issue within the concept of human resources and therefore requires regular attention. Employees' skills and knowledge representation in fact organization most valuable assets. Thus, leaders of organizations should by appropriate means influence sufficient competence through development of a group or individuals to become willing participants in the fulfilment of innovative goals. For this purpose, organizational leaders must have first of all an exciting and contagious vision to encourage others to commit to organizational achievement. Second, this vision has to be communicated. Openness and dynamic contacts between individuals, teams and departments within an organization facilitate the acceptance of new perspectives and represent relevant traits of organizational cultures able to stimulate creativity and innovation for sustainable development. Furthermore, Iswan (2017) stated that in most developing countries, the

government provides platforms of training and development to assist SMEs development in managerial, financial, and technical training. Given the importance of training and development in organization, SMEs must grab such opportunities and take the initiative to improve as well as update their employees' knowledge and skills to produce superior output. It is not surprising to state that training and development would strategically improve entrepreneurship performance leading to SME competitive advantage and long-term sustainability (Mann, 2016). Training, when successful, will reflect in productivity: productivity would increase, there would be a reduction in accidents on the job, and the end profits of the organization would be maximized. Profit is the goal of every employer. Bandari (2020) summed up how training and development influences corporate performance by arguing that developing human capital through continuing training may increase the productive output from each employee either through improvement in skill level or improvement in morale and job satisfaction.

- **Compensation and Motivation**

Compensation and motivation are incentives of pay or reward that is planned to stimulate individuals to join an organization, retain their loyalty, and perform well over time. According to Iswan (2017), a compensation management plan formulates the objectives and requirements that are to arrange employees, motivate performance, improve prosperity, spur and improve productivity and quality in providing services to the community, and improve the orderly administration of local finance. Compensation based on the social exchange theory represents an exchange between the employee and the employer (Reddy, 2017). Nasurdin, Ahmad and Tan (2015), in their study of hotel compensation, asserted that compensation could be categorized into direct and indirect compensation. Direct compensation reflects base compensation, such as salary and pay incentives like bonuses and profit sharing. Indirect compensation comprises benefits given to employees such as health insurance and unemployment insurance. When compensation is aligned correctly with employees' effort and output, the expertise of the employee will go a long way to help sustain development.

The objective of compensation as an entrepreneurial tool is to motivate employees to perform their job effectively to facilitate the accomplishment of organizational goals. Harris and McMahan (2015) advanced the argument that the human capital of organization is a resource that meets the requirement of the resource-based view and could create a competitive advantage for the organization. Gaining a competitive advantage over time will lead to better organization performance and sustainability of the organization. In the educational system, compensation is a strategy for school managers and owners to decide on employee's pay and other rewards to attract talented employees to contribute to the objectives of the school. Lai, Sarisdakis, and Johnstone (2017) supported the statement that with other HRM practices, organizations such as the school tend to practice a formal system of compensation or reward such as recognition and reinforcement, pay increment, job security which is considered as a form of motivation and constitute part of the indirect compensation package. The attraction of quality, talented applicants, and to sustain employees requires managers and owners of organizations to design an effective formal system of compensation. A formal system of compensation is a potential source of achieving a competitive advantage, which sequentially results in enhancing organizational performance (Ambrosius, 2016). In the business setting, managers and owners of SMEs need to offer equitable compensation

policy so that they can attract, retain, and motivate employees to apply their proficiency in their work-related activities efficiently and effectively. If these can be accomplished, then the SME will witness a positive relationship between its compensation system and its performance and the sustainment of their businesses. Reward and benefits management, according to Sarah (2015) as cited in Bandari (2020) is concerned with the formulation and implementation of strategies and policies, the purposes of which are to reward people fairly, equitably, and consistently by their value to the organization and help to achieve its strategic goals for sustainable development. Compensation deals with systems (reward processes, practices, and procedures) that aim to meet the needs of both the organization and its stakeholders. The philosophy of reward management as an entrepreneurial tool recognizes that if HRM is about investing in human capital from which a reasonable return is required, as indicated by Michiels (2017), rewarding people differently, according to their contribution (the return on investment they generate) is more appropriate. An appropriate reward system addresses longer-term issues relating to how people should be valued for what they do and achieve as a contribution of their human capital for the sustains of the organization.

Conclusion

The focus of this paper was HRM practices as entrepreneurial tool for sustainable development. It is expected that managers of organizations such as educational institutions could find value in this article to improve the use of HRM practices for competitive advantage for the sustainability of their organization and the economy as well as for the benefit of all stakeholders. By raising the awareness level of leaders HRM practices as an entrepreneurial tool, both managers of schools, captains of industry and SME leaders could realize and value the HR function as an indispensable critical asset for the sustainable development. If educational leaders recognize and maintain this significant asset well, then the long-term viability of the organization can be achieved for the realization of the higher purpose of the organization. All resources of the school organization must go through a maintenance schedule to ensure maximum performance for competitive advantage, profits, growth, and to successfully continue the operations for the long-term sustainability of the school.

Recommendations

Educational or school managers should rethink their positions on human resources (HR) as the most critical asset of the school organization in succeeding in entrepreneurship education. This is because some school managers tend to downplay the crucial function of HR. It is essential for school managers to understand that without the people, the other resources of the school organization cannot function, leading to instability, and eventually unsustainable development.

The use of compensation and benefits as a sure HRM maintenance strategy for entrepreneurship education should not be compromised by educational mangers. This recommendation aligns with the conceptual framework of this study; people engage for expected returns. If these expectations are not forthcoming, chances are high staff or personnel turnover of essential talents. The ability of educational managers to provide appropriate and consistent salaries plus other strategic added benefits, including motivation,

should be a spot-on strategy to recruit, maintain, and retain the critical HR assets of the school organization.

Administrators of schools should make a conscious effort to always involve their personnel or staff in the decision-making process. An effort of administrators or managers to involve their employees in the decision-making process comes with enormous benefits such as work environment of mutual respect, an increased sense of belongingness, creativity, loyalty, hard work, and eventually, the existence of a long-lasting relationship that could contribute to school organizational competitive advantage and sustainable development.

School managers should empower staff in their jobs as strategic partners of the school organization following recruitment and selection, appropriate orientation, appropriate training and development to minimize failures in the area of empowering students with appropriate entrepreneurial skills and knowledge.

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