The Proposed Relationship connecting e-HRM adoption, Performance Management System and Effective Decision making in Higher Educational Institutions in Nigeria.

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Abstract

Before any meaningful advancement is achieved, or progress attained, there has to be a sound enlightenment / education as the much needed weapon to triumph. If there is proper education, the chances are very high that actions will be free from the menace of ignorance. Formal education flows from a body of institutions which are run and managed by experts whose decisions determine the success or otherwise of those institutions. Suffice is to say therefore that all organizations including the higher educational institutions function as products of effective decision-making. The aim of this paper is to review related empirical literatures and highlight the need to investigate the impact of e-human resource management (e-HRM)) adoption on performance management system (PMS) and effective decision making in higher educational institutions in Nigeria. Towards the end of the paper, a conceptual model depicting the relationships between E-HRM adoption, performance management system and effective decision making will be offered.

Keywords: E-HRM, performance management system, effective decision making

1. Introduction

There is perhaps no point to argue if one says decision making (whether individual or organizational) is one of the most multifarious mechanisms of human philosophy, as various factors and courses of action influence it, intervene in it, moderate it and with different results. No wonder, it is seen as a series of cognitive operations performed deliberately, which includes the fundamentals from the environment in explicit time and place (Orasanu & Connolly, 1993). Similarly, Narayan and Corcoran (1997) argues that decision making is all about communication (face to face interaction or otherwise) between the identified problem that needs to be solved and one who wishes to solve it taking into consideration the time and place i.e when and where.

Effective decision making is highly valuable. Studies have tinted that it has been severally influenced by how apt, sophisticated and timely (managed) performance mechanisms are in an organization. This is because through performance management system highly committed employees will be guided to identify with the goals and values of the organization to be able to have a stronger desire to belong to the organization and willingness to go over and ahead of their requisite job specification in ensuring that the overall organizational decisions are made effective and efficient. In addition, eHRM as argued by Gibson et al. (2003) allows the organizational leaders to be more aware about human organizational behavior being it an extra way to develop effective leadership. On the basis of some illustration cases, the eHRM system is found to be useful for leadership purposes in public and private organizations because it works as the tacit signal method for strategic planning, more flexible working practices, and more importantly produces valid data for decision making and for overall effective human resource management. (Kets de Vries, 2006). Some related literatures for the topic above have been reviewed below.

2. Antecedents of effective decision making

Decision-making effectiveness has been very much linked to how well managers adapt their cognitive style to task requirements. The performance of any organization whether public or private, is considered to be optimistically interconnected with the effectiveness of decision-making (Nura & Osman, 2012). In a related view, it has been further

enlightened that a very stiff competitive environment, technological innovations, political and economic issues, resources (human and material) and consciousness of time in most organizations make the task increasingly exigent for decision-makers (van Riel et al, 2006).looking at it from another dimension, decisions ought to often be made under huge pressure (Payne et al. 1990; Simon 1997), and in highly complex and ambiguous situations (Weick 2001), where decision-makers are not supposed to defer decisions or call them off due to lack of sufficient information and fear of great uncertainty about future states of affairs (Bazerman 2001). Organization's decision making capabilities are often times bounded by managers' cognitive limitations- limitations in their ability to interpret process and act on information (Teece 1997). Consequent upon that, Wagner & Sternberg (1986) added that managers must act in response fast and aptly to the little knowledge that is available to them at a certain point in time, after all managers do not have access to all the information they need (March & Simon, 1958) and even if the information is readily available, some managers will still lack the mental and psychological ability to absorb and evaluate it correctly (Jones & George, 2006). The next two paragraphs highlight experts' view on information as it affects decision making.

2.1 Information
Organizations fail for many reasons. Among them is the lack of attention on how information and decision systems could be designed to best assist management regimes in solving the problems that arise from them and achieving effective decision making. The central principle as pointed out by Glantz, et al. (1997) is that systematic attention to cross-scale relationships can and should improve environmental policy and decision making. In achieving effective decision making, everyone in an organization is a user and provider of information considered in the broad sense. That includes data, information, appropriately packaged experience and knowledge. The need for information arises at all levels, from that of senior decision makers at the national and international levels to the grass-roots and individual levels.
Srinivas, (2010) declared that information is in evitable in decision making as sometimes, the real cause can lie hidden behind the 'visible' causes. He further postulates that finding information incorporates determining the sources from where information needed for decision-making can be obtained- What information needs to be taken? Who has that information? Why is that information being collected by the source? Which component of the problem at hand will it help? To be able to appreciate the significance of information as explained above, transformation processes are discussed.

a. Information Transformation processes
Whether organizations are new or to some extent mature as Lindsay and Andreas (2011) argued, the reality is that many of them struggle when justifying the benefits that processed information provides to the organization. Although reporting and analytics lead to better insight into an organization which in turn leads to better decision making and planning, the ability to consistently transform the value of data into usable information expands beyond the technical principles of business intelligence. Consequently organizations struggle with concepts surrounding the transformation of transactional data into the needed information for decision making. The vitality of the transformation processes depends on the style of decision adopted by managers.

2.3 Decision Styles
It has been established that managers of organizations do adapt their decision style so that optimal use is made of information and experience, given particular assignment characteristics. Adapting their decision style managers increase decision-making effectiveness (Brunswik 1952; Hammond et al. 1987; Meehl 1996; Payne et al. 1990). Similarly, in INSEAD (2007) it has been argued that a manager's choice of approach/style would depend on a combination of factors. Thus, time pressure might necessitate a more directive approach. If the quality of the decision was most important, then ensuring a more consultative style might be needed. One that ensured people with appropriate knowledge and experience were involved in the decision. Several managerial decision styles have been distinguished in the literature. Based upon Barnard's (1938) distinction between logical and non-logical decision processes, Herbert Simon first distinguished two formally different ways of decision-making: a rational analytical and an intuitive style (Simon 1997). Whatever style managers adopt will remain immaterial if they (the managers) are not time conscious. Having discussed the antecedents of effective decision making, the next segment will discuss the dimensions of PMS.

3. Dimensions of Performance Management System

It is often argued that, the value of the procedure of PMS is an achievement of pecuniary as well as non- pecuniary objectives, the development of skills and competencies of departments and their integration, and the improvement of customer care and process quality (Waal, 2007). There is also sort of substantiation that PMS is implemented in approximately 70% of firms in the US, Europe and part of Asia, in many governmental departments and institutions (Silk, 1998; Marr and Neely, 2003; Rigby, 2001; Williams, 2001; Speckbacher et al., 2003; Neely et al., 2004; Marr et al., 2004). It has been argued that companies and institutions who have implemented a sound PMS perform better than companies that do not use it (Hronec, 1993; Lynch and Cross, 1995; Lingle and Schiemann, 1996, 1999; Kaplan and Norton, 1996; Rheem, 1996; Atkinson et al., 1997; Armstrong and Baron, 1998; Lawson et al., 2003). Even though some of these studies are not academically robust (are not so much grounded in thorough research) as Bourne et al., (2000), Neely and Bourne, (2000) Neely and Austin, (2000) Bourne et al., (2003) Neely et al., (2004) opinionated, they provide some meaningful insights about PMS practice in organizations. An explanation of the role of the concept of procurement is attempted below.

3.1 Procurement

The first operative function of personnel management anywhere is perhaps procurement. It is concerned with procuring and employing people who possess necessary skill, knowledge and aptitude. Under the purview of procurement Shanthi (2010) established that issues on job analysis, manpower planning, recruitment, selection, placement, induction and internal mobility emerge. Viewing from the same perspective with Bernthal (2001) opined that two concepts of recruitment and selection capture the needed interpretation of procurement in human resource management. While recruitment is the process of identifying and attracting a group of potential candidates from within and outside the organization to evaluate for employment, the act of selection depicts the selecting of appropriate employees for employment. This means collecting, measuring, and evaluating information about candidates' qualifications for specified positions. Organizations use these practices to increase the likelihood of hiring individuals who have the right skills and abilities to be successful in the target job. The next line of action after acquiring the desired employee will be to polish them through training and development.

3.2 Training and development

Employee Training and Development are in evitable ingredients in performance improvement. Nonetheless, the primary approach in designing an employee training and development program is identifying the training requirements. The training needs are based on what is needed to achieve the organization's strategic objectives. There are many models of training and development that have made greater progress into organizational settings, which have began to have a greater impact on instructional design. Specifically, Instructional Systems Design, Human Performance Technology, Performance-Based Instructional Design, and Total Quality Management, (Manu, 2004). In the opinion of Vemic (2007), understanding the phenomenon of employee training and development requires understanding of all the changes that take place as a result of learning. It has been further established by Vemic (2007) that employee training and development is positioned within a broader strategic perspective of human resources management, i.e. global organizational management. The next paragraph will discuss the substance of compensation in organizations.

3.3 Compensation

Organizations do regular planning and evaluating of their compensation and performance appraisal systems because it is evident and important to employees and it is very important to consistently communicate a clear message regarding how pay decisions are made. In short, a solid pay-for-performance strategy requires that employee pay matches the organization's message. Lawler (1983) is a prominent advocate of merit pay in organizational settings; he built his argument on Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory. Lawler further declared that pay can be a powerful performance incentive because it can be used to satisfy so many needs. Compensations stimulate the employees to put in their best in their jobs. But it all depends on adhered to organizational culture they are and the precautions they take (Luthans, 1990 & Hofmann et al 1995). It has further been stressed that social factors such as praises and recognition as well as cash bonuses are other ways that employees can be motivated (Khdair, et al, 2011). An elucidation on the Integration of employee in organizations follows in the next paragraph.

3.4   Integration/ career planning

An integration program depends on the size of organization, as Kobozeva (2007) pointed out, is designed to quickly and effectively unite the new employee with the existing team, is a basic necessity for every organization. Triumphant integration programs can help organization regardless of their size create an open, encouraging work atmosphere cutting down the expenses of time and errors and improving employee retention and loyalty. Building a career is not only about finding the right job and keeping it, but about making continual career choices in response to a swiftly changing labor market. Miller and Marvin (2006) also argued that an upshot of poor career planning is occupational mismatches which not only lead to stress, discontent, and even depression for employees, but cost the employers as well. It has been established that more than twenty million people change jobs each year, and about fourteen million of them are left with career planning issues to battle with-need some career planning assistance (Scott and Isenhour, 2003).

3.5   Welfare

Having discussed integration in the preceding paragraph, deliberations on welfare follow in this paragraph. Welfare includes anything (over and above wages and salaries) that is done for the placate and improvement of employees and which helps in keeping the morale and motivation of the employees high so as to retain them for longer duration. Employee welfare includes monitoring of working conditions, ensuring of industrial harmony by providing infrastructure for health, industrial relations and insurance for the workers and their families.

Cowling and Mailer, (1992) asserted that the concept of welfare is a kind of mutual attitude or commitment in the expressed care for employees by their employers as a result of reinforcing their condition of work. Distinctively, it has been pointed out that employee welfare comes in different ways – service grants; personal consultancy and guidance and counseling; cafeteria; health care facilities; sports and extracurricular activities among others (Coventry and Barker 1988). The next lines in the following paragraph will discuss separation.

3.6   Separation / succession planning

The scope of HRM department today is beyond personnel recruitment and compensation issues, but also delivers the ability to attend to broader, more universal strategic challenges as well as building a solid foundation for future organizational success and for their employees both during and after their tenure. A planned succession reduces uncertainties and avoids disruptions when there is a departure of key talents or leadership in the organization (Naidu, 2008). Succession planning is a dynamic and perhaps a continuing process of identifying, assessing, and developing leadership talent; as well as recognizing key contributors to meet future organizational strategic and operational needs (Kimball, 2005). Schmalzried and Fallon, (2007) believe it is a proactive attempt to ensure continuity in an organization through identifying how positions will be filled, duties and responsibilities taken over as both planned and unplanned departures occur. The next segment of the paper was based on related empirical studies.

4.   Empirical studies on the Dimension of E-HRM and effective Decision making

A survey by Overman (1992) concluded that the potential advantages of E-HRM are faster information processing, greater information accuracy, improved planning and program development, and enhanced employee communications. In some researches, the use of E-HRM would reduce HR costs by automating information and reducing the number of HR employees; by helping employees   to control their own personal information; and by allowing managers to access relevant information and data, conducts analyses, make decisions, and communicate with others without consulting an HR professional (Awazu & Desouza, 2003;Ball,2001). Ideally, with an appropriate use of E-HRM, less people should be needed to perform administrative tasks and more time would be made available for HR managers to assist at strategic level. The future is bright for E-HRM as it creates new paths for human resources and for the organizations that effectively use it. One study even goes as far as to suggest that there is evidence that HIRS can improve shareholder value in business oriented organizations (Brown, 2002). It has been widely contended that, an ample acceptance of e-HRM methods in higher educational institutions will construct broader corollary regarding organizational structure (Darling, 2002; Shaba, 2000). And if higher institutions of learning do not cuddle this technology of e-HRM they will be left behind in the quest for effective decision making and technological development (Volery, 2000).

4.1 Empirical studies on the dimension of PMS and effective Decision making

In the paragraph above, previous empirical studies have shown an established link between e HRM and effective decision making. Here, are other empirical concerns that highlight issues on PMS and effective decision making. Kald and Nilsson, (2000) assert that PMS brings about improvement in the decision-making Process. It is also incorporated that, higher commitment of organizational departments to the organization adds a lot of benefits to organizational progress (Neely et al., 2004 & Bititci et al. 2004). More clarity of people about their contribution towards achievement of the strategy and organizational goals also remain an outstanding lead (Lawson et al., 2004; Neely et al., 2004; Papalexandris et al., 2004). In the opinion of Sim and Koh, (2001) higher innovativeness and more pro-activity of organizational members among others which invariably make effective decisions attainable (Waal, 2002; Self, 2004). From the quantitative angle however, increase in revenue is indeed assured in modern organizations (Malina and Selto, 2001; Sim and Koh, 2001; Waal, 2002; Said et al., 2003; Braam and Nijssen, 2004; Davis and Albright, 2004; Neely et al., 2004; Robinson, 2004) Increase in profit is another term that has been spotted as a very powerful value addition brought to fore by PMS (Davis and Albright, 2004; Waal, 2002; Said et al., 2003 Braam and Nijssen, 2004; Neely et al, 2004; Robinson, 2004).

4.2 Proposed Framework

The frame work of this study has proposed E-HRM adoption as independent variable and Performance Management System and Effective Decision making as dependent variables. e-HRM which is a computerized version of the traditional human resource management is measured using the technology acceptance model (TAM) which specifies causal linkages between two key sets of constructs: (1) Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEU), and (2) user's attitude (AT), behavioral intentions (BI) and actual computer usage behavior. PMS is measured using its popular dimensions such as procurement, development, compensation, integration, maintenance and separation (Waal et al, 2007; Schmalzried & Fallon, 2007). Effective decision making can be measured through checking the fitness and compatibility nature of its antecedents. Different scholars attached preference to different antecedents i.e. information (Kennerley & Mason, 2008); decision styles, transformation process and time management (van Riel et al, 2006)

Previous studies have indicated that performance management system is influenced by E HRM (Overman, 1992; Lengnick-Hall & Moritz, 2003; Panayotopoulou et al., 2007; Shaba, 2000). Though there is no one universally acceptable typology on how E-HRM can support HR activities in higher institutions of learning, one thing remains certain that it does help and support in different manners (Maatman, 2006). PMS on the other hand means setting performance expectations and goals for groups and individuals, to channel their efforts towards achieving organizational objectives (Armstrong & Angela, 2002; Gaebler, 1993; Thimmaiah, 1984) Performance management depicts a systematic process by which the organization involves its employees, as individuals and members of a group, in improving organizational effectiveness geared towards the accomplishment of organizational mission and goals. e-HRM, therefore, "is a concept – a way of "doing" HR not to ignore the fact that e-HRM can alter the nature of HRM strategies, policies and practices (Rue̎l et al. 2002, 2004).

It has also been gathered from previous works that E HRM has a significant impact on decision making. EHRM eliminates the "HR middleman" there by simplifying decisions (Lengnick-Hall & Moritz, 2003). It allows managers to access relevant information and data, conducts analyses, make effective decisions (Awazu & Desouza, 2003; Ball, 2001).
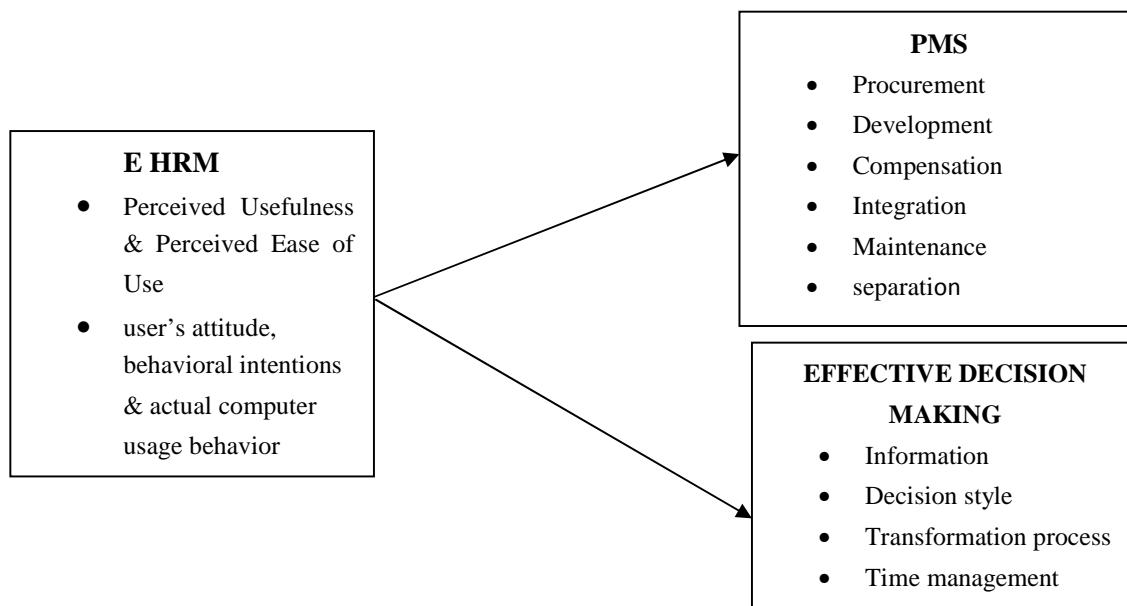
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PMS
- Procurement
- Development
- Compensation
- Integration
- Maintenance
- separation

E HRM
- Perceived Usefulness & Perceived Ease of Use
- user's attitude, behavioral intentions & actual computer usage behavior

EFFECTIVE DECISION MAKING
- Information
- Decision style
- Transformation process
- Time management

Figure 1: Theoretical framework

5. Conclusion

The main objective of this paper was to review the related empirical literatures and highlight the need to investigate E HRM impact on PMS and effective decision making. The reason for integrating PMS and effective decision making is because it is the overall PMS that translates effective decisions all of which are made easier and simpler with an E HRM adoption. Davies and Lampel (1998), argue that managers primarily used PMS in a tactical way, in order to intervene in what they describe as "doctor-patient relationship". Radin (2006) provides the example of the British Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) which audited the research quality of higher institutions of learning based on a number of performance indicators such as the number and type of publications. She asserts that the most vigorous critique of PMS was on the standardized assessment that purportedly did not leave enough room for teachers' discretion.

It has been widely contended that, an ample acceptance of e-HRM methods in higher educational institutions will construct broader corollary regarding organizational structure (Darling, 2002; Shaba, 2000).

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