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HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

Human resources management is the effective use of human resources in order to enhance organisational performance to achieve goals like return on investment (ROI) from human capital and minimise financial risks. Human resources is more concerned with employees acquiring their services, developing their skills, motivating employees to higher levels of performance and ensure commitment of employees to the organisation. However, many people in an organisation fail to understand the roles and functions of human resources management resulting in undermining the roles of human resources management, (Alan, C. 2019).

This paper will therefore, analyse the meaning of human resources management, explain the roles and functions of management, functions of management, management and its relationship with human resources management. Human resources as a strategy is going to be focussed on linking the human resources strategy to organisational strategy. This paper is going to look at the job analysis and recruitment processes as well as job evaluation and remuneration philosophy applied in an organisation. It will further look at the remuneration policy and reward system used in the organisation as well as motivation of employees to produce the best results.

The paper will look at how human resources fit in the organisation and the best position in the organisation so that it can be recognised as an important function like other management functions. It will also focus on the effects of human resources management in the organisation and how it can establish itself in a proper and suitable way to be recognised in the organisation and try to make a big difference in the organisation. The paper will also examine why human resources managers are not recognised so that they can also occupy higher positions in the organisation like being Chief Executive Officers (CEO) or Directors of the company.

Human resources development methods and barriers to career development in human resources management is going to be discussed. The final sections will summarise, discuss and have a general conclusion of human resources management. This will definitely put the whole write-up into clear perspective and will help prospective managers by developing their management skills. Highlighting the importance of training in the organisation and proper motivation strategies to improve the performance of employees will be of paramount importance in the organisation since it improves the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation.



1. **OVERVIEW OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT CONCEPT**

The concept of human resources management is a comprehensive and focusses on all aspects of the business. The evolution of human resources management came from personnel administration and personnel management. It was concerned with administrative tasks that have to do with organising records, and dealing with employee wages, salaries and benefits. Personnel officer dealt with labour relations such as problems with trade unions. However, the difference of personnel management and human resources management is that personnel management is a traditional approach of managing people while human resources management is a modern approach to managing people, (Debra, P. 2023).

Personnel management focusses on administration, employee welfare and labour relations while human resources focus on acquisition, development, motivation and maintenance of human resources in the organisation. Personnel management function is undertaken for employees’ satisfaction and human resources is undertaken for goal achievement. Therefore, human resources management is an improvement of personnel management and human resources management is participatory in decision-making in the organisation in trying to come up with a common goal for the business, (Gary, D. 2023).

This shows that human resources management evolved from personnel management and personnel management did not involve everyone in decision making like what is happening in human resources management especially in job evaluation. When doing job evaluation both parties must be involved and participative in order to come up with a common objective that result in achieving organisational goals. Training and development is another concept where management and employees must have a common understanding of the objective of the organisation and was not familiar with personnel management.

However, this paper will provide an overview of the human resources management concept merely in terms of meaning of human resources management, roles and functions of human resources management, Human resources planning, Training and development. This section will be completed by focusing on discussion and conclusion of the paper. This paper will help both current and prospective managers who are not comfortable with the concept of human resources management since the concept can be used by anyone who deal with people.



* 1. MEANING OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Human resources management (HRM) is the practice of recruiting, hiring, deploying and managing an organisation’s employees. Human resources management is referred to simply as human resources (HR). Human resources department is usually responsible for creating, putting into effect and overseeing policies governing workers and the relationship of the organisation with its employees. Human resources management is employee management with an emphasis on employees as assets of the business. In this context, employees are sometimes referred to as human capital especially in some big organisations or local bodies. As with other business assets, the goal is to make effective use of employees, reducing risk and maximising return on investment (ROI), (Mike, U. 2015).

* 1. DEFINITION OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Human resources management is the process of employing, training, developing policies relating to employees, compensating, and retaining employees. Human resources management involves staffing, which involve hiring people, determine a staffing plan, encouraging multiculturalism and negotiating rewarding and compensation packages. This also involve developing policies thus developing policies relating to vacations, dress codes, discipline and business ethics. Human resources management also examine compensation and benefits administration where fair pay and benefits are looked at as well as setting up pay systems and offering health benefits, (Alan, C. 2019).

This also involve retention where you need to keep and motivate employees to stay with the organisation that means retention of appropriate skills that benefit the business. This goes hand in hand with training and development where the organisation train new and old employees to do their jobs and helping them develop new skills. This will also help in protecting employees by ensuring the workplace is safe and meeting the national and international standards. This means that human resources management is a broad term and have been used in organisations as a way of improving and managing the performance of the organisation. It is normally used to monitor and evaluate the performance of the organisation in order to gain competitive advantage over other organisations. The strategy of human resources management has to be applied with high understanding of the application of the human resources.



* 1. ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The roles and functions of human resources management encompasses a range of responsibilities effectively managing an organisation’s human capital. Human resources management plays an important role in the management of organisation’s important asset which is the people or employees in the organisation. The roles and functions of human resources management is diverse and covers a wide spectrum of various aspects of employee lifestyle and organisation development. The focus will be on some main roles and functions of human resources management as itemised below, (Armstrong, M. and Baron, A 2004).

* + 1. **Recruitment and selection**

Recruitment is done to find applicants for the positions, which the organisation wants to fill and selection is the choosing of those applicants who are best suited for the vacant positions. Once human resources planning has been completed and staffing needs identified, an organisation is able to conduct recruiting procedures. This is the process of attracting qualified job applicants from which to select the most appropriate for a job. The recruitment and selection processes is usually done either internally or externally. When it is internal it is when a person is promoted and usually provides a strong motivation for employees while when it is external the candidate can be sourced from outside the organisation. This can be done when the organisation wishes to bring new or different ideas and new blood to the organisation, (Arthur, J. 1994).

2.3.2 **Training and Development**

Training is better explained as a process which aims to provide an individual with specific job-related skills. Training is based on the business strategy of the company, and itself, be strategically planned and results-oriented. It is successful when it results in an employee making a greater contribution to the business performance and financial results of the organisation, (Van Dyk, P.S. 1992). The heart of a continuous effort designed to improve employee competency and organisational performance. Training focusses on providing employees with specific skills or helping them correct deficiencies in their performance. Once the need for change is determined and the factors that influence the intervention are considered, the process of determining training needs begins as shown on fig1.1 below.



FIGURE 1.1 **THE TRAINING PROCESS**

**Development & conduct of Training**

-Location

-Presentation and Type

**Needs Assessment Phase**

-Organisation Needs

-Task Needs and Person needs

**Evaluation**

**Source: Van Dyk, P.S. (1992)**

There is a process for needs assessment and establishing objectives then develop and conduct training, depending on specific skills to be imparted to employees. Delivering of training is very important because there are a number of issues to be considered, like the location, the material to be presented, the type of people to receive the training and the methods of delivering the training. Eventually, you need to consider evaluation of the training to establish the effectiveness and efficiency of the training. However, evaluation can be done in each stage or phase as the trainer or human resources manager needs to keep on monitoring.

The aim of training is to seek long term change of employees’ skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviour to improve work performance. A well organised and well-presented training programme develops and maintains an organisations’ sustainable competitive advantage. The following types of training are commonly used:

* On the job training
* Off the job training
* Competency based training
* Action training or sitting by Nellie.

The following are some of the benefits of training which include high productivity, reduces costs, opportunity for promotion, self-improvement and job satisfaction by employees.



* + 1. **Human resources planning**

It is the process that identifies current and future human resources needs for the organisation. This involves strategic proposal to guarantee workers are adequate, skilled and proficient to attain business objectives. Human resources forecast the future demand for employees that is after employees have either retired, resigned or get promoted, creating spaces for others. This is where it involves talent development pipeline, succession planning through job analysis as specified by human resources strategic plan. Human resources planning (HRP) is therefore the systematic reviewing of human resources requirements to ensure that the required number of employees, with the specific required skills and knowledge are available when needed.

* + 1. **Compensation and benefits**

This involves all rewards that individuals receive as a result of their employment. The reward maybe one or a combination of pay which is the money an individual receives for performing a job and benefits which are additional financial rewards other than basic pay and this include paid vacations, sick leave, holidays and medical insurances. In addition to those benefits there are non-financial rewards which are non-monetary rewards such as enjoyment of the work performed or a pleasant working environment which is part of self-motivation to the employee. In some organisations, it is referred to as remunerations which is the financial payment an employee receives in return for working for an employer and normal received in form of wages, salaries and bonuses as direct financial compensation, (Armstrong, M. and Baron, A. 2004).

In order for remuneration to be effective and efficient, there should be a remuneration policy where a compensation philosophy supports the organisation’s strategic plan and initiatives, business goals, competitive outlook, operating objectives, and compensation and total reward strategies. This will also determine where you want your organisation to be positioned, like if you want your organisation to be leading in terms of remuneration then it will be regarded as 75th percentile, while if you want it to be lagging then you will be behind other companies in terms of remunerations and it will be at 30th percentile which means 70% of your competitors would be paying better. However, the most common one, is matching the market, that is when your company will be positioned at 50th percentile or median where half of your competitors pay less and half pay more. This is referred to as P50 or Q2 which is second quartile.



It is also important to consider that for the remuneration or compensation policy to be effective there is need to demonstrate equity where there is fair, equitable and competitive pay practices and this is done through treating all employees fairly regardless of gender or creed. It is also important to demonstrate equity practices both internally and externally and this can drive employees to intrinsically and extrinsically motivated resulting in better results for the organisation, (Barbra, M, and Cornella, G. 2019).

* + 1. **Performance Management**

This is the process that significantly affects the organisational success by having managers and employees work together to set expectations, review results, and reward performance. Performance management is a way of getting better results by understanding and managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, standards and competence requirements. This brings a shared understanding between an employee and the manager of what needs to be achieved and the goal of measuring performance to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation by aligning the employee’s work and results and it is an on-going and integrative process, (Kistern, E. and Martin, E. 2020).

Therefore, performance is the function of ability to do work to enhance the level of performance and motivation involves activities that help employees exert high energy levels and to get performance in desirable direction. This shows that job performance is determined by the willingness to perform, capacity to perform and opportunity to perform. The following are some of the reasons why performance is measured, thus, it enhances motivation and productivity, detects problems, helps evaluate change efforts, provide basis for making decisions and helps in differentiating employees in job-related areas.

However, technology is knocking down the old methods to make room for an updated and more effective method to improve employee performance. In order to meet demands of the ever changing performance management landscape, organisations must stay up to date with cutting edge best practices and solutions and embrace technology. By using advanced performance management systems, employees’ and organisations’ have a better chance of success since they will be understanding and pulling towards one direction without or minimum disputes in the organisation.



* + 1. **Industrial Relations**

Industrial relations involve all aspects of the relationship between employers and employees in the organisation. Industrial relations as a function of human resources management is concerned with the systems, rules and procedures used by unions and employers to determine, to protect interests of both the employer and employees in the organisation. This refers to employment problems and security, conditions of work, remunerations, labour issues, grievances and disputes, welfare of workers, production efficiency, social security and employment development. If there is team work, there will be high chances of efficient production, motivated workforce and profitability. There is also reduction of unfair labour practices and the common actors of industrial relations involve employees or workers’ committees or Trade Unions, employers or employers’ Associations, and government. These parties help to resolve industrial disputes, (Dave, U. 2015).

The discussion did not look at all the roles and functions of human resources but these were seen to be the major functions as they cover all concepts of human resources management and justify the need for a human resources department in an organisation. It is very important to realise that human resources department is a strategic department that is common to their organisational functions and should be recognised even for higher post in the organisation. Human resources management also compile various policies that are used by the organisation to improve the performance of the organisation and as such needs to take a pivotal role in decision making, (Dave, U. 2015).

The discussion above showed that human resources management is used as a strategy for business in many ways, that include talent development, aligning human resources with business objectives, workforce planning, employee engagement, leadership development, performance management and compensation and benefits. This also include risk management, innovation and agility, data-driven decision making and drive the results for the organisation. By leveraging these strategies, human resources management becomes a key business partner, driving organisational goals and competitiveness.



1. **RELATIONSHIPS OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND OTHER LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT**

Human resources management (HRM) relates to other levels of management in many ways, since it is a strategic position for the business. It is going to be discussed briefly taking level by level of each management to clarify the importance of human resources management. Sometimes people think that human resources management is only required at top level management or lower level management but it is not true since this strategic position has to be helping all levels of management, from top level management, middle level management and lower level management as indicated below.

* 1. **Top level management**

This is the most senior level of management in the organisation and generally comprises of Governing Board or Board members, Board of Directors and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). They are normally the leaders of the organisation. Therefore, human resources management come in to provide strategic support to top management in setting organisational goals, vision and mission. Human resources management is also involved in top management on talent development, succession planning and leadership development. This is where the top management also listen to the advices provided, (Karen, B. 2019).

* 1. **Middle level management**

Human resources management collaborates with middle level management in implementing policies, programmes, and initiatives. Human resources management provides guidance on performance management, employee development, and conflict resolutions. It also supports middle level management in talent identification, coaching, and mentoring. This shows that human resources management is of paramount importance in the organisation and need to be financially supported for it to be effective and efficiency, (Dave, U. 2001).

* 1. **Lower level management**

Human resources provides training and support to lower level management on human resources related issues such as recruitment and selection, employee relations, compensation and benefits. In summary, human resources management play a strategic partner role with all.



1. **MOTIVATION AND JOB SATISFACTION**

One cannot discuss on human resources management without focussing on motivation and job satisfaction. The same goes with this paper where the writer is not going to look at all motivational theories but focus on Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs which seem to be the most common motivation practices in human resources management. Motivation starts with good employee morale, the mental attitude of employees towards their jobs, (Beach, S. 1985). Poor morale shows up through absenteeism, employee turnover, strikes, falling productivity, and rising employee grievances. This is why some authorities came up with motivational theories to improve the performance of employees.

* 1. Motivation theory

This was developed by Abraham Maslow and was regarded as Maslow’s hierarchy of needs as from 1954 and up to date the theory is still very familiar with many organisations because of the results associated with the theory. Human resources managers have also used this theory in their various functions of human resources management. Maslow, A. (1986) postulated that there is a hierarchy of needs and that until a person has fulfilled his basic needs, he will not strive to achieve his higher needs.

However, this principle has been faced with some resistances from other writers as some feel that development can start from anywhere without specific order. Maslow said that people have five types of needs and also depicted a pyramid which is still in use up to now. He said the needs are aroused from lowest to highest, such that lowest order need must be fulfilled first then the next order need is triggered and the process continues until to the end. The following pyramid on fig 4.2 illustrates how the needs are applied.

This means that managers in the organisations must be perceptive and empathetic to their employees’ need as they must listen to what their employees’ needs are and work to fulfil them. His theory suggests that needs at each level must be satisfied before people will attempt to satisfy needs at the next level of the hierarchy. Theory explains the different levels and importance of human physiological or physical needs. The pyramid below therefore, demonstrate how the various needs are satisfied and the chronological sequence that should be followed.



**Fig. 4.2 Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs**

Self- Actualisation

Self-Esteem Needs

Belonging-ness and Love Needs

Safety, Stability and Security Needs

Physical or Physiological needs

**Source: Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, (1986)**

* + 1. **Physiological or Physical needs**

These are the survival of a human being and form the foundation of the pyramid and the following are some of the basics, thus, food, air, water and shelter. This means that organisations should provide salaries and wages that enable them to afford living conditions. A hungry employee will hardly be able to make much of any contribution to his organisation. The physiological needs show that they play a pivotal role in the process of motivation and driving employees to meet the organisational goals.

* + 1. **Safety, Stability and security needs**

These refers to the need for a secure working environment, free from any threats either by top management, bully colleagues or the general environment. Employees working in an environment free of harm do their jobs without fear of harm or losing limbs. Therefore, if employees are working with machines they should be guarded with machine guards. Employees need to be comfortable in their working environment to perform to their best.



* + 1. **Belonging-iness and love needs/Social Needs**

The need to be affiliated is needed, to be loved and accepted by individuals and groups or other people. To meet these needs, organisations encourage employees’ participation in social events such as organisation games and team building activities. It is always difficult for employees to work where they are not wanted or are not comfortable working with colleagues without trust.

* + 1. **Self-esteem needs**

This refers to self-respect and approval of others. This can be done through recognising those employees performing exceptional well for the organisation and can drive the objectives of the organisation. Organisations can introduce awards to recognise distinguished achievements as a way of motivating employees and they will definitely improve their performance in the organisation.

* + 1. **Self-actualisation**

This is the pinnacle of motivation where one would have done everything in life. It refers to the need to become all that one is capable of being to develop one’s fullest potential. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs can be used by managers to better understand employees’ needs and motivations allowing them to best provide for employees’ needs and generate high productivity and job satisfaction.

The application of Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs is common and encouraged in the organisation since self-actualisation make employees want to work at their maximum. It is important to make employees meet this stage by helping meet their need. It is important therefore, to recognise employee’s accomplishment. There is also the financial security which is an important type of safety need. Employees need to be financial stable and secure by involving them in profit sharing schemes.

In conclusion, the writer managed to look at all aspects of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs in detail, although the paper failed to compare with other motivational authorities like Herzberg’s duality theory of job satisfaction, Skinner’s reinforcement theory and Vroom’s expectancy theory. These theorists had their limitations which made them unfamiliar with motivation as compared to Maslow in terms of application.



1. **GENERAL DISCUSSIONS**

The writer examined the various concepts of human resources management and the information was presented in various sections from section 1 to section 3 as a way of elaborating what is meant by human resources management, the roles and functions of human resources management, how they work with the various levels of management from top management, middle level management and lower level management. It is now important to look at how human resources management relate with other functions of management in the organisation, how human resources management differ from other functions of management, and the contribution of the paper. The writer will highlight the contribution of this paper to both present and prospective managers as well as other researchers in this area of focus.

* 1. HOW HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT LINK WITH OTHER FUNCTIONS

Human resources (HR) links with other functions of the organisation like finance as they partner to develop compensation and benefits packages, manage labour costs and ensure budget alignment. Human resources also link with operations as they support operations by recruiting and training employees to meet business needs, improving productivity, enhancing performance management. Human resources also collaborates with marketing to develop employer branding, attract top talent, and promote the organisation’s culture and values. This is also clearly linked to Information technology as information technology is used to implement human resources systems, manage data analytics, human resources metrics, and ensure compliance with technology-related issues.

Human resources management also partners with legal to ensure compliance with labour laws, manage employee relations as well as resolve grievances and employee conflicts. Procurement also partner with human resources for related services, such as benefits providers or training companies. Human resources also support research and development by attracting and retaining top talent, developing innovation capabilities, and fostering a culture of innovation in the organisation. Human resources works with sales to develop talent pipelines, improve sales performance, and enhance customer service skills. This shows that by integrating with these functions, human resources management enables the organisation to achieve its goals and objectives, and enhances overall success.



* 1. HOW HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT DIFFER FROM OTHER FUNCTIONS

Human resources management is different from other organisational functions in many ways. Human resources generally focus on valuable assets, that is the employees in the organisation and other functions focus on products, finance, services and productivity for the organisation. It also focusses on the scope where human resources look at the broad concepts of the company whereas other functions of the organisation have a narrower scope. The goals of human resources management are centred on employee well-fare, development, and performance while other functions prioritise profit-making, effective and efficiency, and productivity.

Human resources professionals have specific skills that include interpersonal, communication and emotional intelligence skills while other functions focus on technical skills making the impact to the organisation different. Human resources usually have a long-term impact shaping its culture, values, and reputation whereas other functions have immediate impact to the organisation. It is also clear that human resources management is measured its success through employee engagement, retention, and development, low or no disputes and grievances whereas other functions’ performance are measured by metrics like revenue, productivity, sales and orders. The role of human resources is a strategic partner, advisor, and facilitator, where as other functions are more of operational.

In conclusion, the discussion made it clear that recognising these differences, organisations can better understand the unique value human resources management brings and leverage its expertise to drive business success. It also means that for human resources management to be functioning without interfering with other functions there is need to create uniqueness in their way of doing business and specify their roles in the organisation. The differences discussed with other functions should not be used as a way of creating enermity among departments but a way of separating tasks and activities that make the organisation work in harmony. They should have the same goal for the organisation of pulling towards the same direction. The writer is therefore, impressed by how human resources should create uniqueness in the way it conducts its business and how it can develop the management skills required in the organisation.



* 1. CONTRIBUTION OF THE PAPER

The subsections 5.1 and 5.2 have highlighted the relationships between human resources management and other functions or departments in the organisation. It showed the difference of human resources and other functions like finance, procurement, production, sales just to mention but a few. The link between human resources management and other functions was also discussed and analysed. This relationship is critical to the function of the organisation or business. Therefore, understanding of this paper will help readers, especially those who are unfamiliar with human resources management and how the business operates.

In specific to my country, Zimbabwe, this paper, among other purposes, will provide the necessary understanding of the functional roles of human resources management to current and prospective managers that wish to join various organisations in the country. The paper will also provide an insight to the private and public institutions on how human resources management work and how it creates harmony among employees in the organisation. The various levels of management will be given an opportunity to work with human resources management in implementing policies for the organisation and allow the organisation to function with one goal.

The paper will help future researchers and readers in developing new ideas and understanding of the concept of human resources management. It will also help company directors and shareholders in decision-making by understanding the functional roles of human resources management and how they act as the pillar of the organisation used to clear difficult issues in the organisation by handling issues from all management functions and various levels of management.

In summary, it has been agreed that the main purposes of human resources management are to attract, retain, and develop talented workforce, create a positive work environment and align human resources strategies with organisational goals as well as managing employee relations and develop and implement policies and procedures. Human resources management aims to balance the needs of the organisation with needs of its employees, creating a win-win situation that drives the organisation to drive business and employee fulfilment. The discussion above proved that human resources management play a pivotal role in the organisation.



1. **CONCLUSION**

In view of the above discussions, the writer is convinced that human resources management and other functions need to work in harmony if best results are to be produced. Human resources management mainly deal with people or employees, whereas other functions in the organisation deal with tasks and activities. Human resources is most critical function in the organisation because it is about people, the most important and complicated assets of the organisation in the current world of business. People in the organisation are complex, because they, unlike other assets, have moods, stresses, emotions, different attitudes and so on.

Therefore, the task of managing people is the most challenging task compared to managing things in the organisation. This means that every manager in the organisation needs to have a certain level of human resources management skills in a more effective and efficient manner to achieve the organisational goals. The roles and functions of management play a great role in helping the organisation achieve its goal. Basing on the overview of human resources management concept, it is clear that human resources can transform the way the business is operating and allow employees to fully perform to the maximum.

The discussion has also showed that human resources management ensure compliance with labour laws, regulations and standards. It also supports organisational change, innovation, and growth. It also enhances the organisation’s reputation and brand. This shows that human resources management has a significant effect in the organisation and has to be done professionally to avoid creating conflicts and disgruntlement among employees. This would affect production and efficiency of the business. Managers who lack human resources management concepts definitely will find managing people very difficult and are unlikely able to achieve organisational objectives and goals.

Investing in human resources training for managers is not a waste of resources but actually equipping managers with the necessary skills and knowledge that would uplift the business and transform the business. Thus, understanding the roles and functions of human resources management is the understanding of the broader picture of the business and allow all members in the organisation to pull in one direction.



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