Organisational Behaviour and Human Resource Management in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects

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Abstract: *Organisations are created generally to achieve a goal or set of goals, as a result, employ the services of human who manage the resources of the organisation towards the achievement of this goal(s). In the course achieving these goals, there evolves a pattern or way of behaviour which is accepted and is manifested when workers are discharging their responsibilities. It is in line with the above assertion that this paper aims at studying the impact of organisational behaviour on human resource management in Nigeria. The research paper approach adopted for the study conforms to qualitative research, as it reviews the literature relating to organisational behaviour and human resource management. After critical x-ray of related write-ups on the topic under study, we found out that some factors of organisational behaviour such as employee motivation, attitude and perception of workers have a significant relationship with the performance of workers in the organisation. Finally the study recommended among other things that management as well as the staff of organisations should imbibe an orientation and culture which views an organisational as a structure established to develop the workers(individually and collectively), and also improve the lives of members of the society.*

Keywords: Organisational behaviour, Human resource management, Organisation and Behaviour

1. Introduction

Organisations, be it in a developed or developing economy are filled with people that occupy different positions with the sole aim of actualising its predetermined goals and objectives with highest possible profit, shortest possible time and lowest minimum cost. In other words, organisations are structures that have different functions to be performed by people with different skills, abilities, experiences and capabilities, all channelled towards the direction of the organisational goals. Some are managers, others workers; some are owners of the business; others act as trustees of someone else's organisation (Wilson and Rosenfeld, 1990: 6). Suffice to state that, among the resources of the organisation, the human is the most important asset in that it organises other resources effectively and efficiently to achieve optimum result and also, can either grow or destroy a company. Emphasising on the importance of human to the organisation, Elnaga and Imran (2013) stated that employees are the most valuable asset of every company as they can make or break a company's reputation and can adversely affect profitability. Employees often are responsible for the great bulk of necessary work to be done as well as customer satisfaction and the quality of products and events.

Whichever is the case, one of the key aspects in understanding what is going on in any organisation is to understand the people within it. Why did they choose to work in that particular organisation? How were they selected? What makes them work so nonchalantly? What makes them dissatisfied and looking for another job? The answers to this question and a host of others are the central concern of organisational behaviour. What then is organisational behaviour?

Ivancevich and Matteson (2008), define organisational behaviour as the study of human behaviour, attitudes, and performance within an organisational setting drawing on theory, methods and principles from which such disciplines psychology, sociology, political science and cultural anthropology to learn about individual groups, structure and processes. Illuminating in the above definition by Ivancevich and Matteson, is that organisational behaviour centres primarily on the observable characteristics of human-behaviour, how they go about discharging their duties in the organisation.Taking a careful look on the major standpoint of organisational behaviour it will not be an over statement to assert that it has a fundamental relationship with human resource management – the strategic, integrated and coherent approach to the employment, development and well-being of the people working in an organisation (Armstrong, 2012). The obvious area of convergence between both concepts- human resource management and organisational behaviour is that they both lay emphasis on the human or worker who happens to be the most valuable asset of an organisation. The former looking out how the inherent potentials and skills of an individual worker(s) can be optimally utilised to achieve best possible result, while the latter focuses on the perception, attitude, feelings, and learning capacity of an individual worker(s) in discharging his/her duties and responsibilities.

However it is against this backdrop that the paper intends carrying out a critical and in-depth study to find out if organisational behaviour has any significant relationship with human resource management in Nigeria. In other words, the paper focuses on how some factors of organisational behaviour such as workers characteristics, employee engagement, workers motivation, organisational function, culture etc., and how they affect the management of humans in an organisation.

2. Literature Review

This aspect will be broken down into different subheading for easy understanding of the study on ground. The subheadings are; Conceptual Clarification-*organisational behaviour, human resource management, organisation and behaviour,* Characteristics of Organisational Behaviour, Theories of Organisational Behaviour, Theories of Human

Resource Management and The Characteristics of Human Resource Management.

2.1. Conceptual Clarification

2.1.1. Organisational Behaviour

There abound myriad of definitions of organisation behaviour, this resulting from authors defining the concept from their different ideological background and frame of analysis. Nevertheless, x-raying some of the definitions will be of utmost necessity. To set the ball rolling, Sorge and Warner (1997), see organisational behaviour as the interdisciplinary body of knowledge and field research, concerned with how formal organisations, behaviour of people in organisations, and salient features of their context and environment, evolve and take shape, why all this things happen the way they do, and what purpose they serve. Salient in the above definition is that organisation behaviour is basically concerned with the way organisations function and how people behave in the organisation. For Pugh (1971), organisational behaviour is the study of the structure, functioning and performance of organisations and the behaviour of groups and individuals within them. Pugh focused his definition from the angle of performance of both the organisation and the different individuals and groups within the organisation. According to Wilson and Rosenfeld (1990), organisational behaviour is perceived as the study of the social arrangement of people in organisations. It is concerned with the application of key discipline such as psychology and sociology specifically in organisations. It also looks at how social processes are interwoven to form the fabrics of organised society and how these are reflected in organisational life. For Wilson and Rosenfeld, the concept take draws it standpoint from the social arrangement of people in the organisation and this arrangement is reflected in the observable life of people in that organisation. Finally we shall consider the definition by Cole (1995), who sees organisational behaviour as the systematic study of the behaviour of individuals and groups in the workplace, including an analysis of the nature of groups, the development of structures between and within groups, and the process of implementing change.

From the various definitions and contributions of scholars on the concept organisational behaviour, it is very illuminating that they all lay so much emphases on the behaviour of workers in the organisation, how they go about in the realisation of the goals of the organisation which is reflected in their performances, the structural arrangement of people and the patterns of management in the various organisations.

2.1.2. Human Resource Management

Human resource management as a strategic and integrated approach is basically concerned with the management of organisational resources for the actualisation of a goal or set of goals. It is from this point of view that Armstrong (2012) defines human resource management as a strategic, integrated and coherent approach to the employment, development and well-being of the people ne working in an organisation. Mathis and Jackson (1997) define human resource management as the design of formal systems in an organisation to ensure the effective and efficient use of human talent to achieve organisational goals. While Storey

(1995), going beyond the human aspect to a wider view of capturing the structure as well as the cultural imperatives, sees human resource management as a distinctive approach to employment management which seeks to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic deployment of highly committed and capable workforce, using an integral array of cultural, structural and personnel techniques. From the definitions of human resource management, it is very illuminating that they all see and hold the human (people) in the organisation as very important and indispensable. They stressed and emphasised on the need for the human talents and skills to be properly organised and managed to achieve optimum result(s).

2.1.3. Organisation

Organisation generally can be seen as a group of people who work together in an organised way for a shared pursose, or a person or group of people intentionally organised to accomplish an overall,common goal or set of goals.For Kossen(1991), organisation a group of individuals structured by specialised activities and levels of authority for the purpose of effectively accomplishing specific goals and objectives. Contributing to the literature on the definition of organisation, Robbins(1987), views organisation as a consciously coordinated social entity, with a relatively identifiable boundary, that functions on a relatively continous basis to achieve a common goal or set of goals. Salient in Robbins understanding of organisation, is that an organisation is a consciously coordinated social entity, meaning that the unit is made up of individuals and groups of people who interact with each other on a continious basis to achieve a goal(s). However, this interaction has to be balanced to minimize friction and redundancy, and enure that the tasks are being completed.

From the different definitions given above by various scholars, it is glaring that there exist a problem on a normative acceptance of the meaning of the concept-organisation. Morgan(1986), reasoning from the same angle stipulated that, organisations are complex and paradoxical phenomenon that can be understood in many ways. Many of our taken-for-granted ideas about organisation are metaphorical.

In spite of the divergent opinions of scholars on the subject matter, I will not conclude this section without providing us a working definition with a more broader view of the concept organisation. This being the case, we shall consider Cole's view of an orgaisation as appropriate. For Cole(1995), an organisation is percieved as a group(large or small) or groups of people who collaborate in a structured and relatively permanent way in order to chieve one or more goals which they share in common,and which they could not achieve by acting own their own. Such an organisation is structured in a manner which formally recognises,and places the tasks and roles that individuals are expected to fulfill. The operations of work organisations implies a conciderable degree of control over an individual members, especially those most junior in the task structure

2.1.4.   Behaviour

Behaviour is perceived as the observable characteristic of an individual or group of individuals. This can be on a one-to-one basis or in groups.

2.2.   Characteristics of Organisational Behaviour

The characteristics of organisational behaviour will be based on that offered by Armstrong (2012). For Armstrong the characteristics are:

- It is a way of thinking about individuals, groups and organisations.
- The use of scientific method is important in studying variables and relationships.
- It is performance-oriented – it deals with the factors affecting performance and how it can be improved.
- It is multidisciplinary- it uses principles, models, theories and methods from other disciplines.
- The use of scientific method is important in studying variables and relationships.
- It is application-oriented in the sense of being concerned with providing useful answers to questions which arise when managing people.

2.3 Theories of Organisational Behaviour

There are various theories on organisational behaviour which originates based on the different frame of analysis of authors who are concerned with the performance and behaviour of people in an organisation in the process of discharging their responsibilities. Among these authors are Fredrick Winslow Tailor, Elton Mayo, Henri Fayol, Chester Barnard to name but a few. We shall consider few of these theories in the sub-headings below:

2.3.1. Scientific Management: Classical Theories

The first approach which set the course for inquiry into organisational behaviour is the scientific management and the two foremost authors linked with this approach were Frederick Winslow Taylor (1911) and Henri Fayol (1949). There are number of key managers and academics who contributed to the development of scientific management and we refer to them as the 'classical school' of organisational behaviour. Scientific management (which originated at the turn of the twentieth century) is founded on the principles of precision. There was a concerted effort to identify key aspects of work and organisation which could be used to achieve efficiency through immutable principles. The organisation was viewed as a machine which could be made more efficient if universal principles could be applied so as to develop a 'one best way' of organising.

In a famous address to the House of Representative Committee in the United States, Taylor outlined the example of shovelling. Having studied the process with respect to iron ore, Taylor argued that shovelling could be broken down into separate movements, each of which had an optima level of mechanical efficiency. When applied, a consistently greater level of output was achieved (Wilson and Rosenfeld, 1990).

Despite Taylor's effort in trying to explain the behaviour of people in organisations using the universal principle of 'one-best-way', the theory has some inherent factors that led to its demise – *complexity and largeness of organisations, change in politics, culture and society, the recognition of labour as a critical factor in firms and, markets and products became so complex.*

2.3.2. The Human Relations School

The proponents of the human relation are authors Elton Mayor (1949), Chester Barnard (1938), and Roethlisberger and Dickson(1939). The rationale behind this school of thought is that organisations are not mere mechanical contraptions but rather human cooperatives. They stressed on the need of informal groups in organisations which serve most importantly to protect the interest of workers in the organisation. Barnard went further to discuss informal groups from three aspects namely:

1) Natural groups: Human tends to organise themselves into natural social groups which do not always coincide 'functionally specialised' workgroups. The social thus take precedence over the functional.
2) Upward communication: Rather flow 'naturally' from the top of the organisation, information should be two-way, from workers to the chief executive. Relevant information comes from the workforce concerning both corporate and individual needs.
3) Cohesive leadership: Is necessary for the development in executives of the long-run aims of the organisation. Good leadership is necessary to communicate these goals to others in the organisation. When achieved, this should ensure effective and coherent decision-making.

2.3.3.   The Socio-Technical School

The rationale behind this theory of behaviour is that the technical or task aspect are interrelated with the human or social aspects. Among the proponents of this theory are Burns and Stalker (1961), Woodward(1965)and, Lawrence and Lorsch (1969). The emphasis is on the interrelationship between on one hand, the technical processes f transformation carried out within the organisation and, on the other hand, the organisation of work groups and the management structures of the enterprise. Bringing in new people or altering the pattern of work does not necessarily mean changing technology, nor does the introduction of new technology mean that social relations in the organisations are fixed in one pattern.

2.4.   Characteristics of Human resource Management

Though there abound different characteristics of HRM given various scholars, the discussion byChad (2012) will be adopted because of its encompassing nature. They are:

1) **It is an art and science**: the art and science of HRM is indeed very complex. HRM is both the art of managing people by recourse to creative and innovative approaches. It is a science a well because of the precision and rigorous application of theory that is required.
2) **It is pervasive**: development of HRM covers all levels and all categories of people, and management and operational staff. No discrimination is made between any levels or categories. All those who are managers have to perform HRM. It is pervasive also because it is required in every department of the organisation. All

kinds of organisations, profit or non-profit making, have to follow HRM.

3) **It is a continuous process**: first, it is a process as there are number of functions to be performed in a series, beginning with human resource planning to recruitment to selection, to training to performance appraisal. To be specific, the HRM process includes acquisition (HR planning recruitment, selection, placement, socialisation), development (training and development, career development), utilisation (job design, motivation, performance appraisal and reward management), and maintenance (labour relations, employee discipline, grievance handling, welfare, and termination). Second, it is continuous, because HRM is a never-ending process.

4) **HRM a service function**: HRM is not a profit centre. It serves all other functional departments. But the basic responsibility always lies with the line managers. HRM is a staff function- a facilitator. The HR Manager has line authority only within his own department, but has staff authority as far as other departments are concerned.

5) **HRM must be regulation- friendly**: The HRM function has to be discharged in a manner that legal dictates are not violated. Equal opportunity and equal pay for all. Inclusion of communities in employment, inclusion of tribal's(Posco or Vendata projects) and farmers in the benefits and non-violation of human rights must be taken care of by HRM.

6) **Interdisciplinary and fast changing:** It is encompassing welfare, manpower, personnel management, and keeps close association with employee and industrial relations. It is multidisciplinary activity utilising knowledge and inputs from psychology, sociology, economics, etc. it is changing itself in accordance with the changing environment. It has travelled from exploitation of workers to treating them as equal partners in the task.

7) **Focus on results:** HRM is performance oriented. It has its results, rather than on rules. It encourages people to give their 100%. It tries to secure the best for people by winning the whole hearted cooperation. It is a process of bringing people and organisation together so that the goals of each are met. It is commitment oriented.

8) **People- centred:** HRM is about people at work both as individuals and a group. It tries to help employees to develop their potential fully. It comprises people-related functions like hiring, training and development, performance appraisal, working condition, etc.

9) **Human relations philosophy:** HRM is a philosophy and the basic assumption is that employees are human beings and not a factor of production like land, labour or capital. HRM recognises individuality and individual differences. Every manager to be successful must possess social skills to manage people with differing needs.

10) **An integrated concept:** HRM in its scope includes personnel aspect, Welfare aspect And Industrial relations Aspect in itself. It is also integrated as it concern with not only acquisition, but also development, utilisation and maintenance.

2.5 Theories of Human Resource Management

According to David Guest (1997), cited in Armstrong (2012) the theories of human resource management are listed below.
1) Strategic theories- the main stay of this theory is based on good fit and good fit will be associated with superior performance. The hypothesis is that firms have to have a fit between business strategy, structure and HRM policy will have superior performance.
2) Descriptive theories- these either list areas of HR policy and outcomes or adopt a systems approach, describing the relationships between levels. They are largely non-prescriptive.
3) Normative theories- these are normative in the sense that they establish a norm or standard pattern in the form of prescribed best practice. These take a considerable risk in implying 'one best way'

3. Research Methodology

This is an explanatory research based solely on insights drawn from the analysis of the existing literature of different studies, periodicals and books related to the topic of study in order to investigate the relationship between organisational behaviour and human resource management. The research will serve as a means to help acquire useful information or knowledge about the subject area. By drawing on the existing literature, not only topic under consideration is theorized, but also formulates and discusses the proposition that will help illuminate and discuss some ways for organisations to understand the impact of organisational behaviour on human resource management.

4. Impact of Organisational Behaviour on Human Resource Management

This study critical x-rayed existing literature on organisational behaviour and its relationship it has on human resource management, putting public organisations in Nigeria into consideration. As earlier mentioned, some salient factors of organisational behaviour such as workers behaviour, employee engagement, workers motivation, organisational function, and culture were the major areas we beamed our searchlight. We shall separately consider these variables and discuss in details their impact on human resource management in public organisations.

The behaviour of workers in public organisations in Nigeria is characterised by high level nonchalant and carefree attitude. The resultant implication on human resource management is that workers are underutilised and lack growth in their various careers of life, with the concomitant effect of poor and inefficient service delivery to the masses in the society.

Another factor we shall look into here is the employee engagement. Every organisation, whether a public or a private one is established to employ the services of people with different skills and qualification so as to get them engaged and fitted into the structure of the organisation to achieve its afore mentioned goals and objectives. What is

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obtainable in most public organisations in Nigeria is direct antithetical of the statement above. After employing workers in the organisation and placing them on different salary scale from the coffers of the national treasury, their input is very infinitesimal compared to the amount of money received by them as salary in the organisation. Workers resume whenever they wish, especially if they have strong relationship with the key figure of the organisation. Even when they are in the work environment, they sit and discuss irrelevant issues which do not contribute to the growth and development of the organisation. The challenge this poses on human resource management is that workers become intellectually and physically lazy, leading to the retardation of knowledge and experience. Confirming the common Bible verse which states that to him that has even the little that he has shall be taken away from him (Mattew 25vs 29).

Workers motivation is yet another salient variable of organisational behaviour that impacts on human resource management. Motivation according to Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, International Student's Edition, is taken from the verb motivate which means to their duties and responsibilities. Salaries are very poor compared to the high cost and ever rising prices of goods and services, and in some cases not even paid as at when due. The equipment and machines in the organisation are very obsolete and some are not in proper usable condition, and even when they are upgraded to current technologies, workers find it very challenging to operate them because they are rarely sent on training courses to acclimatise with the trend in technology to face the competitive environment. These above setbacks on the part of the management demotivate the workers in the organisation and make them unprofitable to themselves and the organisation.

Organisational function as a variable will also be discussed here. By organisational function we mean the material and non-material aspects of the organisational that are well organised towards achieving high level of quality services or profit with lowest level of cost and losses. The non-material aspects has to do with the quality and level of machines, equipment and tools used by the workers in discharging their duties, while non-material has to do with the calibre of workers in the organisation, which encompasses workers skills, experience, capability, knowledge, dexterity and intellectual capacity . The ability of management of organisations to effectively organise and combine these two aspects of the organisation-material and non-material will result to proper functioning of the organisation. In Nigeria, suffice to state that the functioning of public organisations in terms of bettering the lives of the common is beyond is far below expectation. One of the reasons being that workers are employed based on ethnic or tribal bases even when they lack the necessary requirements for the position, all to the detriment of the organisation. Positions in the organisation are seen as a means of rewarding party faithful's and affiliates who are very loyal to the key figures of the organisation, with less emphasis and consideration placed on competence. In other words what becomes the other of the day is that round pegs and placed in square holes instead of round pegs in the round holes to unproductiveness. Ozor (2004) stressing on the unproductiveness of public organisations states unequivocally that in spite of the rich and abundant human and natural resources, quite array of gigantic public institutions and complexes established in the country, Nigeria remains an underdeveloped country. Infrastructural facilities are poor and ineffective, service delivery is very low and primitive, and industrial development is still below the average standard. The implication this sad event poses on human resource management is that there is high level of wastage of resources both material and non-material, this becomes a norm in the organisation. Those incompetent hands in keys position avoid meeting with workers in the organisation or even absent themselves from their offices so as to prevent their inadequacies and shortcoming from coming to limelight. As result, both workers and the organisation are left in a state of moribund and stagnation with the concomitant increase in wastage of human resources.

Finally, we shall consider culture which happens to be one of the fundamental factors of organisational behaviour that affects human resource management in organisations. organisational culture according to Schein(1985) organisational culture is a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problem of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be consider valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. From the definition by Schein what we can deduce is that culture can be seen as shared assumptions or orientation of workers in solving problems or carrying out activities in the organisation. The orientation workers have in Nigeria about white collar jobs (of which public organisations is not an exemption), is that they belong to the white man which is interpreted in the Igbo dialect as 'oruoyibo'. With this wrong orientation about public organisations, those who are privileged to find themselves in such settings find it very difficult to put in their best to improve the services of the organisation, theyequally see it as an opportunity to amass wealth to satisfy their personal aggrandisement and that of the kith and kin. Corruption both in high and low places becomes the other of the day. Resources meant to be used for the better of the lives of the average man in the society is syphoned by few greedy unrepentant key figures to take care of their personal needs without minding what becomes of the common man in the society. With this pathetic situation standing tall in organisations, the management of human resource becomes so difficult and challenging. Organisational ethic which upholds discipline, integrity, honesty, accountability, hard work and transparency is now being trampled upon and thrown into the gutters by workers. So pathetic a situation!

5. Organisational Behaviour as a Tool for Effective Human Resource Management

In the light of the above expositions, theimportance of organisational behaviour in ensuring the effective and efficient management of human resources in public organisations in Nigeria cannot be overemphasised. Organisational behaviour goes a long way to determine the character of workers which include their perception and attitude in the organisation, their shared beliefs and assumption about the work place and work environment,

how committed workers will be in the organisation, the way organisation combine their material and non-material resources to achieve organisational objective and how workers are motivated in the organisation.

Based on the aforementioned gains of organisational behaviour these recommendations will be considered.

- Workers generally in public organisations- the management and staff, should endeavour as much as possible to have a positive attitude and perception about public organisations. This will be manifested in their efficient service delivery, group discussions and team work geared towards improving organisational and workers productivity.
- Motivation which is one of the essential forces that drives workers in actualising organisational goals and objectives with highest possible result and lowest cost be given very high priority. Areas such as workers allowances, commensurate salary with work, modern equipment and machines for work, staff training and development, adequate and due promotions to name but a few, should be considered by management as essential motivational factors.
- Management of organisations should try as much as possible to engage every worker based on their skills and capabilities in the different functions and tasks in the organisation. By this the workers will in the long run become specialised in their different endeavours and their abilities optimally utilised.
- Culture serves as the bedrock upon which organisational mission and vision is imbibed in the hearts of the workers. Their orientation and assumption about public organisations as the 'white man's setup' or 'oruoyibo' should be jettisoned and embraced as an institution created by and for Nigerians to improve and better the lives of the common man in the society.
- Lastly, employment in public organisations should be based on merit and competency as against sentiment and personal affiliation to key figures in the organisation. When merit and competence are used as yard stick for employment, resources of the organisation will be effectively and efficiently utilised in realisation of its predetermined goals and objectives for it to function as expected.

6. Conclusion

From the discussions above, it is obvious that organisational behaviour plays a very vital role in organisations especially in the areas of managing the material and non-material resources towards realisation of goal(s).Organisational behaviour which is seen as the way people do things in a particular work environment has some factors that impact on human resource management in organisations.Among these factors are the characteristics of workers, employee engagement, work motivation, culture and organisational function. Although these factors directly affect the behaviour of workers in organisations, culture seems to have the greatest impact their (the workers), performance and commitment. Culture has to do with the orientation, belief and perception of an organisation by those in them and we said among other things that public organisations in Nigeria are performing below expectations because of its

wrong/negative perception by Nigerians as a 'white man's job'.

However, in spite of the challenges these factors of organisational behaviour pose on human resource management in Nigeria, the study recommended that; workers should develop the right attitude in the workplace, the management should make motivation of it workers a key organisational priority, workers should be employed based on merit and engaged fully in the organisation and lastly, workers should have a positive orientation of organisations in Nigeria as an established created to improve the standards of living of the average man in the society.

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