

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEMPORARY ISSUES AFFECTING HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN SMALL ORGANIZATIONS IN TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

Rapid changes in global economy, technological advancement, job markets and regulatory issues has brought much complexity in human resource management. Human resource management like other fields of management is now facing several contemporary issues that force it to take a new dimension and approach. The purpose of this study was to understand the contemporary issues affecting human resource management in small organization sin Tanzania today. The study was a descriptive survey design comprised a sample size of 90 respondents selected using purposive and random sampling method. Data was collected using face-to-face structured interviews and analysed using descriptive statistics, and results presented using a table. The findings of the study indicate that the management of human resource in small organizations in Tanzania is affected by several issues such as changes in technology, globalization, Talent acquisition, management and retaining, Rapid changes in the global economic environment and others. The study recommends the need for small organizations to have a continuous effective strategic human resource plan that will help them to handle contemporary issues affecting their human resource management.

Keyword: Understanding, Contemporary, HR Management, Small organizations and Tanzania.

1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary issues are revolving across the profession of human resource management, therefore in this global competition and changing business environment and technology, the need for effective human resource management is one of the ongoing subjects of discussion. The contemporary human resource managers need to learn to be competent professionals as the challenges posed by the new millennium are very complex, for example, from the industrial age to the information age, work performed in factories by machines is being replaced by work in offices or at computer terminals, and instead of working with things; people increasingly work with ideas and concepts (Idalberto, 2001). Any business that wants to succeed in this rapidly changing, highly competitive environment must be able to adapt, evolve, and operate on a global scale because the race is now on to place human capital at the very centre of a sustainable competitive advantage (Rowden, 2002). A new way of doing business, communication methodologies, cultural and demographic changes, are the most important issues that any

business or organization have to be prepared to face and determine the performance of its human resources (Dawson, 2012). Human resource management forms part of the most important management aspects in the organization, effective human resource management in the organization results in effective achievement of the organization goals and objectives, and for organizations to survive and prosper in the modern world of rapid change, they need to be more flexible, faster-moving and faster-learning than before (Husain, 2010).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Human resource Management in 21st century

People are unpredictable, and do not feel, think and behave the same therefore managing people in 21st century is a complex issue due to several forces attacking human resource management from both internal or external. Du Plessis, Nel, San Diego (2013) highlighted that competitive forces that the organizations force today create a new mandate changes to the structure, role and functions of human resource. According to Zorlu (2009), human resource management is a multi-disciplinary function that depicts assumptions from different fields such as management, psychology, sociology and economics. Beardwell, Halden and Claydon (2004) saw human resource management as rules, regulations and procedures related to the management of employees within the organization. Wong and Snell (2003) averred that human resource management in 21st century approach is to utilize the knowledge and expertise of people efficiently and effectively to meet organizational targets.

Monody and Noe (2005) viewed that human resource management in the 21st century is a process that utilizes the skills and knowledge of employees in order to achieve organizational goals. Kamoche (1997) contended that in 21st century human resource management includes number of activities such as conducting job analysis, having concern with personal needs and wants, recruitment and selection of efficient people for a particular job, providing training programs to employees in order to improve employees' current performance, providing incentives and benefits to employees, solving disputes between employees and management, determining wages and salaries, etc. Noe et al. (2010) inferred that in the business world, competition is getting worse to worst day by day and thus human resource management is the sole factor that provides an organization with a competitive advantage.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey research design, used purposive and random sampling technique to select a sample size of 90 respondents from the target population of the study. The data was collected using face-to-face structured interviews and analysed using descriptive statistics and results presented using a table.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Contemporary issues affecting human resource management in small organizations in Tanzania.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Talent acquisition, management and retaining	6	6.7	6.7
Continuous changes in labour regulations	3	3.3	10.0
Changes in political and legal environment	4	4.4	14.4
Changes in Technology	8	8.9	23.3
Rapid changes in the global economic environment	7	7.8	31.1
Globalization	6	6.7	37.8
Managing workforce diversity issues	3	3.3	41.1
Maintaining effective human resource planning in the organization	4	4.4	45.6
Resistance to changes by employees	7	7.8	53.3
Dealing with frequent unexpected absenteeism	5	5.6	58.9
Managing information	2	2.2	61.1
Leadership development	4	4.4	65.6
Continuous Labour/employee turnover	5	5.6	71.1
Employee relations	5	5.6	76.7
Employee health and safety	3	3.3	80.0
Managing employee compensation and benefits	5	5.6	85.6
Labour law compliance	4	4.4	90.0
Managing ethical issues	3	3.3	93.3
Developing and managing the right culture in the organization	4	4.4	97.8
Managing employee performance	2	2.2	100.0
Total	90	100.0	

The study sought to know the contemporary issues affecting human resource management in small organizations in Tanzania. The results in table 1 reveal that 6.7% of the respondents mentioned talent acquisition, management and employee retaining as a contemporary issue affecting human resource management in small organizations, 3.3% mentioned continuous changes in Labour regulations, 4.4% mentioned changes in labour and legal environment, 8.9% mentioned changes in technology while 7.8% mentioned rapid changes in the global economic environment as a contemporary issue affecting human resource management.

Relatively, 6.7% conferred that globalization is one of the contemporary issues affecting human resource management in small organizations, 3.3% mentioned management of workforce diversity, 4.4% said that how to maintain effective human resource planning in the organization is a problem, 7.8% said resistance to change by employees is a problem, 5.6% saw dealing with frequent unexpected absenteeism as contemporary issue in human resource management, 2.2%

stated that management of information in human resource management is a contemporary issue. 4.4% mentioned leadership development and 5.6% mentioned continuous labour/employee turnover as a contemporary issue affecting human resource management in small organizations in Tanzania.

Consequently, 5.6% mentioned employee relations, 3.3% mentioned employee health and safety, 5.6% inferred that managing employee compensation and benefits is a problem in human resource management, 4.4% mentioned labour law compliance, 3.3% managing ethical issues, 4.4% mentioned developing and managing right culture in the organization, while 2.2% pointed out that managing employee performance is one of the contemporary issues affecting human resource management today in small organizations in Tanzania.

The results of this study are supported by different studies. The world federation of personnel management association survey (WFPMA) of 2009) elaborated that the most important top ten human resource challenges are leadership development, organizational effectiveness, change management, compensation. Health and safety, staff retention. Learning and development, succession planning. Staffing: recruitment and skilled labour. Parmenter (2002) claimed that factors which act as barriers to effective human resource management are top management has a low priority, and offer a short-term view of what the real issues in human resource management and the profession are according to various researchers. Burton (2003) appealed that human resource practitioners are perceived to lack sufficient knowledge and skills necessary to implement effective human resource management practices at various levels in their organization. Anthony, Perrewe and Kacmar, (1996) highlighted that some of the regulations required an increase in job specialization, which led to boring and monotonous jobs. French (1997) contended that different legislation and presidential executive orders have had, and continue to have, a profound effect on human resources management. Dessler (2005) argued that the most important challenges of human resource management are technology, e-commerce, workforce diversity, globalization and ethical consideration of the organization which may directly or indirectly affect the organizations' competitive advantages, especially with technological advancement the effect on recruitment, training and development and job performance with great extent can be studied in organization.

Moreover, Losey (2005) averred that technology is advancing so quickly that it is forcing organizations to change their strategies. Theunissen (2007) inferred that in today's era, organizations are coming across various challenges about the 21st century human resource; that includes employing new technology, globalization, everyday innovations, political as well as economic instability and ethical & ecological challenges. Mayrhofer and Brewster (2005) explained that new kinds of technical knowledge, skills and abilities would require human resource practitioners in future who are flexible and willing to deal with the ever accelerating pace and often unpredictable changes in the global workplace. Akkas & Badiruzzaman (2015) asserted that the growing impact of technology on the need for certain types of employees causes an increased need in some areas and declined need in others. Laurent (1986) noted that while the global nature of the business may call for increased confidence, the variety of cultural environments may be calling for differentiation. Robbins (2005) suggested that today's organizations are facing the dynamic environment which requires organizations to adopt changes and work to optimize profit. Foot and Hook (2008) concurred that equality and diversity are

major issues that affect everyone in the workplace. Dawson (2003) observed that the break in continuity can create uncertainty and describes it as one of the main reasons for resistance to change.

Furthermore, Andersen, Cooper, and Zhu (2007) acknowledged that one of the biggest challenges today for human resource personnel is to develop employees in accordance to global environmental factors as well as the international marketplace. Liz Weber (2009) claimed that the most important challenges of the human resource in business are layoffs or cutbacks. Henson (2007) highlighted the need for every organization to adopt new and latest ways of satisfying its people because this will help to control the rate of employee turnover. Argyris (1977) reported that the progress of any industry is quite impossible without worker cooperation and harmonious relationships. Wiesner and Millet (2003) stated that the employee's relation between employee and employer in the organization may also a big challenge for today human resource management. Blanpain et al (2007) saw labour compliance as a problem because every firm that operates in the global economy must contend with the varying employment laws in every country in which it operates, as well as abiding by whatever international standards also exist. However, Williams (2003) was of the view that due to acquisition and mergers in the 21st century, the human resource managers have to develop such a culture that supports these changes. Chang and Huang (2005) commented that organizations must identify and analyze environmental characteristics and develop strategies to meet changing trends. Briscoe et al (2009) suggested that the new, global, complex, and often chaotic world of the multinational enterprises requires a new strategic focus and new capabilities from human resource just as it does from other management functions.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Organizations mostly rely on its human resource management to achieve their goals and objectives and for any organization to be in a position to maintain its survival as well as its competitive advantage, it must manage well the contemporary issues that affect its human resource management. Since the findings of this study have come up with the fact on the major contemporary issues affecting human resource management in small organization today which might be the same in large organizations, the study recommends that small organizations should have a continuous strategic plan to handle contemporary issues affecting their human resource management. Finally, since this study was limited to small organizations, another research should be conducted on large organizations as well as on public institutions in Tanzania that could come up with more facts on the contemporary issues affecting human resource management in Tanzania today.

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