



INFLUENCE OF STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN KWANDE LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION AUTHORITY

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Abstract

This study examined how Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) influences employee performance in the Kwande Local Government Education Authority. The main objective was to assess the current level of SHRM practices and determine their effect on staff performance. A case study design was used, with data collected from 65 employees through questionnaires, interviews, and document review. The data were analyzed using simple percentages and tables. The findings show that SHRM practices are present but weakly implemented. For example, **59.7%** of respondents said training and development is practiced to a small extent, while **67.8%** reported the same for performance appraisal. Similarly, **53.3%** indicated that compensation is applied to a small extent. However, many respondents still agreed that these practices are important, as **53.2%** agreed that training improves performance, and **53.2%** strongly agreed on the importance of human resource planning. The study concludes that SHRM has a positive effect on employee performance, but its impact is limited by poor implementation. It is therefore recommended that management strengthen the execution of HR policies, invest more in staff development, involve line managers more actively, improve appraisal systems, and encourage employee participation in decision-making.

Keywords: *Influence, Strategic Human Resource, Management, Employee Performance, Kwande Local Government Education Authority*

Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving workplace, organizations across the globe are grappling with unprecedented challenges and opportunities. The twin forces of technological advancement and globalization have redefined the very nature of work, while heightened competition has compelled institutions to rethink how they attract, retain, and manage talent. No longer can human resources be regarded as a peripheral administrative function; instead, they have become the cornerstone of organizational resilience and success. Employees are increasingly recognized not simply as inputs in a production process, but as strategic assets whose skills, creativity, and commitment determine whether an organization thrives or falters in a volatile environment.

Against this backdrop, Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) has emerged as a transformative paradigm. Unlike traditional HRM, which often confines itself to routine administrative tasks such as recruitment, payroll, and compliance, SHRM seeks to integrate human resource practices into the broader organizational vision. It emphasizes foresight, deliberate planning, and the cultivation of a workforce whose competencies align with long-term strategic objectives. In essence, SHRM reframes HR from a reactive support function into a proactive driver of competitive advantage. It is about ensuring that the right people, with the right skills and motivation, are in the right roles at the right time.

Recent scholarship underscores the tangible benefits of this approach. Ahmad and Schroeder (2023) and Efuk et al. (2024) demonstrate that organizations adopting strategic HR practices consistently outperform those that rely on conventional personnel management systems. Their findings suggest that SHRM not only enhances employee engagement and productivity but also fosters innovation and adaptability, qualities indispensable in today's dynamic business landscape. Similarly, Aliyu (2024) argues that effective SHRM equips organizations with a workforce that is both competent and committed, thereby enabling them to achieve strategic goals with greater efficiency and sustainability.

Yet, the picture is more complex in the Nigerian public sector. While private enterprises and multinational corporations have increasingly embraced SHRM, many public institutions remain tethered to outdated HR frameworks. These legacy systems, often characterized by rigid hierarchies, bureaucratic inertia, and limited investment in employee development, hinder efficiency and weaken service delivery. The consequences are far-reaching: diminished employee morale, underutilization of talent, and a widening gap between organizational objectives and workforce capabilities. In a sector tasked with delivering essential services to millions, such inefficiencies are particularly costly.

This study therefore seeks to interrogate the role of SHRM within the Nigerian public sector, with a specific focus on its influence on employee performance. By examining how strategic HR practices, such as workforce planning, continuous training, performance management, and employee engagement, impact productivity and service delivery, the research aims to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Ultimately, the goal is to highlight pathways through which public institutions can modernize their HR systems, harness the full potential of their workforce, and deliver on their mandates more effectively. In doing so, the study contributes not only to academic discourse but also to the practical reform of public sector management in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Despite growing awareness of the importance of human capital, many public organizations in Nigeria continue to struggle with low productivity, poor service delivery, and inefficient workforce management. Traditional HR practices focused mainly on recruitment and basic training are no longer sufficient in addressing modern organizational challenges. A major issue lies in the lack of alignment between HR practices and organizational strategy. According to recent research (Osterman, 2022; Adegoroye et al., 2023), many organizations fail to effectively link employee capabilities with strategic objectives, resulting in underperformance. Furthermore, there is limited empirical evidence on SHRM practices within African public sector institutions, particularly at the local government level. This study therefore investigates the extent to which SHRM practices influence employee performance in the Kwande Local Government Education Authority.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research is to evaluate the impact of Strategic Human Resource Management on employee performance. Specific objectives include:

1. To assess the current state of SHRM practices in Kwande Local Government Education Authority
2. To examine the current level of SHRM practices and employee performance in Kwande Local Government Education Authority

Research Questions

1. How does SHRM influence employee performance in Kwande Local Government Education Authority?
2. What is the current level of SHRM practice in in Kwande Local Government Education Authority?

Conceptual Review

The relationship between human resource management and employee performance has long been a subject of scholarly inquiry, and over time the discourse has shifted from viewing HRM as a purely administrative function to recognizing it as a strategic driver of organizational success. Human resource management, in its most comprehensive sense, refers to the deliberate and systematic management of people within organizations. It encompasses recruitment, training, compensation, performance appraisal, and employee relations, but more importantly, it is about aligning these practices with the broader goals of the institution. Scholars such as Ahmad and Schroeder (2023) argue that HRM is not simply about filling vacancies or processing payroll; it is about cultivating a workforce whose skills, motivation, and values resonate with the long-term vision of the organization.

Employee performance, on the other hand, is the tangible manifestation of how well individuals contribute to organizational objectives. It is often measured in terms of productivity, quality of work, innovation, and collaboration. Yet performance is not an isolated construct; it is shaped by the systems, culture, and practices that surround employees. Rahman Sukmara (2026) notes that performance is a function of both individual competencies and organizational support, meaning

that even highly skilled employees may underperform if HR systems are weak, outdated, or misaligned with strategic priorities.

The literature consistently demonstrates that effective HRM practices enhance employee performance. Training and development, for instance, equip employees with the skills needed to adapt to technological change and evolving job demands, thereby improving efficiency and innovation (Bolanle & Akinade, 2023). Performance appraisal systems, when designed to provide constructive feedback and clear expectations, motivate employees to align their efforts with organizational goals (Journal of HRM, 2024). Compensation and reward structures also play a critical role, as fair and competitive remuneration fosters commitment and reduces turnover, sustaining high levels of performance over time.

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) represents the most advanced stage of this evolution. Unlike traditional HRM, which is reactive and operational, SHRM is proactive and integrative. It seeks to embed HR practices into the very fabric of organizational strategy, ensuring that workforce planning, talent development, and employee engagement are not peripheral activities but central to achieving competitive advantage. Aliyu (2024) emphasizes that SHRM ensures organizations possess the right workforce with the necessary competencies and motivation to achieve strategic objectives, thereby transforming HR into a strategic partner rather than a support function.

However, the adoption of SHRM is uneven across contexts. In Nigeria's public sector, for example, many institutions remain bound by rigid bureaucratic frameworks that prioritize compliance over innovation. These outdated systems limit efficiency, dampen employee morale, and undermine service delivery. The literature suggests that without a deliberate shift toward strategic HR practices, such as continuous training, performance-based incentives, and workforce planning—public institutions will struggle to harness the full potential of their employees. This gap between theory and practice underscores the need for studies that explore how SHRM can be effectively implemented in public sector contexts, where the stakes are particularly high given the essential services these institutions provide.

In sum, HRM and employee performance are inseparable: the former provides the structures and practices that shape the latter. The literature makes clear that organizations that embrace strategic HRM are better positioned to cultivate a motivated, competent, and high-performing workforce. For the Nigerian public sector, the challenge lies in moving beyond outdated frameworks and embracing HRM as a strategic lever for institutional effectiveness and national development.

Methodology

This study adopted a case study research design in order to gain a detailed understanding of how Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) practices are applied within the Kwande Local Government Education Authority. The choice of this design made it possible to closely examine real-life situations and gather in-depth information about the organization.

The total population for the study consisted of 651 employees working within the authority. From this population, a sample of 65 respondents was selected. The selection was done using a combination of purposive and convenience sampling techniques, ensuring that participants who had relevant knowledge of human resource practices were included, while also considering their availability.

Data for the study were collected through multiple sources to ensure reliability. These included structured questionnaires, which provided quantitative data, as well as interviews that allowed respondents to express their views in more detail. In addition, relevant documents were reviewed to support the findings.

For data analysis, both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used. The quantitative data were analyzed using simple statistical tools such as percentages and tables, while qualitative responses were carefully interpreted to provide meaningful insights into SHRM practices within the organization.

Results

Table 1: *Presents the current SHRM practices, showing the extent to which each strategic human resource management practice is applied in Nigeria, with specific reference to the Kwande Local Government Education Authority.*

The scale of 1-5, was used, where A- represented Very Great Extent, B- Moderate extent, C- Small Extent D-. Not at all

<i>HRM practice</i>	<i>Response of respondents</i>			
	A	B	C	D
<i>Training and development</i>	0	12 (19.3%)	37 (59.7%)	13(21%)
<i>Employee Participations</i>	0	32 (51.6%)	19 (25.8%)	11 (17.7%)
<i>Performance appraisal system</i>	0	14 (22.6%)	42 (67.8%)	6(9.6%)
<i>Compensation System</i>	2(3.2%)	16 (25.8%)	33 (53.3%)	11 (17.7%)
<i>Involvement of line managers</i>	7 (11.3%)	37 (59.7%)	10 (16.1%)	8(12.9%)

Sources: (Ungwa et al., 2025)

The results show that most strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices in the Kwande Local Government Education Authority are applied at a relatively low level. For training and development, no respondent rated it as being implemented to a very great extent, while only 19.3% saw it as moderate. The majority (59.7%) believed it is practiced to a small extent, and 21% said it is not practiced at all.

Employee participation appears slightly better, with 51.6% indicating moderate implementation, though 25.8% and 17.7% still viewed it as minimal or absent. A similar trend is seen in performance appraisal, where most respondents (67.8%) rated it as being applied to a small extent.

Compensation practices are also weak, as only 3.2% reported a very great extent, while over half (53.3%) said it is practiced to a small extent. However, the involvement of line managers shows some improvement, with 11.3% rating it very high and 59.7% moderate.

The findings suggest that SHRM practices are present but not effectively implemented, which may limit organizational performance, consistent with recent findings that weak HR systems reduce efficiency (Aliyu, 2024).

Table 2: *Presents the current level of SHRM practices in the Kwande Local Government Education Authority. The scale of 1-4, was used, where 1- represented Strongly Agree, 2-Agree, 3- Not sure, 4-Disagree*

<i>HRM practice</i>	<i>FREQUENCY</i>			
	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree
<i>Training and development</i>	20 (32.3%)	33(53.2)	7(11.3%)	2(3.2%)
<i>Human resource planning</i>	33 (53.2%)	21 (33.9%)	9(14.5%)	3(4.8%)
<i>Employee Participations</i>	33 (53.2%)	21(33.9)	5(8.1%)	3(4.8%)
<i>Performance Appraisal System</i>	18(29.0%)	32(51.6)	10 (16.1%)	2(3.2%)
<i>Compensation System</i>	20 (32.2%)	30 (48.4%)	7(11.3%)	4(6.5%)

Sources: (Ungwa et al., 2025)

Most of the respondents clearly feel that strategic human resource practices play an important role in improving organizational performance. For example, a large number either strongly agreed (32.3%) or agreed (53.2%) that training and development make a real difference. The same pattern is seen in human resource planning and employee participation, where over half (53.2%) strongly agreed and about a third (33.9%) agreed.

Performance appraisal is also viewed positively, with 29.0% strongly agreeing and 51.6% agreeing. Compensation follows a similar trend, as 32.2% strongly agreed and 48.4% agreed that it supports better performance. Only a small number of respondents were unsure or disagreed across all areas. The finding shows that, the responses show that staff generally believe that when these HR practices are properly applied, they can improve how the organization performs (Ahmad & Schroeder, 2023).

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of findings reveals an important gap between the presence of strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices and their actual level of implementation within the Kwande Local Government Education Authority. From Table 1, it is clear that most HRM practices such as training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation are applied at a low level. A large proportion of respondents indicated that these practices are only carried out to a small extent or not at all, suggesting weak institutional commitment and possible resource constraints. Although employee participation and the involvement of line managers show slightly better results, they are still not strong enough to drive effective performance.

However, findings from Table 2 present a different perspective. Most respondents strongly agreed or agreed that SHRM practices have a positive effect on organizational performance. This indicates that employees are aware of the value of these practices, even though they are not adequately implemented. This contrast suggests that the major issue is not lack of awareness, but

poor execution of HR strategies. The findings therefore imply that improving the implementation of SHRM practices could significantly enhance organizational efficiency and service delivery, as supported by recent studies (Ahmad & Schroeder, 2023; Aliyu, 2024).

Conclusion

This study looked at how Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) affects employee performance in the Kwande Local Government Education Authority. From the findings, it is clear that even though SHRM practices like training and development, performance appraisal, employee participation, and compensation are present, they are not being properly carried out. Most respondents pointed out that these practices only happen to a small extent, which may be due to poor implementation, limited funding, or lack of strong management support. Interestingly, the results also show that employees understand how important these practices are. Many of them agreed that if SHRM is properly applied, it can improve their performance and help the organization achieve better results. This simply means the issue is not ignorance, but more about how these HR strategies are being executed in practice. The study thus, confirms that SHRM plays a key role in improving employee performance, but its benefits are not fully felt because of weak implementation. For real improvement to happen, there is a need for stronger commitment from management and better alignment of HR practices with organizational goals.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Management should take HR practices more seriously by ensuring that policies are not just written but actually carried out. Regular monitoring and supervision will help make sure that training, appraisal, and other activities are properly implemented across the organization.
2. More funds should be allocated to staff training and development. Employees need regular opportunities to improve their skills, and without proper funding, these programmes will continue to remain weak and ineffective.
3. There should be stronger involvement of line managers in HR activities. When managers actively participate in planning and decision-making, it becomes easier to implement HR policies and achieve better results.
4. The organization should improve its performance appraisal system by making it more transparent and consistent. Staff should clearly understand how they are assessed, as this can motivate them to perform better.
5. Employee participation should be encouraged by involving staff in decision-making processes. When workers feel heard and valued, they are more committed to their duties and more willing to contribute to organizational success.

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