

**EFFECTS OF COVID 19 PANDEMIC ON HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF OFFICE
MANAGERS IN EKITI STATE**

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Abstract

Most organizations across the world are facing numerous challenges created by COVID-19 and one of the most significant challenges is the increased uncertainty among most organizations most especially concerning human resource control and maintaining a higher customer base through marketing. The study investigated the effects of Covid 19 pandemic on human resources management and its implications on organizational performance of office managers in Ekiti State. The researcher used survey design of the descriptive type of research for the study, the research instrument used for this study was a self-structured closed ended questionnaire designed by the researchers. Inferential statistics of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Chi-Square was used to test the hypotheses postulated at 0.05 level of significance. Based on the findings from this study, the researcher concluded that human resources management has relationship with organizational performance, it was also concluded that Covid 19 pandemic has an effect on human resources managers. Covid 19 pandemic also have positive and negative implications on organizational performance. Virtual office and online marketing was recommended to further alleviate the complications of Covid 19 pandemic on organizational performance.

Keywords: Covid 19, Human Resources, Organizational performance, Pandemic

Introduction

COVID-19 is an unprecedented health crisis that has strongly shaken the whole world, plunging it into great fear and uncertainty. It has heavily impacted economies, societies, employees, and organizations. Given the rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus, these countries have implemented several non-pharmaceutical measures intended to reduce its spread, such as social distancing. Lockdown measures have been imposed; people were quarantined; schools, universities, nonessential businesses, and non-governmental organizations have been temporarily closed; travels were restricted; flights were canceled; and mass public gathering as well as social events have been prohibited (Brodeur, Gray, Islam, & Bhuiyan, 2020; Gourinchas, 2020).

Coupled with these measures, the COVID-19 outbreak had led to a significant slowdown in the world economic activities (Brodeur et al., 2020; Gourinchas, 2020), triggering furloughs and layoffs (World Economic Forum, 2020), that led to the increase in the unemployment rate in many country with Ekiti State inclusive. In the recent years, the world has witnessed an expansion in the globalization where the economies of many countries are interlinking to encourage foreign trade through scientific advances and connectivity (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). This upsurge has also fuelled the increased rivalry in the national and foreign markets that has further encouraged the organizations in hiring and retaining highly talented workers. Several companies are dependent on their employees to gain advantage in the competitive market. Therefore, they are strongly related to the efficiency of their human resources and their human resources management (Collins, 2021).

Human resource is the most precious and significant resource in any organization. To succeed, a business needs committed staffs to meet its aims and goals in determined tenures. Staff should be trained and motivated in an organisation to their needs and wants for the management to achieve their potential. It is the responsibility of the human resource department to ensure that recruits are given to correct staffs, and that staff get appropriate training to ensure that the business meets its aim. Human resource management is of key importance in almost all organizations. Human resource management has the opportunity to enable organizations to survive, grow, be competitive and profitable (Werner, 2014). Organization that lacks genuine human resource planning will not be able to survive for long, meet the expected performance, with globalization as a force steering various changes in the world's organizations, this degree of changes that are occurring globally has made effective human resource management a crucial aspect of organisational development. Without effective human resource's management, skills, and knowledge gained by employee can easily become obsolete and outdated. Hence, the human resources management practices such as training, development, performance appraisal, promotion and other become paramount for any organization in this era for adaptation and blending with the modern pattern of doing things.

Most organizations across the world are facing numerous challenges created by COVID-19 and one of the most significant challenges is the increased uncertainty among most organizations most especially concerning human resource control and maintaining a higher customer base through marketing (Kalogiannidis & Chatzitheodoridis, 2021). Most organizations have laid off their workers and consequently lost their customers ever since COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic and this has greatly affected the profitability levels of such organizations mostly due to deterioration in efficiency and productivity of the human resource (Lauer et al., 2020). The main challenges of most organizations today are very diverse as they cut across different complex issues that include; climate change increased political instabilities in both developing and developed countries, and severe economic downturns (Inoue & Todo, 2020). In the current dynamic world, the different organizational problems associated with marketing and human resource management greatly affect the ability of an organization to operate strategically and achieve sustainable growth. By posing a great threat to the sustainability of an organization, these challenges enable an organization to be highly responsive and consequently adaptive to effectively organize and manage or control its workforce (Atkeson, 2020). Within an organization, there are various kinds of departments such as financial, production, clerical, technical, personnel, managerial, manufacturing, advertising and marketing, sales, training and so forth. The activities and functions of all the departments are implemented in places that are termed as offices. In educational institutions also, there are various kinds of clerical and technical jobs that are implemented by the office workers, hence, office is stated to be an integral part of any organization or an institution (Upadhyay, Ladhe, Rai, Bhatkar & Upadhyay, 2015).

Research on organizational performance, either with regard to its financial or its operational aspects, has revealed different factors that have significant effects on OP. Examples of these factors include enterprise risk management, multidivisional structures of organizations, CEO charisma, stakeholders' involvement and support, intellectual capital, human capital, CEOs' social networks, organizational learning, the strategic integration of human resource management, managerial practices related to strategies, performance measurement, corporate governance, innovation and development, along with the external environment, adoption of green supply chain management (SCM) practices, human resource practices, knowledge management capacity, supportive organizational climate, supply chain quality management, supply chain innovation, human capital disclosure and knowledge creation (Ahmad, 2017).

It was observed by the researcher that since the outbreak of Coronavirus, various organizations have continuously faced a prime challenge of unparalleled proportions, which forces them to dive into and directly manage unprecedented territory as they change or alter their entire workforce in different departmental areas or fields in ways not seen before. Most heads of organizations have applied different technical, physical and socio-psychological ways to reduce

their workforce as means of surviving in the current times or the coronavirus pandemic. The market of some products or services offered by most organizations has reduced globally hence most organizations continue to reduce their workforce in different areas such as in sales and marketing departments since it's the only way of lowering operational costs most managers are striving hard to help their workforce adapt to and consequently cope with radical changes occurring in the work and social environment. For example, initially, most of the employees used to spend a lot of time at the workplace or within the physical boundaries of their organizations but now have no other option but to quickly adjust to remote work environments during the coronavirus pandemic. However, working remotely is also associated with some challenges since most employees are unable to find alternative places of convenient work most especially when they cannot operate efficiently at their homes. Based on this view and observation, the researcher tends to examine the effects of Covid 19 pandemic on human resources management and its implications on organizational performance of office managers in Ekiti State.

Objectives of the study

The specific objectives of the study are as follows;

1. To find out the relationship between human resources management and organizational performance
2. To find out the effects of Covid 19 pandemic on human resources management
3. To find out the outcome of Covid 19 pandemic on the performance of office managers in Ekiti State.

Hypothesis

The hypotheses derived for this study were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between human resources management and organizational performance
2. There is no significance effects of Covid 19 pandemic on human resources management in Ekiti state.
3. There is no significant implications of Covid 19 pandemic on organizational performance of office managers in Ekiti State.

Methodology

The researcher adopted survey design of the descriptive type of research for the study. This is because it gave the researchers the opportunity to elicit the needed information from the respondents (office manager). The population of the study consisted of all governmental and non governmental agencies such as broadcasting agencies, medium/large scale business etc. the sample size of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents was used for the study. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the organizations used for the study while convenience

sampling without bias was used for selecting the respondents used. A self developed close ended questionnaire was used for the study and the reliability of the instrument was ascertained using cronbach’s alpha formula. The coefficient obtained was 0.89. The data gathered for the study was analyzed using of Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and t test at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Test of hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between human resources management and organizational performance

Table 1: Pearson Correlation Coefficient for relationship between human resources and organizational performance

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r	p
Human Resource Management	120	38.14	2.785	0.690*	0.000
Organizational Performance	120	8.95	.892		

***p<0.05**

The result on table 1 shows that the computed r-value (0.690) is significant at p<0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between human resources management and organizational performance.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significance effects of Covid 19 pandemic on human resources management in Ekiti state.

Table 8

ANOVA analysis of data showing the effects of Covid 19 pandemic on human resource management

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F _{cal}	F _{tab}	Sig. (P)
Between Groups	53.060	1	58.060	1670.701		.000
Within Groups	21.909	119	.076		3.640	
Total	74.969	120				

Source: Field Survey (2021)

P < 0.05 (Significant)

The result of analysis presented in table 8 revealed F_{cal} = 1670.701, df = (1, 164), F_{tab} = 3.640 and P-value = 0.00 at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis that there is no significant effects of Covid 19 pandemic on human resources management was rejected based on

the fact that that $F_{cal}(1, 198) = 1670.701$ was greater than $F_{tab} (3.640)$ and $P (0.00) < 0.05$ level of significance. This implies that Covid 19 pandemic have a serious effects on human organizational performance.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant implications of Covid 19 pandemic on organizational performance of office managers in Ekiti State.

Table 3
ANOVA analysis of data showing the implication of Covid 19 on organizational performance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F_{cal}	f_{tab}	Sig. (P)
Between Groups	78.011	1	55.111	1236.609		.000
Within Groups	20.556	119	.076		3.640	
Total	98.65s7	120				

Source: Field Survey (2021)
P < 0.05 (Significant)

The result of analysis presented in table 3 revealed $F_{cal} = 1236.609$, $df = (1, 164)$, $F_{tab} = 3.640$ and $P\text{-value} = 0.00$ at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis that there is no significant implications of Covid 19 pandemic on organizational performance of office managers in Ekiti State was rejected based on the fact that that $F_{cal}(1, 164) = 1236.609$ was greater than $F_{tab} (3.640)$ and $P (0.00) < 0.05$ level of significance. This implies that covid 19 pandemic disrupt organizational performance.

Discussion of Results

The findings of the study revealed that there is relationship between human resources management and organizational performance. The finding was supported the assertion of Etim (2021) that relationship between organizational behavior and human resource management stems from the fact that human resource management can be used as a tool for shaping organizational behavior. The effective use of human resources can be used to shape the perceptions and behavior of the employees in an organization, resulting in a desired outcome in their organizational behavior. This link between organizational behavior and human resource management can be seen in the area of the workers' attitudes toward their jobs. The finding also goes in line with Ijigu (2015) that human resources management practices can be significant source of employee's satisfaction that lead to lower absenteeism, reduce turnover and increase employee's loyalty to the organizations. Human Resource Management Practices are identified as an important factor in gaining competitive advantage (Obeidat and Abdallah, 2014). Appropriate management of human resources played an important role in the development of employee commitment that helps in attaining organizational goals.

The finding of the further revealed that covid 19 pandemic has an effect on human resources management. During this pandemic situation, HR managers may have to deal with various employees related challenges, for example, initial days every organization faces lots of difficulties to do their work through digital platform because most of the employees are not usually doing their work at home, in front of their families and this Coronavirus give them a totally different experience. Sometimes the current employees who are working for the organization they may affect from this virus, so HR manager may have the responsibility of their safety and to create a healthy relationship between employees and organization (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020). Since, this Coronavirus situation is their employees have disconnected from their social life also, because previously they interact with friends, colleges and doing other social activities during their jobs but now they all are stuck in one place. In this Coronavirus situation every research conducted through a digital platform so, there is a lack of continuous business activities, employee safety, and customer's preference (Singer-Velush, Sherman, & Anderson, 2020) and HR managers are working so hard to bring down less damage through this work from the home situation. Sometimes this whole pandemic situation getting more stress full for employees because usually their working hours are already decided but under this situation sometimes time duration is not limited, they had to work, to overcome this stressful situation HR executive building different type of new policies for their employees

The finding from this study also revealed that Covid 19 pandemic has a significant implications on organization performance. The finding supported the opinion of Nkengasong and Mankoula, (2020) that in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic that has caused a global lockdown of the economy and restriction of international trading, the manufacturing sector is struggling with some measures of performance such as productivity, customer satisfaction and profitability. This is because manufacturing firms who produce at a large scale have now had to reduce production capacity especially those considered to be essential service producers, while all others are asked to shut down temporarily. The effect of these especially for those firms who have not been able to integrate technology into all their production and supply chain capabilities is reflecting in the company capacity to continue operations as a result of consistent production of goods and services leading to lack of customer satisfaction, revenue and profitability (Nkengasong and Mankoula, 2020).

Srivastava and Agarwal (2020) indicated that the pandemic has posed the greatest impact on stock markets around the globe, and has caused worst economic meltdown since the 2008 global financial crisis. In recent times, Goodell (2020) agrees that natural disasters and terrorist attacks are similar to the effects of COVID-19 on economic and organizational performance, because it inhibits trade and production within places affected. Financial Times (2020) attests to

this, noting that the emergence of COVID-19 has created panic in the financial system, causing high volatility in several markets. Akhtaruzzaman et al. (2020) affirms by stressing that many financial and non-financial firms across the globe have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, as stock returns are trending downwards these days. Busari and Jaiyeoba (2021) noted that even if the pandemic is resolved, its effects on business and economic/organizational performance will linger in the short run.

Conclusions and Recommendation

Based on the findings derived for the study, the researcher concluded that human resources management has relationship with organizational performance, it was also concluded that Covid 19 pandemic has an effect on human resources managers. Covid 19 pandemic also have positive and negative implications on organizational performance. In order to avoid further complicating effects of Covid 19 pandemic on organizational performance, the researcher recommended that organizations should engage themselves in virtual office and online marketing as this will further help to improve their organizational performance.

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