# Strategic Human Resource Management and Performance of Manufacturing Firms in Nigeria

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Abstract: Strategic human resource management (SHRM) can be thought as a broader perspective of human resource management (HRM) in realizing firm strategies and goals affecting all HRM functions such as strategic recruitment and selection, strategic planning, strategic training and development, strategic compensation and reward systems, strategic succession and strategic appraisal. The study examines the effect of Strategic human resource management and performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Despite the effort placed on strategic human resource management by manufacturing firms in Nigeria to enhance performance, the performance of these manufacturing firms has remained low. The main objective of this study was to examine the effect of SHRM on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria from 2015 to 2019. The survey research design method was adopted and the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) method of analysis was employed to regress the data that was gotten from primary source through the administration of questionnaire to the respondents. The findings reveal that SHRM (employees' training and compensation practices) was found to have positive and significant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Therefore, the study recommends that strategic human resource management should play this role creditably well and to act as catalyst, as manufacturing firms should keep on the benefits of integrating their SHRM function with its overall strategies and operations to achieve performance

**Keywords:** Strategic Human Resource Management, Employees' Training, Compensation Practices, Performance and Manufacturing Firms

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Date of Submission: 14-05-2020 Date of Acceptance: 29-05-2020

# I. Introduction

Since independence in the 60's, the Nigerian economy has shifted from agriculture to crude oil and now with industrialization taking an integral part of the country's development strategies. The manufacturing sectors has contributed significantly to the Gross Domestic Product(GDP) of the nation but for the past five years, the manufacturing sector has stagnated at a little more than what it used to be. In line with this, the economic environment is changing rapidly and this change is characterized by activities such as the ever-increasing product-market competition, globalization, changing customer and investor demands. To compete successfully in this environment, manufacturingfirms continually need to improve their performance by reducing costs, innovating products and processes and improving quality, productivity and speed to market. The people who make up the firms, human resources, are considered to be one of the most important resources of todays' firms (Tiwari &Saxena, 2012).

From the above and over the years, it has become a widely held premise that people provide organisations with an important source of sustainable competitive advantage and that the effective management of human capital, not physical capital, may be the ultimate determinant of organizational performance (Reich, 1991). The value of human capital may be especially apparent in modern manufacturing organisations that have invested heavily in production innovations.

As stated by Njue (2018) manufacturing firms are focused on achieving superior performance through the best use of talented human resources as a strategic asset. SHRM policies or strategies must now be aligned to business strategies for organizational success. No matter the amount of technology and mechanization developed, human resource remains the singular most important resource of any success-oriented organization. After all, successful businesses are built on the strengths of exceptional people. Also, with the emergence of strategic management in firms, many functions and departments of organizations have tried to match their strategies, practices and processes with the business strategy. HRM is one of them and strategic HRM emerged when firms tried to link their HR strategies and practices with business strategy (Wright & McMahan, 1992).

Research has recorded a positive relationship between strategic human resource management and manufacturing performance. Thus, in order to stimulate manufacturing Performance, management is required to develop skilled and talented employees who are capable of performing their jobs successfully (Thompson

&Cushen, 2012).

Despite the effort placed on strategic human resource management by manufacturing firms in Nigeria to enhance performance, the performance of most manufacturing firms has remained low (MAN,2016). It is on this basis that the researcher sought to examine the effect of strategic human resource management on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

## **II.** Objectives Of The Study

The general objective of this study was to examine the effect of strategic human resource management on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Other specific objectives include to:

- i. Evaluate the effect of employees' training on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria
- ii. Determine the effect of compensation practices on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria

## **III. Research Hypotheses**

In line with the objective of the study the following hypotheses are stated in a null form and tested, they are: **Ho<sub>1</sub>:**Employees' Training has no significant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. **Ho<sub>2</sub>:**Compensation Practices has no significant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

#### **IV. Literature Review**

Previous studies such asMuhammad (2015) studied strategic human resource management practices on the competitive priorities of the manufacturing performance in Karachi, using a sample of 182 usable survey questionnaires is collected from 90 organizations of 15 manufacturing sectors based in Karachi and exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses to assess the reliability and validity of the measurement model. Also, Bulitia, K'Obonyo and Ojera (2014) establish the relationship between human resource practices and performance in the manufacturing firms in Kenya. Finally, Oladipo and Abdulkadir (2011) examines Strategic HRM on the Nigerian manufacturing sector. But none of these studies used employees' training and compensation practices as proxies for SHRM. Therefore, the study fills the research gap by examining the effect of SHRM and performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria from 2015 to 2019.

#### Concept of Strategic Human Resource Management

As stated by David, Ali and Al-Aali, (2011), SHRM has to do with gaining and maintaining competitive advantage. It is the process of linking traditional human resource functions with an organization's strategic objective so as to improve performance (Bratton & Gold, 2012). Human resource management identifies employees as part of an organization's resources, while strategic human resource management recognizes employees as strategic resources that can help an organization attain viable competitive advantage (Adil, 2015).

Strategic human resource management (SHRM) is a relatively new concept both in the field of human resource management and strategic management. SHRM is the effective application of the firms HR to achieve the organization's total strategies (Monks &McMackin, 2001). It links HRM and strategic management to enhance, coordinate and harmonize HRM practices through various human resource planning processes aiming to efficiently achieve organizational strategies and goals (Anthony, Kacmar&Perrewe, 2009). Strategic human resource management is concerned with the collection of strategies and practices in relation with the connection amongst individuals and organizations intended to empower an organization to accomplish its objectives. SHRM is both a field of practice and study (Storey, Wright & Ulrich, 2009).

## Concept of Performance

Performance is the process of assessing the proficiency with which a reporting entity succeeds, by the economic acquisition of resources and their efficient and effective deployment, in achieving its objectives. Performance measures may be based on non-financial as well as on financial information. (Barrett, 2004)It is the process of developing measurable indicators that can be systematically tracked to assess progress made in achieving predetermined goals and using such indicators to assess progress in achieving these goals. (Busco, et al., 2006)

The essence of performance is the creation of value, which is the essential overall performance criterion for any organisation. In relation to SHRM, people are a key resource and a critical element in an organisation's performance. The basis for SHRM is that by integrating HRM with the organisations' strategy and applying particular systems of HRM practices will lead to effective management of employees and resultant improvement in individual and organizational performance (Holbeche, 2001; Farnham, 2010). Performance is defined using the 3E, which are efficiency, effectiveness and economies. Ristea (2002) is of the opinion that the three concepts of efficiency, efficacy and economy can be associated with performance.

#### **Empirical Review**

Muhammad (2015) investigates the impact of eight strategic human resource management practices on the four competitive priorities (i.e., cost, quality, delivery and flexibility) of the manufacturing performance when controlled for information sharing and relationship with employees. A sample of 182 usable survey questionnaires is collected from 90 organizations of 15 manufacturing sectors based in Karachi. The method of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses was used to assess the reliability and validity of the measurement model. The structural equation modeling method was then applied to examine the theoretical framework. The results of the structural model show that all of the eight strategic HRM practices collectively demonstrate a very good model fit between the theory and the sample drawn however, both performance appraisal and employment security have been found statistically significant to predict these four priorities in isolation too.

Bulitia, K'Obonyo and Ojera (2014) establish the relationship between human resource practices and firm performance in the manufacturing firms in Kenya. used a census survey of the 68 medium and large manufacturing firms whose core activities involved in production and marketing of edible oils, soaps and detergents, beverages or sugar registered in the Kenya association of manufacturers directory 2012. data was collected through self-administered questionnaires sent to the production manager, brand manager, human resource manager, marketing manager, or the relevant manager dealing with innovations, the main findings of this study reveal that manufacturing firms apply human resource management practices to different extents. For instance, some models of human resource management practices such as licensing are not commonly used, while others like hiring of skilled employees and teaching company schemes are very common with average composite mean score of 4.00 and 4.08 out of the best score of 5.0 respectively.

Oladipo and Abdulkadir (2011) examine the extent to which Strategic HRM is practiced in the Nigerian manufacturing sector as well as its impact on organizational performance. A multi-respondent survey of 21 Nigerian manufacturing companies was undertaken and data collected was subjected to correlation and regression analysis as well descriptive statistics in pursuance of the stated objective of finding a fit between organizational performance and strategic human resource management practices. Results show that strategic HRM was moderately practiced by the companies operating in the Nigerian manufacturing sector. Results also indicate that line management devolvement, innovative recruitment and selection system, regular training and development of personnel, equity based compensation system, performance appraisal system, effective career planning system and a robust employee participation in the organizations' decisions and actions are the key strategic HR practices that influence organizational performance in the Nigerian manufacturing sector.

# Theoretical Framework Resource Base-View Theory

The theory that best suits this study is the Resource Based View (RBV) theory, which was founded on the work of Penrose (1959). There is strong evidence that supports the Resource Founded View (Crook, Ketchen, Combs, & Todd, 2008) which indicates that firms compete in an ever changing and dynamic business environment. Organizations can attain and achieve a sustained competitive advantage through their employees according to Barney (2001). This can be realized when a firm has a human resource pool that cannot be imitated or substituted by its rivals or competitors. The RBV as a basis of competitive advantage lies primarily in the application of the bundle of valuable resources at the disposal of the firm. The firm has to identify the key potential resources which should fulfil the criteria of being valuable, rare, in-imitable and no substitutable by the firms'competitors (Galbreath, 2005) in the area in which the firm operates. Resources are stocks of available factors that are owned or controlled by the firm, and capabilities are an organizations' capacity to deploy resources. Essentially, it is the bundling of the resources that builds capabilities.

# V. Methodology

Survey research design was adopted for this study and this is because the information or data needed for the study required the use of structured questionnaire that will be administered to the respondents who are staff in the manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Also, the population of the study consists of all the registered manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The manufacturing sector in Nigeria has a total number of 2,803 firms according to Corporate Affairs Commission report (CAC, 2018). The population of this study 2803 manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

However, the sample size of this study using Taro Yamane Formula (1967) is 350 manufacturing firms in Nigeria across the sector. However, the reasons for selecting 350 manufacturing firms across 6 geo political zone in Nigeria are based on availability of data on their operations, their proximity to the researcher and research assistants in the zone and their perceived long term operation in the industry. The selected manufacturing firms have stayed long enough in the business and a pilot study has shown that they have a good record book keeping. The study considered those selected manufacturing firms that were established earlier before the period of the study and those within the period of study that is still in operation to date.

The study also used accidental sampling method to administer questionnaire to the personal managers of selected manufacturing sector in Nigeria. The reason for using accidental sampling method is that there is no formal register for all the personnel managers of manufacturing sector in Nigeria by government organization or body. Therefore, the researcher selected personnel manager in any organization and issued out questionnaire. This selection is accidental because any personnel manager that the researcher comes across with in the cause of administering the questionnaire, the researcher gave the questionnaire.

To test the reliability of the questionnaire to ensure that it can address appropriately the questions being answered. Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the internal consistency.

**Table 1: Scale reliability of variables** 

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Performance	0.76
Employees training	0.81
Compensation practices	0.77

Source: researcher's computation (2020)

The above table indicated the reliability of the instruments of the variables which have Alpha value above 0.6, which means they are reliable. The statistical tools used are multiple regression and simple percentages. The multiple regressions were used to determine whether there is an effective relationship between the variables.

This is expressed in this study as follows:

 $Y = \alpha + \beta_I x$ ......

Where y = dependent variable,  $\alpha =$  intercept,  $\beta_I$  is coefficient and x is the independent variable. However, the above model is expressed as:

 $PF = \alpha + \beta_1 ET + \beta_2 COP + \mu$  .....equation 2

Where:

PF = Performance (efficiency, effectiveness and economies)

 $\begin{array}{ll} \beta & = Coefficient \\ \alpha & = Intercept \\ \mu & = Error\ terms \\ ET & = Employees\ training \\ COP = Compensation\ practices \end{array}$ 

# VI. Data Analysis And Results

Table 2: Assessment of Employees Training in Manufacturing firms in Nigeria Source: Survey, 2020

Items	5	4	3	2	1
There is effective on the job training in manufacturing firms	89(25.42)	78(22.29)	12(3.42)	77(22.00)	94(26.85)
The manufacturing firms in Nigeria frequently practice off the job training	99(28.29)	111(31.71)	23(6.57)	56(16.00)	61(17.43)
New employees are given orientation on the job	109(31.14)	123(34.14)	11(3.14)	49(14.00)	58(16.57)
Promoted workers are frequently inducted into the organizations	121(34.57)	110(31.42)	33(9.42)	59(16.85)	27(7.71)

From the above table, it was discovered that majority of the respondents strongly agreed (25.42%) and agreed (22.29%) to the statement that there is effective on the job training in manufacturing firms. 22.00% strongly disagreed and 26.85% disagreed with the said statement while only 3.42% were undecided.

It was also observed that the majority of the respondents, 28.29% and 31.71%% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that manufacturing firms in Nigeria frequently practice off the job training. 16.00% and 17.43% strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively, while only 6.57% were undecided.

From the table also, the majority of the respondents 31.44% and 34.14% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that new employees are given orientation on the job. 14.00% and 16.57% strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively, while 3.14% were undecided.

It was also observed that the majority of the respondents, 34.57% and 31.42% strongly agreed and agreed respectively that promoted workers are frequently inducted into the organizations. 16.85% and 7.71% strongly disagreed and disagreed respectively, while only 9.42% were undecided.

**Table 3: Mean of Employees Training** 

Variables	5	4	3	2	1	FX	N	Mean	Remarks	Ranking	Sectorial mean
On the job training	89	78	12	77	94	1041	350	2.97	Low	4 <sup>th</sup>	3, 37
Off the job training	99	111	23	56	61	1181	350	3.37	High	3 <sup>rd</sup>	3.37
Orientation	109	123	11	49	58	1226	350	3.50	High	2 <sup>nd</sup>	
Induction	121	110	33	59	23	1285	350	3.67	High	1 <sup>st</sup>	

Author's Computation, 2020

The table shows that employees' training in manufacturing firms is unique since the sectorial mean is above 3.00 which imply that managers of manufacturing firms in Nigeria observed effective training for employees in the organizations.

Table 4: Assessment of Compensation Practices in manufacturing firms in Nigeria Source: Survey, 2020

Items	5	4	3	2	1
Employees of Manufacturing firms in Nigeria frequently received bonuses	113(35.29)	114(32.57)	34(9.71)	65(18.57)	24(6.85)
There always commission given to employees in Manufacturing firms in Nigeria	110(31.42)	117(33.42)	33(9.42)	60(17.14)	30(8.57)
Employees are frequently recognized for performing a task	118(33.71)	122(34.85)	20(5.71)	58(16.57)	32(9.14)
Employees are frequently received overtime wages	119(34.00)	118(33.71)	31(8.85)	50(14.29)	32(9.14)

From the above table, it was discovered that majority of the respondents strongly agreed (35.29%) and agreed (32.57%) to the statement that employees of Manufacturing firms in Nigeria frequently received bonuses. 18.57% strongly disagreed and 6.85% disagreed with the said statement while only 9.71% were undecided.

It was realized that majority of the respondents strongly agreed (31.42%) and agreed (33.42%) to the statement that there is always commission given to employees in Manufacturing firms in Nigeria. 17.14% strongly disagreed and 8.57% disagreed with the said statement while only 9.42% were undecided.

More so, it was realized that majority of the respondents strongly agreed (33.71%) and agreed (34.85%) to the statement that employees are frequently recognize for performing a task. 16.57% strongly disagreed and 9.14% disagreed with the said statement while only 5.71% were undecided.

Finally, it was realized that majority of the respondents strongly agreed (34.00%) and agreed (33.71%) to the statement that employees are frequently recognize for performing a task. 14.29% strongly disagreed and 9.14% disagreed with the said statement while only 8.85% were undecided.

**Table 5: Mean of Compensation Practices** 

Variables	5	4	3	2	1	FX	N	Mean	Remarks	Ranking	Sectorial
											mean
Bonuses	113	114	34	65	24	1367	350	3.91	High	1 <sup>st</sup>	
Commission	110	117	33	60	30	1067	350	3.05	High	4 <sup>th</sup>	1
Recognition	118	122	20	58	32	1286	350	3.67	High	3 <sup>rd</sup>	3.58
Overtime wages	119	118	31	50	32	1292	350	3.69	High	2 <sup>nd</sup>	1

## Author's Computation, 2020

The table shows that compensation practices used in manufacturing firms is unique since the sectorial mean is above 3.00 which imply that managers of manufacturing firms in Nigeria used compensation practices effectively.

Table 6: Assessment of Performance in manufacturing firms in Nigeria

Source: Survey, 2020

Items	5	4	3	2	1	
Manufacturing firms in Nigeria perform efficiently	129(36.85)	110(31.43)	11(3.14)	66(18.85)	34(9.71)	
The performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria is effective	118(33.71)	111(31.71)	32(9.14)	49(14.00)	40(11.43)	
Manufacturing firms in Nigeria careful manage their available resources	121(34.57)	110(31.42)	33(9.42)	63(18.00)	23(6.57)	

From the above table, it was discovered that majority of the respondents strongly agreed (36.85%) and agreed (31.43%) to the statement that Manufacturing firms in Nigeria perform efficiently. 18.85% strongly disagreed and 9.71% disagreed with the said statement while only 3.14% were undecided.

It was discovered also that majority of the respondents strongly agreed (33.71%) and agreed (31.71%) to the statement that performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria is effective. 14.00% strongly disagreed and 11.43% disagreed with the said statement while only 9.14% were undecided.

It was discovered that majority of the respondents strongly agreed (34.57%) and agreed (31.42%) to the statement that manufacturing firms in Nigeria careful manage their available resources. 18.00% strongly disagreed and 6.57% disagreed with the said statement while only 9.42% were undecided.

Table 7: Mean of Performance of Manufacturing firms in Nigeria

										8	
Variables	5	4	3	2	1	FX	N	Mean	Remarks	Ranking	Sectorial
											mean
Efficiency	129	110	11	66	34	1284	350	3.66	High	2 <sup>nd</sup>	
Effectiveness	118	111	32	49	40	1251	350	3.57	High	3 <sup>rd</sup>	
Economies	121	110	33	63	23	1293	350	3.69	High	1 <sup>st</sup>	3.66

#### Author's Computation, 2020

The table shows that performance of manufacturing firms is unique since the sectorial mean is above 3.00 which imply that managers of manufacturing firms in Nigeria perform effectively and efficiently.

**Table 8: Descriptive Statistics** 

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
PF	350	1.00	5.00	3.3457	1.40728
ET	350	1.00	5.00	3.1029	1.39411
COP	350	1.00	5.00	3.2629	1.44013
Valid N (listwise)	350				

Source SPSS version 20.00

The table 8 revealed that the result of descriptive statistics which indicated the mean and standard deviation as well as the minimum and maximum value of the variables. The mean value of performance (PF) is 3.34, employees training (ET) is 3.10, the mean value of compensation practices (COP) is 3.26. The table also recorded the standard deviation of the variables.

**Table 9 Regression Analysis** 

 Model Summary

 Model
 R
 R Square
 Adjusted R Square
 Std. Error of the Estimate

 1
 .982a
 .964
 .963
 .26956

a. Predictors: (Constant), COP, ET

$\Delta NOV \Delta$	۱

Mode	el	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	665.955	2	332.977	4582.546	.000 <sup>b</sup>
1	Residual	25.214	347	.073		
	Total	691.169	349			

a. Dependent Variable: PF

b. Predictors: (Constant), COP, ET

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>
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Model Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
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		В	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	.213	.036		5.963	.000
1	ET	.062	.041	.062	1.534	.126
	COP	.901	.039	.922	22.919	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PF

Source: econometric output, 2020

Decision rule: 5%

The regression result shows that the model is fit for the study since the f-statistics is significant at 5% level of significance. The result also shows that employees training have a positive and insignificant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria while compensation also has a positive and significant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Thiseffect is significant since the P-values are less than 5% while it is also insignificant since the p-value is more than 5%. Thus, the study rejects the null hypothesis and accepts the alterative hypothesis and concluded that employees training have a positive and significant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria while compensation also has a positive and significant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The  $R^2 = 0.96$  indicates that only 96% of variation on strategic human resource management can be used to explain by the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria but 4% can be explained by other factors not noted in the regression model which is referred to as error term.

#### Discussion of Findings

The study found out that strategic human resource management has a positive and significant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Other findings were that employees training have a positive and insignificant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria while compensation also has a positive and significant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The study is in line with the findings of Muhammad (2015) who found positive and significant effect relationship between the variables. The study is also in line with Resource Based View (RBV) theory, which that firm competes in an ever changing and dynamic business environment. Organizations can attain and achieve a sustained competitive advantage through their employees.

## VII. Conclusion

The study concluded that strategic human resource management has a positive and significant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. Other findings were that employees training have a positive and insignificant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria while compensation also has a positive and significant effect on the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria. The implication of this is that the manufacturing firm in Nigeria does have strategic training exercise that produces highly skilled human capital, and these manufacturing firms do organize conferences that equip employees with new tools to enhance their service delivery. Also, bonuses, overtime wages, commission, which are proxies for compensation practices helps improve the performance of manufacturing firms in Nigeria.

#### VIII. Recommendations

The study recommended that in achieving performance, the atmosphere of the manufacturing firms in Nigeria has been supportive to lead to and sustain staff motivation and high performance. No doubt, strategic human resource management identified in this study should play this role creditably well and to act as catalyst. Therefore, manufacturing firms should keep on the benefits of integrating their SHRM function with its overall strategies and operations.

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Eze, Lilian Chineye, et. al. "Strategic Human Resource Management and Performance of Manufacturing Firms in Nigeria." *IOSR Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, 22(5), 2020, pp. 01-08.