

The Challenges Faced by Human Resource Practitioners in Implementing Strategic Human Resource Management in South Sudan National Organizations: Case study Jubeck State

Article by Joggo Florence D. Moini¹, Nandita Mishra², Ashok NM³

¹Department of Business Administration; Texila American University Guyana, South America

E-mail: joggo.florence@gmail.com¹

Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to examine the challenges faced by human resource practitioners in implementing the Strategic human resource management in Jubeck State, South Sudan National NGOs. The target population in this study was the Human Resource Practitioners. The research design employed was qualitative approaches. Interviews and focused group were conducted. In this paper primary data was collected by the use of interviews and focus group discussion., documentary and observation method. Content analysis of collecting data was used and results presented through narrative. The findings of the study shown that lack of employee's benefits packages, rigidity of some employees to adopt organization policies and procedures, management interference on human resource role, and political instability are the contributing challenges that affected the human resources practitioners. Conclusion was drawn to improve the challenges faced by HRP which include, provision of refresher training on the policies and procedure, Human Resource unit should be independent, organizational culture need to be understood by the entire employees separated employees should be given their entitlement or separate organ to keep the pension for the employees.

Keyword: *Implementing, strategic, human resource management, Challenges.*

Background

The armed conflict between the Khartoum government in the North and the Southern regions of Sudan which ended with the comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, lasted for only 50 years with certain intermissions. In 1955, one year before Sudan achieved independence the resistance against the Khartoum government started when soldiers in the South mutinied, refusing transfer to the North. By January 2011 South Sudan referendum was conducted to determine the South Sudan independence, as such in July 2011 South Sudan became newest Nation in the world and Africa's 54th nation. Thereafter, the independence many hotly dispute erupted that since 2013 to present which made people homeless and take refugees in the POC and Camps in the neighboring countries (Breidlid 2015, p.109-110). Therefore, due to the conflict that is ongoing the department of human resource management in the private and public sectors still faced challenges in the implementation of strategic human resources management, so this paper is to represent the gap.

Also, the research used some observation to compare the challenges in Jubeck State and other Human resource department in the neighboring countries the indicators shows that there are more challenges faced by the human resource practitioners in NNGOs.

Human Resources is a core functional role in the organizational structure. Human Resources management also is about managing people for examples in educational organization is about achieving results with and through employees. But also, it is about empowering and developing the same people as person, individual and collaborative professional (Coleman 2018). As describe by other authors Human resource management is a strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization most valued assets the people working there, individually and collectively contributed to the achievement of its objective. Also, strategic human resource management is an approach to the development and implementation of Human Resource strategies that are integrated with business strategies and enable the organization to achieved its goals.

Universally there were many literature describing what reflect the real context of the strategic human resource management in the experience of many scholars which discussed the concepts of human resources strategies which derive from number of theories such as Motivation theories Content Theory, resource based-view, organizational behavior theory, Equity theory and contingency theory, institutional theory, human capital theory, Resource dependence theory, Amo theory, social exchange theory, Transaction theory, Agency theory. In addition to that the challenges facing the human resources professional in implementing the human resource strategies and also how the challenges can be improving.

The strategic human resource management is viewed as an approach to the development and implementation of human resource strategies that are integrated with business strategies and support their achievement. Further argument was that, strategic human resource management is focus on identifying the organizational mission and the strategies, but on the other hands' attention was given to the resource base required to make it succeed. Managers who think strategically will have a broad and long term views of where they are going but they will also be aware that they are responsible of how to allocate resources to opportunities that contribute to the implementation of strategic human resources management in the organization (Thompson and Strickland (1996; P.3). Basically, the fundamental aim of strategic human resource management is to generate organizational capacity by ensuring that the organization has the skills, engaged committed and well-motivated employees to achieve sustained competitive advantage. Alvesso (2009: P.52) argued that strategic human resources management is about how the employment relationship for all employees can managed in such a way as to contribute optimally to the organization's goals achievement.

In essence, strategic human resource management is conceptual; it is a general notion of how integration of 'fit' between HR and business strategies in achieved, the befits of taking a longer terms view of where HR should be goings how to get there and how coherent and mutually supporting HR strategies should be developed and implemented. Importantly, it is also about how the members of the HR functions

should adopt a strategic approach on a day-to-day basis, this means that they operate as part of the management team, ensure that HR activities support the achievement of business strategies and a continuous basis, and are consciously concerned with seeing that their achievement add values to the organizational performance (Peter Boxall, 2007).

Storey (2014) argues that the major human resource management issues affecting implementation of strategic human resource management in African Organizations include inappropriate use of foreign models, over reliance on particular practices driven by local institutional and legislative regimes, lack of transparency in decision making and concern with procedural and transactional human resource management rather than strategic focus. The most tangible aspect of strategic human resource management is therefore the set of human resource policies and processes in existence in an organization and how they address various aspects of people management such as recruitment, diversity, management development, reward and employment relations.

Research methodology

Overview of the study

This paper was conducted through qualitative research method which was divided in to three Theme, research design, Target population, Sampling, research instrument. This methodology was mainly focused to addressed the research question, Objective of the study which was descriptive in nature. Furthermore, documentary was used to collection some of the information to enrich this paper.

Research design

This paper employed qualitative approach was employed which provides an in-depth, intricate and detailed understanding of meanings, actions, non-observable as well as observable phenomena, attitudes, intentions and behaviours, and these are well served by naturalistic enquiry. Cohen et al (2018, p.287) describe qualitative research as a form of social inquiry that tends to adopt a flexible and data-driven research design, to use relatively unstructured data to emphasize the essential role of subjectivity in the research process, to study a number of naturally occurring cases in details, and to use verbal rather than statistical forms of approach, so at this points the

data collected was presented and interpreted through narrative.

Population

In this paper the targeted population were the human resources practitioners, the population of the NNGO consist of approximately 200 registered in which the researcher selected 4 four of which the group 8 participant were selected randomly.

Data collection instrument

The study used primary Data, which was used to collected through structured interviews which was describe as a flexible methods of data collection. In other words, is based on the conversations of daily life and is professional conversations, it is an inter-view, where knowledge is constructed in the inter-action between the interviewer and interviewee. Focus group and observation method were also use to collect data. The participant of the study were mainly the human resource practitioners. Also focused group discussion was used to obtained first-hand information from the respondents.

Validity and reliability

Validity

Validity is an important key to affective research, validity is concern with the nature of what is valid. Mores so validity explain the extent to which interpretations of data are warranted by the theory and evidence used. It was notes that, in qualitative data collected the intensive personal involvement an in-depth responses of individual secure a sufficient level of validity and reliability as such the data selected must be representative of sample, the whole data set on the field, that is the must addressed content concurrent validity(Cohen et al, 2018, p.247-8)

Reliability

Reliability pertains to the consistency and trustworthiness of research findings; it is often treated in relation to the issue of whether a finding reproducible at other times and by other researches. This concerns whether the interview subjects will change their answers during an interview and whether they will give different replies to different interviewers. In addition to that in qualitative research, reliability can be regards as a fit between what researcher record as data and what occurs in the natural setting that is

being researched, a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverages (Cohen et al, 2018, p). Reliability according to Joppe (2018) a research instrument results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology; measure should produce similar or the same result consistently if the same data are similar. The author also added that the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable (Joppe 2018, p.1).

Data analysis

In reference to Polit and Hunger 2017 he describes data analysis as a systematic organization of data in the categorizing, ordering, manipulating and summarizing the data and describing them in a meaningful term. Since this was qualitative research it employed qualitative data analysis which concerns how we move from the data to understanding, explaining and interpreting the phenomena in question. Data analysis focus on in-depth, context-specific, rich, subjective data and meanings by the participant in the situation, with the researcher herself/himself as a principal research instrument, it involves; data reduction in order to avoid often serious issue to data overload.

Ethical consideration

Ethical concern was viewed in this paper as the major factors for its success, because in research ethical concern reflected in the growth of relevant literature and in the appearance of regulatory codes of research practices formulation by various scholars. Ethic has been defined as a matter of principled sensitivity to the right of others, educational researchers must take into account the effects of the research on participants; they have a responsibility to participant in such a way as to preserve. Ethical issues where put forward in this research paper, first the informed consent, gaining of access in the field and the confidentiality was addressed before data was collected from the participants.

Results and discussions

The interviews and focus group discussion conduct with various participants shown that there were many challenges faced by the human

resource practitioners in implementing the strategic human resource management in Jubek State, South Sudan which include. Rigidity of some staff to adopt to new changes introduced by in the organization. It was found that the nonexistence of coordination among the HRP has been a challenge in which it became difficult for the organizations to share information that concern with the employees from various organizations, this explain the point of networking forum that are used to bring professional together and share information or to harmonize certain organizational policies.

It was also revealing that interference of Senior management on HR activities for instance the HQ/RO issues related to HR are presented by head of office as such it discourages the practitioners in performing their roles as the organ of the organizations. In relation to that one of the participant echoes that even decisions making in most case is done by the senior management leaving the human resource unit speechless in the organization. More so, political instability due to the ongoing conflict in the country it became difficult to some extend to find the qualified candidates since many of the persons are staying in the IDP camps and other in camps in the neighboring countries all this factors affect the implementation of strategic human resource management in the organizations.

The interviews result presented that lack of employees benefit packages in some of the organization has placed some HR practitioner end up been jail because staff after end of services expect to go home with entitlement, this is due to the poor system of managing entitlement of the employees after services and this issues had placed some of the human resources personnel in to harassment, torture and jail as separated staff were not paid the final benefits.

Data analysis on table form

Table 4.1. Lack of employee's benefits packages

25-35 Years	Frequency	Percentage
35-40	4	50
45-50	1	12.5
55-60	3	37.5
65-70	0	0
total	8	100%

Table above shows that 50% fully agreed that lack of employee's benefits is the challenge faced by the human resources HRP in implementing the strategic human resources management in the selected NNGOs in Jubek state. While 37.5% agreed that lack of employee's benefits has a negative impact on implementation of human resources strategies in the selected organizations, also the results revealed that 12.7% did not agreed.

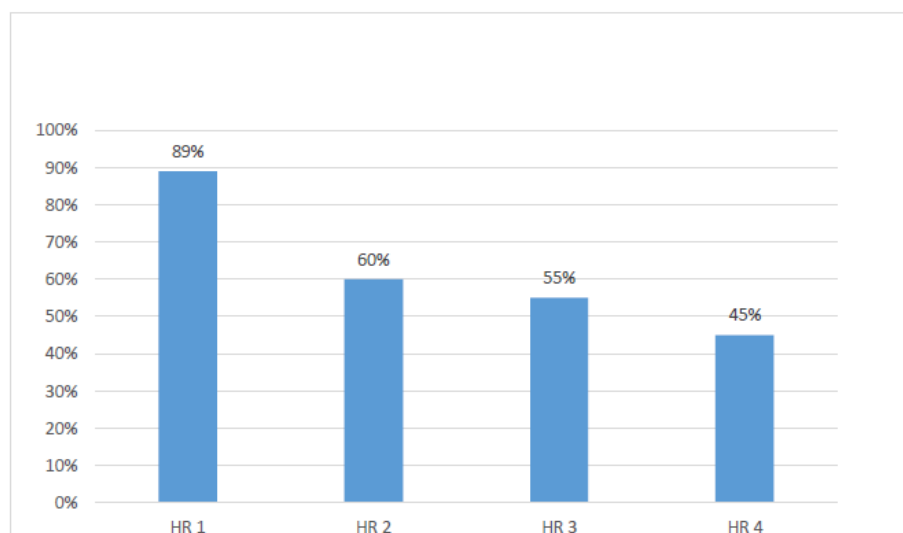


Figure 4.1. Rigidity of some employees to adopt the organization policies and procedures

HR1=Strongly Agree,
 HR2= Agree,
 HR3=Disagree
 HR4=no ideas

The highest percentage of 89% strongly agreed that the challenges faced by the HR practitioners in the selected organization was the rigidity of the employees to accept the existing organizational policies and procedures. Some 60% of the participant eco that in their organization this stand the challenges in most cases faced by the HR team, employees pay less interest to know what the organization policies and procedures is

talking about, hence affected the work. More importantly 55% participate disagree on the rigidity of employees as a challenge because for them they believed that it is the responsibility of the organization to ensure that the employees were provided with the available policies and procedures, while 45% of the participants have no ideas on the questions, they left uncompleted.

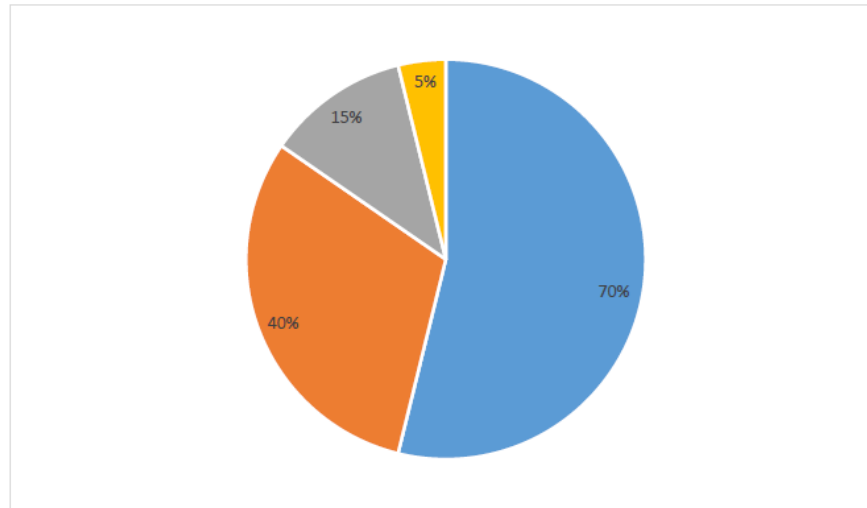


Figure 4.2. Management interference on HR roles in the organization

Out of the selected HR practitioners in the NNGOs majority (70%) strongly agreed that management interference on HR roles, for examples on the decision making and senior positions are handling by the management which has a negative impact, meaning some of them were planning to leave the organization. In the inclusive interviews 40% of the participant confirmed that they also agreed on the issue of management interfering on the role of human

resources team, so this has been an ongoing therefore, most of the HR colleagues had no voice in the organizational decision making, hence not able to work independently. 15% of the participant did not agree on the point of management interference as a challenges, as such it is difficult to conclude. While 5% of the informant has no ideas on the topic whether this is a challenge or not.

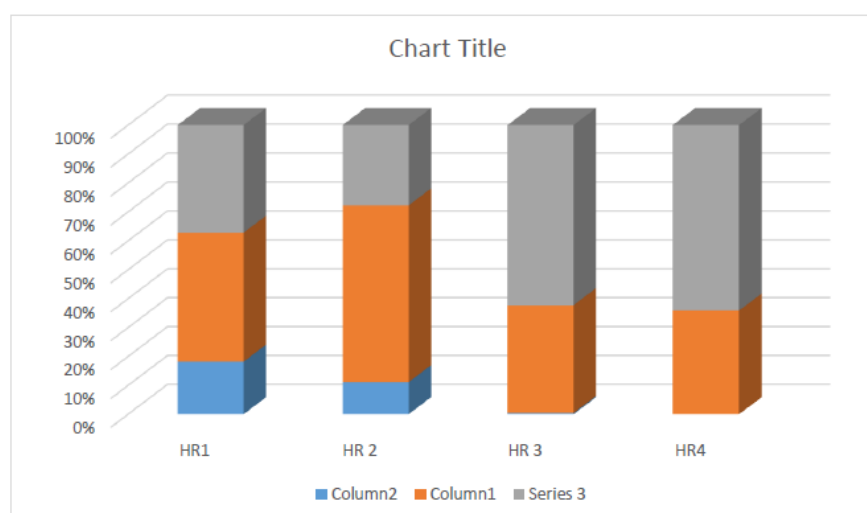


Figure 4.3. Political Instability

In the table above data collected shows that 90% of the participant strongly agreed that the most alarming challenges faced by HR practitioners in the organizations was the political instability which has seriously made the work difficult to get the most talent qualified employees during recruitment and selection, for examples since the war broke in 2013 till present were many of the people are living in the POCs and others in the neighboring countries of Uganda, DRC and Kenya. In relation to that 80% of the participant agreed that the political instability was the hindrance factors for the HRs in the organization as many able people left the country. Furthermore, 2% of the informant did not agreed with the views that political instability affect employment specifically in hiring suitable candidates. Finally, 0% of the participant have no ideas. In generally analysist the major challenge faced by the HR practitioners was the political instability in the country that have a significant effect on the employment of staff in the selected organizations

Conclusion

In the broader point of views, the research work has answered the main objective of the study and the research question. The results revealed that there was lack of employee's benefits packages, Rigidity of employees to adopt the organizational policies and procedures, Management interference, and political instability had made the work difficult for the practitioners to implementing the strategic human resource management. one of the participants mentioned that they are subject to jail, beaten and harassment some time with the separated staff who have not been paid their final benefits on time, therefore this affected their work. In addition to that lack of coordination among the HRP within the organization made it difficult to share knowledge and experience because each organization have different internal policies and procedures. The results indicated that there is political instability that has affected the work of human resource personnel in the organizations in the way that many of the qualified applicant are in the camps, so it made it difficult to get the candidate on board as expected, the same job kept on been re-advertised for several time which wasted a lot of time.

Acknowledgment

My deepest gratitude goes to the almighty God for his protection throughout this study. More importantly I acknowledge the great support from my Guide Dr. Nandita Mishra who continuously guide in the process. Also, I recognize the word of encouragement from my mother, sister and brother for their effective support till the end of this paper. In Addition, the distinctive thanks go to all the participants who entirely maintained the confidentiality in giving out the information required for the study.

Reference

- [1]. Armstrong, M. (2017). A hand book for Human Resources Practices. London: Kogan Page.
- [2]. Atkinson, J. (1984). Manpower Strategies for flexible organisation, P. ersonnel Management, 28-31.
- [3]. Avesso. (2009). Critical perspective on Strategic human resource management . ISBN: Routlege.
- [4]. Barney, J. (2001). Resources Based ""View Theory, a useful perspective for strategic management Research,. Academy of management Review, 41-56.
- [5]. Bottery, M. (1992). The Ethics of Educational management. London: Cassell.
- [6]. Boxall, P. P. (2003). Strategic Human Resource Management. New, York: Palgrave.
- [7]. Breidlid, A. (2015). Education, Indigenous Knowledges, and Development in the Global South. London: Routledge.
- [8]. Cohen, L. M. (2018). Research Methods in Education. London: Routledge.
- [9]. Early, C. &. (2005). Leadership and Management . NY: Work press.
- [10]. Hendry, C. (1994). Human Resources Strategies for International growth. London: Routledge.
- [11]. Huselid, M. (1995). The Impact of Human Resources management Practices and Productivity and corporate Finance Performance. Academy of Management Journal , 38,635,672.
- [12]. J.Storey. (2018). New perspectives in Human resource management . London : Routledge.
- [13]. Joppe. (2017). Qualitative Research . Research Process, 1.
- [14]. Kvale, S. B. (2015). Interviews, Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing . Los Angele/London/New Delhi/Singapore/Washington DC: SAGE.
- [15]. M, J. (2000). Qualitative Research. Research Process, 1.

- [16]. Magazine, H. (2007). Organization Development. Strategic Human Resource tool, 59,1-10.
- [17]. Maxwell, D, D. (2015). The Contemporary Humanitarian Landscape; . London : Feinstein International Center.
- [18]. Taylor, C. a. (2010, Jun 9). What is qualitative data Analysis(QDA)nAvailable from: . Retrieved from <http://onlinegda.hud.ac>.
- [19]. Thompson, A. a. (2000). Strategic human resource management. Irwin, Georgetown , Onterio : Routledge .
- [20]. Zhang, X. F. (2019). Application and challenges of big data in Human Resource Management. Human Resources and Development of Tencent, 7, 462-474.