

Human Resource Management Practices Automation and Employee Health and Safety in Keystone Automobile Firm Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between automated human resource management practices and employee health and safety management system with automation as moderating variable in Keystone Auto Company, Ogun State, Nigeria. The population was derived from 72 employees of Keystone Auto Company and Simple Random technique was used in selecting random sample of 60 employees for data collection. The method of data collection used for the study was from primary source of data using questionnaire. The primary data was collected by a self-administered structured questionnaire and was summarized using descriptive statistics to establish the mean count with statements on automated human resource management practices adopted and employee health and safety management system. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results for automation of training shows ($r = 0.624$; $F = 35.411$; $t = 6.317$; $p < 0.05$). It is, therefore concluded from the result that training practices is a significant predictor of Employee HSEMS and the result for automation of reward shows ($t = 7.452$; $p < 0.05$); hence, reward is a significant predictor of Employee HSEMS in the company. The study concludes that there is a high degree of influence of automation of human resources practices on health and safety of employee in the company. The study recommended the adoption of HSE incentive system and rewards for staff who performs well in the company, so as to ensure that working safely can earn them some incentives in Keystone Auto Company.

Keywords: Human Resource Management Practices, Automation, Health and Safety Management System, Recruitment, Training, Reward, Compensation.

Introduction

Employees play a crucial role in an organization. For organizations to be sustainable, employees must be motivated to care about the work they do, to acquire job-related skills, and perform their tasks to the best of their abilities. Human Resource Management (HRM) practices are an important element of every organization. Human resources (HR) handles issues related to employees, including hiring, onboarding, off boarding, training, development, payroll, timekeeping, vacation, and sick time, and general well-being. Human resources are important to the smooth functioning of any organization. The focus of the current investigation is on

establishing the relevance of automating recruitment, training, employee reward and compensation in automobile industries.

Health and safety in the automobile industry is a critical aspect that requires effective management. The nature of work in this industry involves various risks and hazards that can pose a threat to the well-being of employees. Human resources management practices play a significant role in identifying and addressing potential health and safety risks in the workplace. By conducting risk assessment and by implementing appropriate measures, organizations can proactively prevent accidents and injuries from occurring. The concept of automation of human resource practices contribute to the success of health and safety practices in the automobile industry is the effective management of human resources. Human resources management plays a crucial role in ensuring that employees are adequately trained, equipped, and supported to carry out their work safely and ensuring that employees have access to necessary equipment's like PPE and promoting good safety culture within the organization.

HR automation is the use of software and algorithms to handle activities previously done manually by HR professionals. These activities include data entry for applicant tracking, drafting job requisitions, onboarding new hires, off boarding protocols and managing time-off requests. HRM automation is about digitizing repetitive and time-consuming HR tasks to eliminate or minimize the need for manual work and human input.

Health and safety in the automobile industry is a critical issue that requires careful attention and management. By implementing effective human resources management practices, organizations can ensure the well-being of their employees and create a safe working environment. It is essential for organizations to prioritize health and safety in the workplace and to continuously strive to improve their practices to protect their workforce (Ayode & Nwanjo, 2017).

The study investigates the automation effect of Human Resource Management (HRM) practices on employee's health, safety and environment management system in Keystone Auto Company. Human Resource Management is regarded as important for the successful realization of organizational objectives. It is argued that adoption of high performance Human Resource Management practices in auto operations are associated with significantly Lower Incident Rates, Lost Time injury (LTI) and better financial performance of employees (Cline & Guynes, 2017). Furthermore, the synergy of HR personnel with Health Safety and Environment (HSE) officer has been recommended as a strategy to boost the ability of health, safety and environment (HSE) officer to manage effectively Human Resource in the organization (Izuogu, 2018).

Keystone Auto Company employs a trained and specialist HSE officer so as to manage the health and safety, performance of employee's and to compensate employee adequately where needed. However, few studies are conceptualized to enhance our understanding of the relative importance of the various HRM functions to reduce risk of health and safety of employees in the area of diagnosis, repairs, and automation in the organization. It may be argued that lack of

knowledge of the relative importance of the effects of the various HRM functions in driving incident free in employee health and safety systems may be dysfunctional. The aim of this study is to determine the relative significance of HRM practices which will have the potential to enhance the ability for organizations to achieve its core mandates. The focus of the current investigation is on establishing automation relevance of recruitment, training, reward and compensation of employee as predictors of employee health and safety management system within in the organization operations.

It can be argued that HR demanding nature of employees' health and safety provision justifies an empirical investigation to identify the automation of Human Resource Management practices that significantly predict Employee Health and Safety as a way to enhance the role of HRM in Keystone Auto Company in Nigeria.

To fill the empirical and conceptual gaps, there is a need for a study that focuses on the link between automation of human resource management practices and employee health and safety. The current study focuses on establishing the empirical link between automation of human resource management practices of recruitment, training, reward and compensation, and employee health and safety of workers in Keystone Auto Company

Statement of the Problem

The automation of human resources management practices has gained momentum globally in organizations as they seek to streamline processes improve efficiency (Dunleavy and Carrera, 2016). However, the integration of automation in employee health and safety practices has not been as widely adopted. This lack of automation in health and safety processes constitutes significant challenges for organizations in ensuring the well-being of their employees (Okoronkwo, 2017).

Previous studies have not provided an empirically derived understanding of the significance of automation application of Human Resource Management functions in employee health and safety management. For instance, the study by Ayode and Nwanjo (2017) focused on implications of the devolved system of Human Resource Management in the Health and Safety sector on retention of HSE personnel working in the organization. In Nigeria, the selected organization activities face challenges related to the availability of adequately trained and motivated HSE personnel, as well as the poor integration of automated them to improve employee health and safety (Dunleavy and Carrera, 2016).

The study on the role of human resource management on retention of HSE officers by Ayode and Nwanjo (2017) in automobile company did not address the recruitment, training, reward and compensation issues that have been suggested to influence performance of health and safety. Other related studies, such as Obert and Gayle (2017) focused on the implementation of devolution in management of HSE.

The current study is motivated by the need to establish, if the existing Human Resources Management capacity can adequately motivate staff in the selected organization activities with well compensated and motivated HSE professionals for employee health and safety

management in Nigeria. This study provides a comprehensive conceptualization of the role of automation of human resource management in enhancing employee health and safety in Keystone Auto Company.

Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of this study was to examine the influence of automation with human resource management practices on employee health and safety management system in the selected organization.

The specific objectives are:

1. To determine the relationship between the automation of recruitment and employee's health and safety management system in the selected organization.
2. To ascertain the relationship between the automation of training and employee's health and safety management system in the selected organization.
3. To ascertain the relationship between the automation of reward and employee's health and safety management system in the selected organization.
4. To establish the relationship between the automation of compensation and employee's health and safety management system in the selected organization.

Statement of Hypotheses

Based on the objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated to guide this study;

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between automation of recruitment and selection and employee's health and safety

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between automation of training and employee's health and safety.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between automation of reward and employee's health and safety

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between automation of compensation and employee's health and safety.

Literature Review

Human Resource Management and Processes are an important element of every organization. Human resources handles issues related to employees, including hiring, onboarding, off boarding, training, development, payroll, timekeeping, vacation, and sick time, and general well-being. Human resources are important to the smooth running of any organization. Human resources departments undergoes series of paperwork when carrying out these tasks manually (Dunleavy and Carrera, 2016). The invention of Human Resource automation has provided proper and smooth running of Human Resource duties in organizations. Human Resource automation techniques have the potential to streamline the majority of Human Resource duties, boosting businesses productivity (Bridger, E., 2014).

Onboarding, payroll, timekeeping, and benefits administration are just some of the HR processes that may be streamlined with the use of human resources automation software. Staff in human resources are freed up to focus on longer-term, higher-value projects as a result

(Marcolin et al., 2019). Additionally, it increases productivity and security while decreasing the possibility of human error.

Human Resource automation has developed in response to the time and paper requirements of regular HR processes. If the Human Resource professionals on your team are spending more time on paperwork than contributing their unique skills elsewhere, you may want to rethink your approach to getting things done (Ramson, 2017). The organizations, while switching from a manual method to HR automation demand a specific amount of skill and training in using the technology (Sung & Choi, 2019).

Automation technology affirms workforce and increase employee performance by enabling quicker, easier-to-use HR services (Ramson, 2017). Organizations with a greater customer centric approach experience a moderate boost in average employee performance. Experts predict that as a result of automation, the number of generalist professionals responsible for tedious, repetitive routine duties, such as HR generalists may decrease (Van Wynsberghe & Robbins, 2019). Furthermore, more Human Resource personnel will do analytical tasks and become more engaged in other corporate operations.

Concept of Human Resource Automation

Human resource automation is the technique used in making HR departments more effective by relieving them of low-value, repetitive chores so that they may instead devote their time and energy to more strategic and better decision making. Experts in human resource management can automate many boring and routine HR tasks in order to streamline data acquisition, development, and updates for employees (Marcolin et al., 2019). Due to this, businesses will be more efficient, rule-driven, and straightforward.

HR Automation's Advantages: The primary benefit of HR automation technologies is the time they provide. Human resources process automation accelerates processes by eliminating routine, manual steps. Here are few benefits to HR automation:

- 1) Efficiency and streamlined processes: There will be more accurate data for better decisions, more effective record-keeping, better allocation of resources, higher output, and consistent procedures with the effect of automation on HR functions.
- 2) The rise of automation technologies has brought about a paradigm shift in the nature of work, prompting organizations to reimagine their operations and Human Resource practices. As technology continues to advance, the role of HR in managing the change to an automated workplace has become incomparable. This paper investigates the implications of automation for Human Resource practices.

The integration of automation and human resource functions has led to both concerns and expectations about its effects on the workforce, prompting organizations to evaluate their HR practices in response to these transition. Human Resource automation can help in crucial KPIs, ensuring that everyone's efforts are aligned with organizational goals.

Automation and Recruitment Practices

The impact of automation on recruitment processes has been commonly explored in recent literature. Researchers have investigated the effectiveness of artificial intelligent applicant tracking systems and algorithms by carefully examining large volumes of resumes and performing fast and efficient task of screening phase (Davison et al., 2019). However, concerns regarding bias and fairness in automated recruitment have also emerged, prompting calls for transparency and continual monitoring of these algorithms to ensure equitable hiring practices (Van Wynsberghe & Robbins, 2019).

The automation of the entire hiring process, from posting open positions to conducting interviews and providing new hires is made possible and convenient. With the help of HR software, businesses may be able to save costs and shorten the time it takes to get new hires up to speed

Technological advancements such like HR chatbots possibly will encourage candidates to actively participate in the selection procedure.

Skill Development and Training Automation Practices

The transformation landscape of automation has reshaped the focus of training and development programs within organizations. Scholars have highlighted the integration of online learning platforms and micro learning modules as key components of upskilling initiatives (Marcolin et al., 2019). This review also investigates the dynamic nature of required skills, suggesting that Human Resource departments need to highlight continuous learning and adaptability to bridge skill gaps that may arise due to automation (Sung & Choi, 2019).

Rewards and Compensation Automation Practices

Managing employee benefits on paper and by hand is an enormous task. As a result of rising costs, the implementation of HR automation is to save money on benefits administration (Dunleavy and Carrera, 2016). One of the advantages of an automated platform for managing benefits is less time spent on the following:

1. The process of determining who is entitled to receive benefits which has been automated.
2. Letting current employees make adjustments to their benefits packages and
3. Availability of benefits for new hires and prospective employees on the wide range of employee benefits.

Theoretical Framework

The following theories gave a conceptual guide to the study;

1. Human Capital Theory and
2. Intellectual Capital Theory.

Human Capital Theory

The Human Capital Theory by Baker (1964) reflects people as assets and emphasizes that investment in people by organizations brings worthwhile returns. According to human capital theory, the human capital brought to work consists of elements like distinctive abilities, behaviour and personal energy. The human capital theory was used as suitable framework for revealing the connection between automation of recruitment and automation of training as Human Resource Management practices and Employee's Health and Safety. It is an asset that must be managed properly, since performance depends largely upon the knowledge, skills and motivation of health and safety professional responsible for employee's safety intervention. As Armstrong (2011) recommends, Human Resource Management should focus on attracting, retaining and developing human capital since is individuals that create, retain and use the knowledge and skills to create intellectual capital. Further, this study considered Human Capital Theory as an appropriate theoretical framework to test the connection between the automation of health and safety practices for recruitment, training, reward and compensation in the organization (Yaping, Kenneth, Song and Katherine, 2016).

Intellectual Capital Theory

Intellectual capital consists of the stocks and flows of knowledge, ability, skill and competencies available to an organization. These can be regarded as intangible resources which together with tangible resources (money and physical assets) comprise the market or total value generating processes of a firm and are under its control. As described by Bridger (2014), these incorporate the value of all relationships inside and outside the organization including those with customers and suppliers.

It also encompasses the development of structure to ensure that people work effectively together and that they exchange relevant information and ideas and make the best use of the resources of knowledge possessed by the organization (Boxall & Purcell, 2015).

Examining the Influence of Automation on Human Resource Practices

The use of automation technologies, including artificial intelligence, robotics, and data analytics, has significantly transformed various Human Resources (HR) processes within organizations. This section investigates the extent to which automation has reshaped HR practices, focusing on recruitment, training and development, employee engagement.

Research Methodology

In this study, a survey research design was regarded suitable for gathering data on Human Resource Management Practices Automation and Health and Safety Management System. The integration of automation assists in describing the existing conditions of employee's health and safety at Keystone Auto Company, Nigeria. This method was used to determine the employee perceptions, attitudes, behaviour and values towards the working conditions. The scope of the study is to examine the impact of automation of human resource on employee health and safety at the Keystone Auto Company. The sample to be employed for this study was limited to the employees of the company.

The population of interest consisted of all the skilled and unskilled labours, technicians, Automotive Engineers, Electricians, Auto painters, HSE officer and many other employees at Keystone Auto Company, Nigeria. A population of 72 staff formed the population of study. 72 questionnaires were distributed and 60 were completed and returned, while 12 were not returned. This study used a survey research design, which was appropriate for this study as it allowed for comparatively quick ways of collecting information.

The method of data collection used for the study was from primary source of data using questionnaire. The primary data was collected using questionnaire and was summarized using descriptive statistics to establish the mean count with statements on automation of human resource management practices adopted and Employee Health and Safety management system.

As the response data were received, the data were analyzed. The primary data was collected by a self-administered structured questionnaire and was analyzed using a survey method analysis and summarized using descriptive statistics to establish the mean count with statements on human resource management automation practices adopted and Employee Health and Safety management system. Further analysis was done to categorize the data based on the survey questions. It provided a means to determine the major categories for discussion in this study. The study applied regression analysis of the dependent and independent variables. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS software.

The method of analysis used in the study was a survey method analysis using questionnaires. The purpose of the survey analysis of data with regards to this research study was to make conclusions that are valid and lead to good decision (Olannye, 2006). Analysis is the rational processing of data with the use of statistical tools, to produce information. A quantitative approach was vital for this study to achieve a “numerical description of variables, attitudes, or opinions” of a large population base (Creswell, 2009).

Result and Discussion

Presentation of Data, Analyses and Interpretation

This section evaluates acquired data for this research project. Data was displayed and interpreted according to questionnaires disbursed to employees in Keystone Auto Company, Nigeria. 72 questionnaires were given to the respondents. Total of 60 copies were returned while twelve (12) were not returned.

Summary of Regression Analysis for the Influence of Automation of Human Resource Management Practices on Employee Health and Safety in Keystone Auto Company, Ogun State

Table 1

| a: Model Summary | | | | | | |
|--|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | | |
| 1 | .624 ^a | .390 | .379 | .36678 | | |
| a. Predictors: (Constant): Recruitment, Training, Reward, Compensation | | | | | | |
| b: ANOVA | | | | | | |
| Model | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. | |
| 1 Regression | 19.055 | 4 | 4.764 | 35.411 | .000 ^b | |
| Residual | 29.865 | 222 | .135 | | | |
| Total | 48.920 | 226 | | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Health and Safety | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant) | | | | | | |
| c: Coefficients | | | | | | |
| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. | |
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | |
| (Constant) | 1.289 | .201 | | 6.110 | .000 | |
| Recruitment | .024 | .055 | .027 | 0.874 | .727 | |
| Training | .283 | .045 | .348 | 6.317 | .007 | |
| Reward | .340 | .046 | .413 | 7.452 | .003 | |
| Compensation | .109 | .053 | .125 | 2.060 | .041 | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Health and Safety | | | | | | |

Source: Field Survey (2024)

R Square value in regression model of Table 1A above gives an indication of the explanatory power of the regression model. R square is simply the percentage of variance in the dependent variable explained by the collection of independent variables. The value of 0.390 means that 39.0% of the variability of employee health and safety management system may be explained by the predictor Human Resources Management variables used in the study. The next part of the output shows the SPSS test of the significance of the correlation coefficient by analysis of variance (ANOVA). The ANOVA table assesses overall significance of the regression model.

Table 1C presents predictor variables coefficients together with p-values. The hypothesis was tested by comparing the decision rule p value of 0.05 with predictor variable p values. The decision rule states that if $p < 0.05$ reject the null for non-significance and conclude that the

independent variable is a significant predictor of the dependent variable. The study hypothesized that:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between automation of recruitment and selection and employee's health and safety

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between automation of training and employee's health and safety.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between automation of reward and employee's health and safety

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between automation of compensation and employee's health and safety.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the test of significance as shown in Table 4.1C indicates that the p-value of automation of recruitment practices is >0.05 ($p = 0.727$). It then accepted the first null hypothesis, H₀₁ that there is no significant relationship between automation of Recruitment and Employee Health and Safety Management System. This can be concluded that the automation of recruitment practice is not a significant predictor of the employee health and safety management system, as given that the p-value (0.727) is greater than the decision p-value $p < 0.05$. The recruitment practices in the selected organization do not significantly predict the employee health and safety management system.

The result can be understandable for getting an insignificant relationship between the automation of recruitment and employee health and safety management system as against some theories since recruitment is not a major function of human resource in the selected organization.

For the second hypothesis; the result of the hypothesis test as shown in Table 4.1C indicates that the p-value of the automation of training practices ($p=0.007$) is less than the decision p-value ($p < 0.05$) hence we reject the second null hypothesis, as stated H₀₂, that there is no significant effect between automation of training on employee health and safety management system. The result for automation of training shows ($r = 0.624$; $F= 35.411$; $t = 6.317$; $p < 0.05$). It is therefore concluded from the test that the automation of training practices is a significant predictor of employee health and safety management in the company.

For the third hypothesis; the result of the hypothesis test as shown in Table 4.1C indicates that the p-value of the automation for reward practices ($p=0.003$) is less than the decision p-value ($p < 0.05$) hence we reject the second null hypothesis, as stated H₀₃, that there is no significant effect between automation of reward on employee health and safety management system. The result for reward shows ($F= 35.411$; $t = 7.452$; $p < 0.05$). It is therefore concluded from the test that the automation of reward practices is a significant predictor of employee health and safety management in the company.

For the fourth hypothesis, the result of the hypothesis test as shown in Table 4.1C indicates that the p-value of the automation of compensation practices ($p=0.041$) is less than the decision p-

value ($p < 0.05$) hence we reject the second null hypothesis, as stated H_04 , that there is no significant between the automation of compensation on employee health and safety management system. The result for automation of compensation shows ($r = 0.624$; $F = 35.411$; $t = 2.060$; $p < 0.05$). It is therefore concluded from the test that the automation of compensation practices is a significant predictor of employee health and safety management in the company.

Conclusion

The coefficients on the automation of recruitment show observational evidence that does not drive health and safety of employees in the company. Moreover, automation of training, reward, and compensation management practices are significant predictors of the employee's health and safety management system in the selected organization. Employees are helped to acquire technical knowledge and skills through the automation of training practices to discharge their duties effectively.

Conclusively, this study provides an important basis for describing high influence of automation of human resources practices on health and safety of employee in the company.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made according to the inquisitive results observed;

- 1) The study recommends the embracement of recent modern technology in the recruitment process so as to employ competent and talented employees that will help in achieving organizational employee health and safety goals. Artificial intelligence-based applicant tracking systems and algorithms should be used by carefully examining large number of resumes so as to perform fast and efficient task of the screening phase.
- 2) The study also recommends companies to implement HR technologies trainings so that the company data analyst can be trained to do their jobs from home or elsewhere in the office. They can get knowledge more easily and keep it up to date, which can be useful in the long run.
- 3) The study also recommends for the embracement of health and safety incentive system and the automation of rewards practice for staff who perform well in the company. This incentive system will create awareness and also motivate employees in ensuring that working safely will earn them some incentives.
- 4) The automation of Human Resource system (for compensation) should be made to be user friendly so as to attract a substantial user base, and it should also consistently integrate all Human Resource Management related practices.

This study examines the impact of automation of human resource practices on employee health and safety in the Keynote Auto Company. The study will have impact on the management and employee of the company, health and safety practitioners, customers and also show the relevance of automation of human resources on employee's health and safety.

Areas for Further Research

The following suggestions are recommended suggestion for further investigations;

- 1) The influences of automation on recruitment process of auto companies
- 2) Effect of automation on training and development in the auto companies.
- 3) The future researchers should conduct additional studies on this topic to ascertain other independent variables that many affect the employee health and safety.

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