

The Relationship between Human Resource Management Practices and Employees' Loyalty of the Nigerian Public Sector

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ABSTRACT

Employee loyalty plays a significant role in the organizational development as well as economic growth around the world. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between human resource management practices (HRMP), and employee loyalty (EL) in Nigeria public sector. A proposed human resource management practices model the influences employees' loyalty measures were formulated and tested. This study adopts quantitative research approach. Survey, using questionnaire, was conducted to obtain data from 500 public sector employees in Lagos state Nigeria. Structural Equation Modelling analysis using AMOS version 22 was conducted to determine the direct effects of HRM on employee loyalty. The findings reveal that there is a strong causal relationship between HRM practices and employee loyalty in Lagos state public sector. This study recommends that future research should consider using longitudinal mixed method research design to study relationship between HRM practices, workplace spirituality and employee loyalty. Thus, findings of this research have undoubtedly created pathway for future research in human resource management.

Keywords: *Performance Appraisal, Compensation, Training and Development, Employees' Loyalty*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This study explores the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices and employee loyalty in the Nigerian public organizations in Lagos state. Contemporary literature has consistently focused on employee loyalty in the global business world. Employee loyalty is of continued concern to every employer of labour. It is significant because it stimulates the attainment of organizational goals. Studies indicate that loyal employees are indispensable stakeholders who contribute immensely towards the progress of a business (Prabhakar, 2016; Waqas et al., 2014). Therefore, their loyalty is an integral part of a successful business organization.

In the management discourse, commitment is a central variable synonymous

with loyalty. Loyal people tend to devote efforts to work in order to improve organizational performance. In recent years, the likely impact of loyalty on performance has largely increased. Extant literature has explored the term loyalty in various ways. These include consumer loyalty, employee loyalty, management loyalty, loyalty to society and principles, ideals, and beliefs, and so forth.

Given the dynamic business environment, employers need to devise strategies to retain their experts and keep them loyal. By so doing, employers can avoid brain drain. However, it should be noted that sustained loyalty in any organization reflects management operations and practices, since these give clues to intending or existing employees about the company (Rana & Malik, 2017; Ribeiro & Gomes, 2016; Zhu et al., 2014). Hence, the operations and practices shape

employees' perception of how they are treated.

By implication, a satisfied employee is unlikely to seek another employment. Therefore, it becomes imperative to employ appropriate HRM policies. Particularly, those that can induce employee loyalty. By statute, HRM places great emphasis on the organizational structure by forming policies that enhance promotion opportunities, long-term development programs, and job security among employees. These are contributory factors towards employee loyalty.

In this regard, every organization needs to pay ample attention to the loyalty of their employees. Studies suggest that this will promote their domestic processes and prevent repeated training on employee disloyalty and turnover (Sikora et al., 2016; Sikora, Ferris & Van Iddekinge, 2015). These days, companies deploy diverse marketing strategies, both internally and externally, to improve customer satisfaction (Spinelli & Canavos, 2000). Employee loyalty is a good factor in achieving customer satisfaction. There are theoretical discussions as well as anecdotal illustrations which how employee loyalty could, in turn, result in excellent customer service and customer loyalty, and hence, ensure the long-term profitability and success of an organization (Ineson, Benke & Laszlo, 2013).

However, Disloyalty among employees in organisations has become rampant nowadays with adverse consequences such as work withdrawal among employees, and overall organizational performance and Nigeria context is not an exemption (Oluwafemi, 2013a; Tatsiramos, 2014). Structural changes, rationalization, downscaling, and dismissals in organisations brought about tensed working in environments in which employees experience low self-assurance (Driver, 2005; Gatling, Kim & Milliman 2016). Numerous organizations have been faced with problems in building important aspects of their organizations. They include creating community among employees, connecting the organizations, individual qualities, and creating the admiring environment in persuasive air in which the co-workers can show their ability, reliability to

demonstrate their capacity and loyalty. Mallow (2016) indicated that workplace tension tamped on employee loyalty into rejecting an organization's core values.

In Nigeria, where corruption seems to act as the destructive mode for government rules and regulations, indigenous and comprehensive challenges face organizational structure because of the disloyalty of employees in the workplace. Goel and Nelson (2008) see corruption as the use or abuse of public office for private gratification. A study conducted by Ayodele (2010) on bribery and corruption in Nigeria, showed that between 5 % and 15 % up to 40 % were illegally spent on bribery and corruption provided to higher management officials in government offices, especially during the awarding, executing and payment contracts. Ayodele (2010) observes that about 80 % of productivity issues in organisation's work environment are due to issues bordering on loyalty, specifically among the public employees in Nigeria.

Over the years, the public sector in Nigeria has experienced loyalty related problems. These include stealing, diversion of resources for private use, falsification of contracts and disclosing official records and government classified information. All of these reduce the civil servants' 'Integrity' (Anger, 2002). Mustapha and Osaghae (2018) assume that the poor pay package contributes to this phenomenon amongst civil servants in Nigeria. This accumulated and accounted for employees reduced loyalty to their organization.

Regardless of the pay package, the civil service rules frown against disclosing classified information. They are expected to maintain secrecy in their respective official capacity on government documents. The oath of secrecy of 1962 has remained in force in the civil service to show the premium government places on official documents. An official who divulges official secrets in the civil service has divided loyalty (Oji & Eme 2014).

Divided loyalty increasingly becomes a problem for the government. Hence, the informed idea by the government to embark on various reforms in the civil service such as National Poverty Alleviation Programme

(NAPEP) and Strategic Marketing Management Product (SMMP). Despite these reforms, studies have revealed no positive impacts have been made on restoring loyalty to the Nigerian public sector for effective service delivery (Osawe, 2017).

Currently, Nigeria lacks infrastructural and service development. To address this, there is a need to investigate whether the HRM practices of the public institutions are effective in enhancing employee loyalty. A comprehensive HRM policy focuses on recruitment, training, compensation, and environment that fosters meaningful life, promoting a culture of meritocracy, performance, and achievement among the civil servants (Oji & Eme 2014). In view of this, the present study intends to investigate the relationship between HRM practices and employee's loyalty.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT CONCEPT (HRM)

The concept of human resource management (HRM) often defines business operations. In the last two decades, HRM has been used in lieu of Personnel Management (PM). (Aslam et al., 2014; Ayub et al., 2013; Lloyd & Rawlinson, 1992; Quresh et al., 2010). In a broader meaning, HRM practices encapsulate the vision of an organisation constructed to make it realise its objectives while ensuring the effective employee longevity for the organisation benefit (Chan & Hasan, 2019; Shahnaei & Long, 2015).

Shahnaei and Long (2015) and Paauwe (2009) equally opined that human resources management in the 21st century is a process that utilizes the skills and knowledge of employees to achieve organizational goals. Amin et al. Beardwell and Wright (2014; 2004) defined human resources management as sets of rules, regulations, and procedures related to the organization's management. Schuler and Jackson (1987) described human resources management practices as a system that pulls, develops, motivates, and retains employees to ensure effective implementation and the survival of the organization and its members. It

is worthy to say that some scholars often visit human resources as human capital (Mayo, 2016; Zula & Chermack, 2007). Some equally conclude that human resource management practices are an essential ingredient for sustainable competitive advantage in this modern society and era of global competition (Luthans & Luthans, 2004).

2.1 Dimension of Human Resources Management

In the 21st century, HRM incorporates a number of exercises such as job analysis which describes employee needs, recruitment, selection for enrolment, and choice of productive individuals for a specific occupation (Al Damoe, 2014; Paauwe, 2009). Researchers further mentioned that giving preparing projects to representatives keeping in mind the end goal to enhance workers' present execution, giving impetuses and advantages to representatives, unravelling debate amongst workers and administration, deciding wages and pay rates, and so forth. For coherent comprehension of the branches of HR administration, researchers like (Haslinda, 2009) thought of a short representation for clear and better comprehension of the term as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

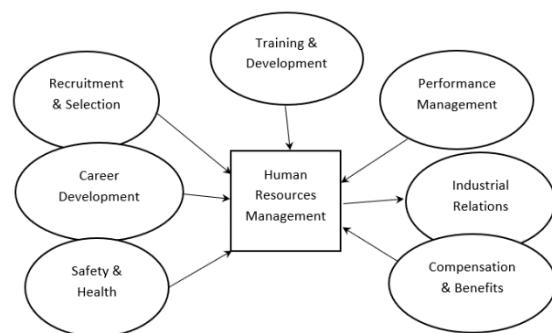


FIGURE 1
HRM practices

Figure 1 shows that HRM practices are numerous. Tessema and Soeters (2006) concentrated on eight HR practices while investigating the relationship between HRM practices and employees' perceived performance. Another researcher like Huselid (1995; 1995) identified eleven HRM practices. These include employees' selection, execution

compensation, performance appraisal, work design, grievance methods, data sharing, and state of mind appraisal, labour administration interest, recruitment effort, employee training, and advancement criteria. Likewise, in a recent study by Olander, Hurmelinna-Laukkanen and Heilmann (2015), it was found that several human resources practices are interrelated and correlated. That is, commitment, trust and motivation may strengthen an employee's loyalty and enhance productivity.

In reality, HRM practices contribute to the organization's bottom line in training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation which should be consistent, integrated, and strategically focused in this study. Therefore, building on these findings, the present study will focus on these practices to propose sustainable solutions that will enhance employee loyalty and benefit the Nigerian civil service organizations.

Insight of this, organizations need to build long-term commitment in retaining their workforce and heavy reliance on HRM practices such as training and development, performance appraisal and compensation, therefore, critical analysis should be allowed (Güngör, 2011). As such, performance appraisal as one of the practices resulted in an increase in output to the organization and a higher standard of living as these promotions and other necessary rewards motivate the employee to work hard (ibid).

Given the previous discussions, frequently employed HRM practices are discussed below:

a. Training and development (T&D). This is usually an organization's means of educating employees' skills. It encompasses a diverse set of improvement activities (e.g., overseas attachment, overseas training, and secretariat attachment) with timely induction exercise provided to all new staff (Bell et al., 2017; Noe et al., 2017). It also involves periodic management training for continuous improvement.

This HRM practice is responsible for ongoing employee development. Continuing education keeps employees' skills fresh, so they bring innovative ideas to the workplace (Martin, 2010; Noe, 1986). Some of the components for a successful employee T&D experience are based on learning principles.

HRM agenda for a successful employee training is always focused on employee's knowledge, skills, and abilities unlearn (Garah et al., 2012; Gilbreath & Montesino, 2006; Martin, 2010; Noe et al., 2017). Examples of formal training organized for employees include seminars and workshops to update their knowledge and offer them new experiences. These enhance their skills and keep them motivated in their respective jobs. At the same time, employees should be given an opportunity to reinforce what they learn through practices and should be duly compensated for the efforts made.

The training and development practices support skills and opportunities that promote positive self-esteem (Bell et al., 2017; Noe et al., 2017). It enhances employees' talents and work experience to motivate and encourage employees to stay and remain committed in their various companies.

b. Compensation. This HRM practice could otherwise be referred to as benefits. Compensation and benefits are rewarding tools to staff that are sometimes given based on merit, competence, responsibility, and accountability (Noe et al., 2017). Its purpose is solely to drive employees' motivation, encourage employees on skills development, improve competency, or desire career advancement (Stewart & Brown 2019). There are three basic components of compensation and benefits, namely base pay, variable compensation, and supplementary compensation (Noe et al., 2017).

Base pay is a basic salary and wage given to employees. It usually is constant at a given amount irrespective of the difference in organizations. This explains the fixed payments

to the employee irrespective of the different organizations they work, regardless of education qualification. Salary is usually tied to a person's skills and experience, but compensation represents the single largest component package (Arumugam & Mojtahedzadeh, 2011).

Surprisingly, employees reckon more with a benefit when comparing organizations or in deciding which company to work. Some of the packages for employees include medical treatment, retirement, pension, gratitude after working years although, a subsequent increase in these benefits is usually based on employees' performance, value, and contribution to an organization (Noe et al., 2017).

Compensation policies in many organisations accommodate payment flexibility for employers to increase or reduce benefits. In respect of which form of compensation, they act as tools towards employees' retention, drive their satisfaction, and take care of their worries to focus and be loyal to their company.

- c. **Performance appraisal (PA).** This is another important function in HRM. It is the process of evaluating and assessing the performance of employees in order to determine how well the job is performed (Abraham et al., 2001; Dulebohn & Ferris, 1999; Ilgen & Feldman, 1983; Karim, 2015; Melnyk, van Osselaer, & Bijmolt 2009; Mohamed, 2019; Murphy, Cleveland, & Hanscom 2018; Oliver, Cravens, and Stewart 2019; Pandey, 2019; Poon, 2004).

It is a mechanism that ascertains transparency, accountability, and integrity of the appraisal process. The performance appraisal system is an innovative and integrated computer-based system that enables HR managers to conduct needs analysis for employee training and development (Dulebohn & Ferris, 1999; Murphy, Cleveland, & Hanscom, 2018). All appraisers must be adequately trained on the

personnel management system and have the required skills for evaluation.

Performance appraisal is a catalyst for effective employee performance, productivity' and a congenial work environment (Benati & Coccia, 2018; H. H. Meyer, Kay & French Jr., 1965). Performance management will be effectively implemented in an organisation when goals are set, and standard operation procedure (SOP) to achieve the goal are in place (Mercier & Deslandes, 2019; Murphy, Cleveland, & Hanscom 2018). Having discussed some of the major HRM practices applicable by most organizations, the next section focuses on employee loyalty.

3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW: EMPLOYEE LOYALTY

Loyalty is a kind of faithfulness and trueness; it reflects a person's devotion or sentiment to an object, another person or group of persons, or an idea, a duty, or a cause. It expresses itself in both thought and actions and strives for identification of to identify the interests of a loyal individual with those of the object. Loyalty can also be described as an employee's intricate thoughts about the connection that he/she engages in within the organization (Aityan & Gupta, 2012). Loyalty definition can be express from different perspectives. In the context of this study, it will be about an employee in an organisation.

Employees' loyalty in the organisations simply means a good employee, who is a dedicated and a reliable employee. Employees' loyalty is an important psychological concept in most organizational studies and employment relationships in particular (Meyer, 2016). According to Klein et al. (2012), employee commitment refers to a psychological bond with one or more targets of a work setting, for example, organization, colleagues, job, and supervisor, in which these are the root in terms of employee loyalty in an organisation.

In other words, organizational motivation and commitment are diverse structure involving an employee loyalty to the organization (Joo et al., 2018). These are all words related to employee loyalty underpinning. Findings by Padmavathy, Balaji

and Sivakumar (2012) revealed that optimistic organization managers' behaviour is very important to their employees. Without this positive approach, the loyalty of employees to organizational goals may be jeopardized. Overall, the targeted objectives to become a successful firm may suffer some setbacks if the role of employee loyalty is threatened.

A number of authors, Chi and Gursoy, 2009; Henryhand, 2009; Loveman 1998, linked employee loyalty to organization profitability. Chang, Chiu, and Chen (2010a) stated that employee loyalty is one of the pressing issues within cooperative organizations today because workers happen to be the treasures for any organization. The loyalty of employees can be enhanced through employees' pleasure. Arguments have been the level at which organisations open their doors to employees and reciprocate to employees' payback which is their loyalty to the organisation.

Researchers in the western context have indicated that employee loyalty is a good link to organizational structure and employees, which gives room to innovative organizations (Farrukh, M., Kalimuthuan, R., and Farrukh, 2019). Consistently, Samadi et al.(2017) mentioned in an argument that lack of loyalty can be unfavourable because it leads to loss of trust, ineffectual effort, higher absenteeism, and employee turnover (Davis, 2015).

Ample research has acknowledged the presence of several factors that contribute to employee loyalty. It is also obviously understood that HRM policies influence the performance of most organizations. Therefore, the organizational obligation to employees is considered to be one of the issues carefully preserved for organizational achievement. (Mohsan et al. 2011; A. Suliman and Iles 2000; A. M. Suliman and Al-Junaibi 2010).

Researchers such as Sabri, Mutalib and Hasan (2019); Padmavathy et al. (2012) clarify the unique attitude of loyal employees in terms of their dedication and stability toward achieving their organization objectives, their prospect to move from one organization to another is very low. The main inference drawn from the previous studies is that employee loyalty greatly impacts an organization

(Antonicic, 2011). Hence, this cannot be undermined by heads of organizations. Walker (2005) also found that satisfied employees will become loyal when they perceive their organization is offering them opportunities to learn, grow, and provide a clear established career path that they can pursue in the organization. Some effective HRM practices can, therefore, motive employees to be committed and be loyal to the organization.

3.1 Relationship between Employee Loyalty and Human Resource Practices

Loyalty is an issue in the global business environment. For instance, spending time, money and giving all kinds of incentives to the employees; is that person going to be loyal to me? For how long would I benefit from such employee? These are questions that shape the employers' worldview. According to Wiklund and Jansson (2019), there is trust for a loyal-committed employee who is productive; hence, loyalty level is now the determinant of the organization's performance.

It has been generally recognized that successful human management resources practices are critical in separating positive work practices among employees, which successively prime to loyal employees and organizational improvement (Chaubey & Sahoo, 2019; Nasim, 2019). According to Harter et al. (2002), HRM practices can create expanded learning, inspiration, collective energy, and responsibility among workers, bringing about a wellspring of maintained upper hand for the firm. HRM practices have generally been described as company procedures that are developed to sustain consistent documentation of human capital achievement and other related personnel activities (Delery & Doty, 1996; McClean & Collins, 2019; Oladejo, 2012).

It is noteworthy that HRM practices influence organization performance and stimulate employees to be committed and loyal to the organizations that are part of HRM roles. De Menezes and Wood (2015) found that HRM practices make a suitable environment for employees to be strongly committed to the organizational objectives.

Therefore, HRM practices are instrumental to employee loyalty to the organization.

The lack of employee loyalty in an organization hinders learning and self-development in the workplace for employees. This, in turn, can be the key to employees' disloyalty. If organizations seek employee loyalty, it is important to conduct reforms in policies and operation plans. This means a call for changes in the HRM practices to facilitate the desired loyalty from employees. Each of the HRM practices identified in the current study is discussed in the following sub-sections.

3.2 Compensation and Employee Loyalty

It has been observed that employees' express positive reactions to work compensated. Such compensations include pay and benefits. They can be socio-passionate benefits like gratefulness and reward (Angle & Perry, 1983; Armeli et al., 1998). The monetary or non-monetary rewards motivate a workforce, encourage retention of talented workers, increase satisfaction, and improve the performance of employees (Kazi et al., 2019; Yap Peng Lok et al., 2019).

The logical view is that compensation stimulates and motivates employees to keep their job and be loyal to the organization. It was revealed that pay segments are vital variables to dispelling turnover intention, encourage loyalty, and great indebtedness to the organization (Evans & Davis, 2005). The fact remains that various measures are used to balance the effort of the employees at their various posts. Extant research has discovered that compensation stands out amongst other vital components when considering employees' delight and loyalty (Noe et al., 2017).

Compensation indirectly influences employee loyalty by discouraging turnover intention. Compensation is positively interrelated to employee loyalty (Grace & Khalsa, 2003; Cotton & Tuttle, 1986). Consistent with the other research, Ovadjie (2009) found a strong negative relationship between compensation and employee turnover (disloyalty). In other words, the study

establishes the fact that compensation can be a high drive towards employee's indebtedness (i.e., loyalty) to their organization. Ajonbadi and Mojeed-Sanni (2015), in support of this, argued that high compensation and a comfortable work environment is an invitation to move to a comfortable place. As a result, employees become loyal to organizations that provide just and fair compensation packages to their employees.

3.3 Performances Appraisal and Employee Loyalty

Loyalty is an emotional effect that symbolizes the connection of an organization and any employee in the organization (Allen & Grisaffe, 2001; Jaja & Okpu, 2013). Performance appraisal is an estimation of the accomplishment of organizational objectives (Jansson & Wiklund, 2019; Robbins & Miller, 2004), and the objectives of big business exercises are to upgrade business execution. Therefore, there is a need for employee loyalty in an organization.

Loyal employees are those that perform their tasks as expected. Performance appraisal is critical in any organization because it brings about employees' pleasure and loyalty, which creates organization success (Iqbal, Tufail & Lodhi, 2015; Iqbal et al., 2019; Jawahar, 2006; Moon, 2019).

Jawahar and Hemmasi (2006) and Alfes (2017) state that there are important connections between HRM practices and employees' influence on performance. This implies a concrete reaction to specific organisational structures on how employees are liable towards assigned work. Meanwhile, the entire organizational operating strength is from employee loyalty (Chen, 2006). Loyal employees care about their performance to their tasks and to the organization's success. In contrast, disloyal employees give less attention to the appraisal irrespective of an organization's judgment.

3.4 Training and Development Employees Loyalty

Juhdi et al. (2010) stated that if an organization provides training for employees, it broadens their knowledge and enhances organizational cooperation. Therefore, it increases employees' development in an organization. At the same time, it brings about employee morale and the ability to lead a rational thought for an employee who ranks self-development and career as important. Kulkarni (2013) and Turkyilmaz et al. (2011) asserted that the loyalty level of employees who are trained by an organization is different from those who are not trained. Thus, employees tend to be loyal to the organization that provides career development through training provision.

In addition, Juhdi, Pa'wan, and Hansaram (2012) observed that employees perceive themselves as an organizational investment by providing training programs that give them self-confidence and increase their capacity building. For example, in a situation where employees' expectations are met through organization workshops/seminars, there is a tendency for employee loyalty to increase. Regarding the previous discussion, it is relatively important to look at some challenges hindering HRM practices. These are discussed in the next section.

3.5 Hypothesis Development

Researchers such as Meyer and Allen (1997) suggested that organizations that care for employees and treat employees as king are less likely not to have untrustworthy employees. Thus, employees who are attached to their organization show better performance and meaningful contributions to organizational goals (Near & Miceli, 2016). Therefore, for any organization that intends to enjoy employees' efficiency and loyalty, it should create a healthy workplace by providing HRM practices such as training and development enabling employees to obtain economic gain.

However, since human capital theory suggests a balance between progress and

structures of the parties, this will relate the effort in terms of (HRM practices) discussion between organization and employees as a vital achievement of organizations and employees' "movers." These views of the human capital theory are reflected as powerful tools for understanding workplace relationships on employee loyalty conduct (Malik, 2011). A survey of white-collar workers in Malaysia Ahmad and Bakar (2003) showed a positive relationship between training employees on HRM practices and organizational commitment, leading to employees' loyalty.

Another study by Linz, Good and Busch (2015) indicated a positive correlation between employees' training and organizational commitment over employee loyalty. Channar, Talreja, and Bai (2015) indicated that human capital development as a role of HRM is positively related to organizational satisfaction with the level of employees convenience gradually leads to loyalty. These are all justification of motivational strategies that can be provided by HRM to move an employee to their starting point as well and give an advantage to their organizational goals. Based on these literatures, the current study hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: *HRM practices positively influence employee loyalty*

4.0 METHODOLOGY

This research was purely quantitative in nature employing the cross-sectional survey design. It is categorized the cross-sectional as data collected from different sections or groups of government ministries workers at one time. The researcher seeks to explore the functional interaction between HRM practices and employees' loyalty in Nigerian public organizations.

4.1 Sample and Data Collection

the population groups for this study is the benchmark for employees' loyalty in ministries operating as Lagos civil service. Hence, five ministries were sampled, and all the districts

were approached. The names for the chosen ministries are (i) ministry of education, (ii) ministry of health, (iii) ministry of local government and community affairs, (iv) ministry of economic and development and (v) ministry of establishments, training and pensions. A stratified random sampling design, was adopted for the study in order to get the samples from different ministries. Based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample sizes table, 377 are essential to represent a population size of 20000. More specifically, Raosoft sample size calculator (<http://www.raosoft.com>) estimate shows that for populations of 18,687 with a margin error of 5% and a 95% confidence interval, the required sample size of 377 respondents is needed. In view of this the present study adopted 377 sample size.

The study was conducted among the civil servant workers in Lagos state, Nigeria. The state is the most crowded city in Nigeria, the second most rapidly developing city in Africa, and the seventh in the world (City Mayors Statistics, 2014). Lagos state is situated in the Southwest geopolitical zone of Nigeria with 20 Local Government Areas and 37 Local Council Development Areas [LCDAs]. The state is a major commercial nerve centre for the nation. It has beaches and seas which encourages international organizations. It has many tall buildings that command its horizons.

The data was collected by distributing survey questionnaires among civil servants from different ministries in Lagos State, Nigeria. This study adopted and adapted measurement for HRM practices, and employees' loyalty. The items were measured on a 5-point Likert-scale, which ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Permission letter was obtained from Kulliyah of KENMS International Islamic university Malaysia before administering the survey to civil servants in Alausa Lagos state. The researcher discussed with the authorities of each ministry. Precisely the directors and heads of the department. After fruitful discussion with the authorities on how distribution and collection will be made. Few were distributed but not collected on the same day. The feedback was gathered from the respondents. It was a self-administered

questionnaire approach. The questionnaires were "dropped off and collected later" in which the researcher explained the purpose of the survey and collected them back after the respondents had completed. The respondents were told to return the survey questions within one week using the envelope enclosed in the research packet.

5.0 DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0 was used to compute the descriptive statistics, including the frequencies of the demographic profiles of the respondents. SPSS software is used for Principal Component Analysis (PCA) to reduce the items. Subsequently, an application of first and second order CFA on the relationship among the variables of the study was conducted. For the single group analysis computation, Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) version 21.0 (Arbuckle and Wothke 2010) with Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE) was used to perform confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modelling (SEM) in the single group.

5.1 Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

TABLE I
Demographic Profile of the Sample (n=360)

Demographic characteristics	Option	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	187	51.9
	Female	173	48.1
	Total	360	100
Age	Less than 25	33	9.2
	25 to than 35	125	34.7
	35 to less than 45	54	15.0
	45 less than 55	134	37.2
	55 less than 65	9	2.5
	More than 65	5	1.4
	Total	360	100
Working experience	Less than 2 years	50	13.9
	2 to less than 5 years	50	13.9

5 to less than 10years	96	26.7
10 to less than 15 years	51	14.2
15 to less than 20 years	72	20.0
20 to less 25 years	22	6.1
25 years or more	13	3.6
Missing	6	1.7
Total	360	100

TABLE II Demographic Profile of the Sample (n=360)

Demographic characteristics	Option	Frequency	%
Marital status	Single	103	28.7
	Married	246	68.3
	Divorced/ separated	6	1.7
	Widowed	4	1.1
	Missing	1	0.3
	Total	360	100
Tribe	Hausa	5	1.4
	Yoruba	300	85.0
	Igbo	28	7.8
	Others (please indicate)	20	5.7
	Missing	7	1.9
	Total	360	100
Category of employment	Permanent	299	83.1
	Contractual	56	15.6
	Missing	5	1.4
	Total	360	100

5.2 Measures

The measures used in the research have been adapted from various studies previously researches. These scales have been tested and validated in different cultural contexts. For instance, HRM practices Performances Appraisal measured by six items adapted from Sturges et al (2000), Training and Development measured by six item was equally adapted from Sturges et al (2000) Juhdi et al. (2010) and Compensation by 13 item was adapted from Smith 1976 while Employee loyalty was measured by five items adapted from R.W.Y. Yee et al (2010) All the

measures revealed a high level of reliability with Cronbach alpha above 0.7.

TABLE III Constructs-wise descriptive statistics and the Reliability

No.	Construct	Mean	Std. Dev.	Cronbach's alpha
1	Performance appraisal	3.535	.59832	0.869
2	Compensation	3.076	.80386	0.741
3	Training and development	3.250	.69733	0.833
4	Employees' loyalty	3.637	.61615	0.725

5.3 Analysis and Results

The analysis of the collected data, was computed through Structural Equation Modelling with AMOS 21 to determine the relationship between HRM practices and employee's loyalty of the Nigerian public sectors. The hypothesized model four latent constructs which are: performance appraisal (10 items), training and development (8 items), compensation (8 items), and employee loyalty (3 items). This information can be depicted in Figure 2 below.

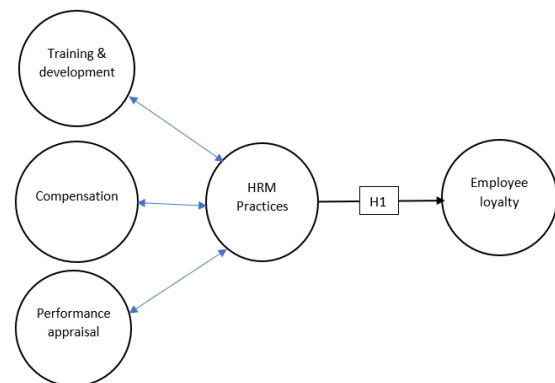


FIGURE 2

The Research Framework for the study showing the hypothesis of interest

The latent constructs are denoted by the ellipses in the AMOS Graphics. The forms of variables and latent constructs as shown in Figure are well described. SEM is a confirmatory method that provides a complete method for evaluating and modifying a measurement model. It also includes the

structural model (Awang 2015). This multivariate analytic technique is capable of assessing the measurement model's dimensionality, reliability, and validity. All constructs including items and several errors of measurement (after conducting CFA for each construct) are described subsequently.

Assessment of Measurement Model

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) for Second Order Constructs. Figure 2 shows the CFA conducted for human resource management (HRM) construct.

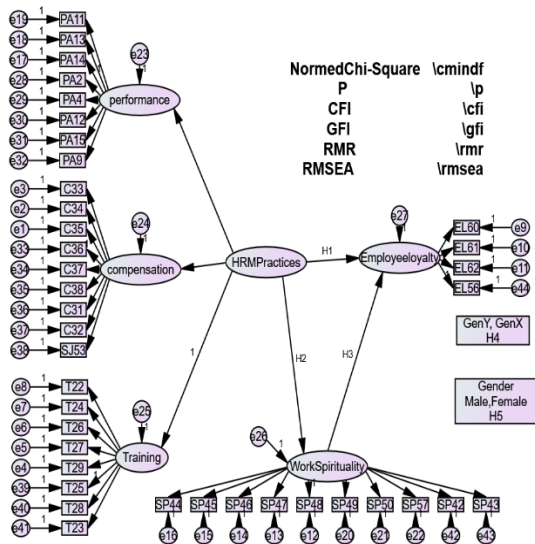


FIGURE 3

CFA for human resource management (HRM) construct

Initially, the HRM's measurement model contains three factors derived from the Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA). Figure 4 presents these three factors: performance appraisal (PA), training and development (TD) and compensation (C).

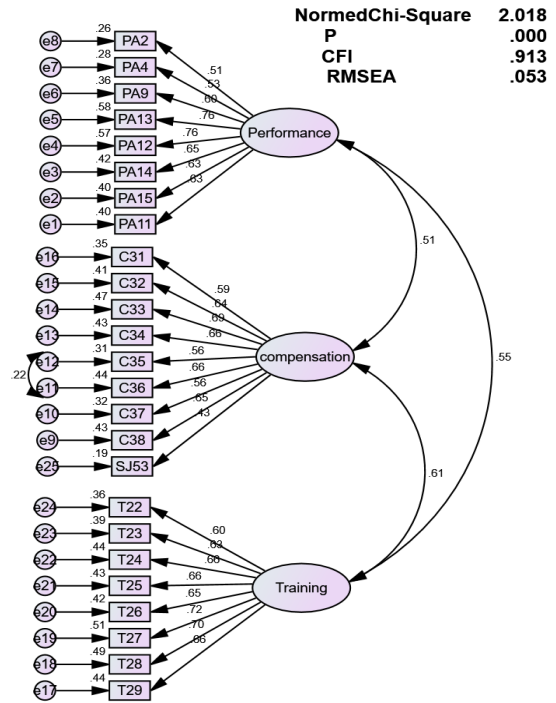


FIGURE 4

The Initial Measurement Model for human resource management (HRM)

The second order CFA Measurement Model for HRM

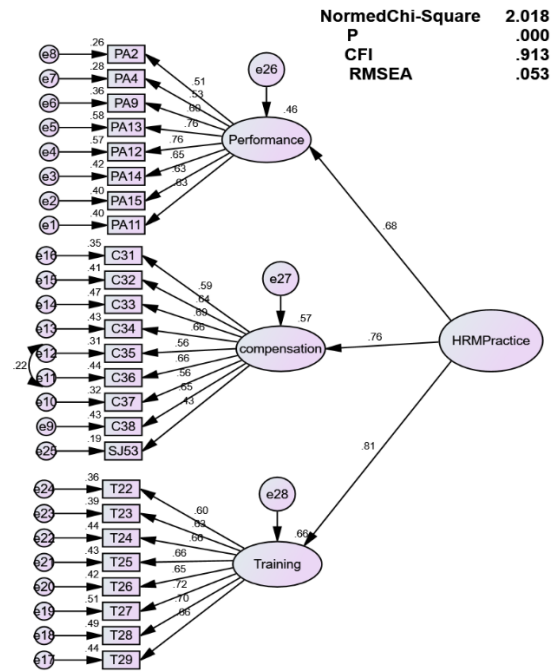


FIGURE 5

The CFA for Second Order Construct in the Model

Figure 5 shows the assessment of the measurement model's (HRM Model) fitness using CFA. In this case, three fit indices are evaluated to ensure the models fit with the data. Nevertheless, there has been no agreement on the right fitness index to be used by researchers (Awang 2015). Both Holmes-Smith, Coote and Cunningham (2006) and Hair et al. (1995, 2010) suggested the usage of at least one fitness from every model has fit category. The p-value as well as the RMSEA (Root Mean Square Approximation) are utilized to test 'absolute fit', the Comparative Fit Index, as well as the Tucker-Lewis Index meant for 'incremental fit' and Chi-Sq/df (Chi-Square/Degrees of Freedom), are utilized to ensure 'parsimonious fit' in this study.

Table IV reveals the fitness testing for human resources management practices measurement model. All fit indices reached the threshold values for model fitness.

TABLE IV
The Assessment of Fit for the Initial Measurement Model of HRM

Name of fit index category	Name of Index	Level of acceptance	Index value	Comments
Absolute	RMSEA	<0.08	0.053	Fulfilled the threshold level
Incremental	CFI	>0.9	0.913	Fulfilled the threshold level
Parsimonious	ChiSq/df	<5.0	2.018	Fulfilled the threshold level

Table V shows the standardized regression weight for the HRM components with critical ratio (CR) above 1.96 and significant p-value. The regression weight for training is 0.812, compensation 0.756 and performance appraisal amounted to 0.675 beta coefficient. This indicates that HRM practice has significant influence on participants' responses to training, compensation, and performance.

TABLE V
Standardized Regression Weights: Second-order CFA HRM Practices

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Training	←---	HRMPractice	.812			
Compensation	←---	HRMPractice	.756	.142	6.959	***
Performance	←---	HRMPractice	.675	.108	6.813	***

Given the above analysis on HRM practices, the current researcher proceeded to run CFA for both HRM practices and workplace spirituality. Table: provides the outcome of the fit indices.

6.0 VALIDATING THE MEASUREMENT MODEL

In the current study, composite reliability and AVE are calculated using the procedure outlined by Lowry and Gaskin (2014). Composite reliability is found as C (0.835), PA (0.823) and TD (0.860), as shown in table These values are greater than the minimum acceptable reliability of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010; Malhotra and Birks, 2007; Sekaran, 2003).

The AVE value for all the four factors is less than the minimum criteria (AVE<0.50). As shown in Table VI, the convergent validity for the proposed constructs of this study is adequate, although convergent validity (AVE) value for each construct is lower compared to the AVE threshold of 0.50. Discriminant validity is present when the correlation between two constructs is lower than the recommended value ($r < 0.85$) indicating the existence of discriminant validity (Kline, 2010), (see Table VI).

TABLE VI
Convergent and Discriminant Validity

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	Compensation	Performance	Training	Spirituality
Compensation	0.835	0.390	0.382	0.841	0.625			
Performance	0.823	0.405	0.306	0.914		0.553		
Training	0.860	0.435	0.382	0.944	0.618		0.553	

VALIDITY CONCERNS

Convergent Validity: the AVE for compensation is less than 0.50.

Convergent Validity: the AVE for Performance is less than 0.50.

Convergent Validity: the AVE for Training is less than 0.50.

Divergent Validity AVE for compensation is greater than the share variance (SV); evidence of convergent validity

Divergent Validity AVE for performance appraisal is greater than the share variance (SV); evidence of convergent validity

Divergent Validity AVE for training is greater than the share variance (SV); evidence of convergent validity

Legends: PA=performance appraisal, C=compensation, TD=training and development.

Therefore, the CFA is applied to the data obtained from the 360 employees, using AMOS 22 with Maximum likelihood (ML) estimation (Bryne, 2010). The measurement model of all the first order exogenous latent variables shows that the overall model fit is significant based on their respective factor loadings. All factor loading below the required thresholds have been deleted.

7.0 INTERPRETING THE AMOS TEXT OUTPUT: THE REGRESSION WEIGHTS

Figure 6 presents the hypothesized full-fledge model whereby the researcher has discovered that the R2 value determines a good model as well as the model’s goodness-of-fit from the fitness index while the factor loadings of all the items meet the value of the threshold (more than 0.6). In other to assess the relationship among independent, dependent and mediating variables, all variables are combined into a single model, as shown in the Figure 6 below. The full structured model is a representation of the research model, Figure 6.

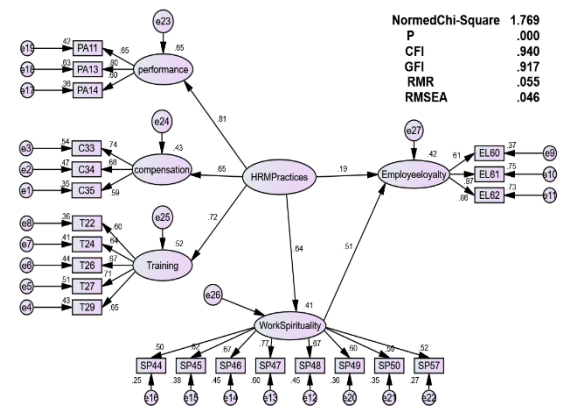


FIGURE 6

Full Structural Model

7.1 Revised Full-fledge Model

One of the most significant outputs to explain the regression path coefficient model (Standardized regression weights) is R2 value. The value of R2 for this model is 0.64, as shown in Figure 6. This value confirms that the model is good since it can capture 64% of the estimate on the HRM construct by the three exogenous constructs (performance appraisal, compensation, training and development) on Employee loyalty. It can be observed that the goodness-of-fit indices of the final model have achieved their required level (see Figures 6 and Table VII). The RMSEA is 0.046, which is lower than the threshold value of < 0.08 for this model. Therefore, the RMSEA indicates that the modified model effectively fit the data. The values of CFI and GFI are 0.940 and 0.917

respectively indicating the adequacy of the modified model. The Normed chi-square (ChiSq/df) is expressing a better fit for the final modified model, it is 1.843. These outcomes provide support for the uniformity and consistency of the survey data. However, the AMOS (Version 22.0) text output does not offer any further hints on how to adjust the modified model.

Parsimonious	ChiSq/df	<5.0	1.843	Fulfilled the threshold level
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Figure 6 contains the diagram and Table 5 presents the output for the full model including the estimate and critical ratio (CR) values. Based on these values, it can be established that there is a significant relationship between the structural path of HRM and EL. This issue is illustrated in the full fledged structural model above.

TABLE VII
The Fitness Indexes Assessment Model Fit Summary

Name of fit index category	Name of Index	Level of acceptance	Index value	Comments
Absolute	RMSE	<0.08	0.048	Fulfilled the threshold level
	A	<0.10	0.55	
	RMR	>0.90	0.917	
Incremental	GFI			Fulfilled the threshold level
	CFI	>0.90	0.902	

7.2 Testing Research Hypothesis

The SEM analysis is conducted to address research questions. The first research question states if there is any link between HRM and employee loyalty. The second research question determines the factors that affect employee loyalty. According to the findings, the proposed hypotheses are examined to determine their acceptances or rejection.

TABLE VIII
Regression path coefficient Weights

Factor	Factor	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P	Label
Performance	<--- HRMPractice	1.027	.152	6.748	***	par_16
Compensation	<--- HRMPractice	1.108	.168	6.579	***	par_17
Training	<--- HRMPractice	1.000				
Employee loyalty	<--- HRMPractice	.215	.103	2.079	.038	par_19

The acceptance result is measured through the significance level (p) and critical ration (C.R) value. Experts set the cut-off point for achieving a significant level. The p-value should be at least 0.05 or higher (Hair et al., 2010) and C.R value should be more than 1.96 at 0.05 significant level with standard normal distribution from random sampling (Garson, 2013). Garson also mentioned in the same study that if the C.R value is more than 1.96 at the significance level (p), the hypothesis is supported. On the other hand, the hypothesis that is proposed to check the validation through path coefficient between latent variable and the path coefficient value should be at least 0.1 for an impact mentioned within the model (Hair et al., 2011). Table VIII illustrates the relationship between the variable with the estimated value from the

standardized regression weights (default model).

TABLE IX
Standardized Regression Weights

Variable	Relationship	Variable	Est.
Performance	<---	HRMPractice	.807
Compensation	<---	HRMPractice	.654
Training	<---	HRMPractice	.723
Employee loyalty	<---	HRMPractice	.185

The estimated values are shown in figure 4.13 as the standardized path coefficient of the SEM model. The path coefficient (β) value for this model ranges from 0.185 to 0.807. Discussions of the hypothesis testing result are provided below:

Hypothesis 1: *HRM practices positively influence employee loyalty*

There is a significant relationship observed between HRM practices and employee loyalty. The first hypothesis from the research question has been evaluated after

analysing the data employing SEM. It is positively related to employee loyalty. The positive effect shown in the Table X is supported by the path coefficient mentioned.

TABLE X
Hypothesis 1 (H1) Findings

No	Hypotheses	Estimate	CR	Assessment
H1	There is a significant positive relationship between HRM (performance appraisal) and employee loyalty	.807	6.748	Supported
	There is a significant positive relationship between HRM (compensation) and employee loyalty	.654	6.579	Supported
	There is a significant positive relationship between HRM (training and development) and employee loyalty	.723	XX	Supported
	There is a significant positive relationship between HRM and employee loyalty	.185	2.079	Supported

The present empirical study has been conducted based on the premise that HRM practices factors affect employees' loyalty. Civil servants in Nigeria are not exceptional in this regard. A total of four hypotheses were evaluated. Given this finding, Table X shows that H1, H2, H3 and H4 are positively supported.

7.3 Discussion

H1: *HRM practices positively influence employees' loyalty* (Supported)

As proposed by the study, HRM practices (training and development, compensation, and performance appraisal) positively impact employees' loyalty. The more attention is accorded to HRM practices, the higher the employees' loyalty to an organization. Consequently, this improves organizational productivity. There are studies in the literature that reported similar findings as to the current research. Their outcomes posit that HRM practices have a positive and significant relationship with employees' loyalty. For instance, Bakalis (2006) argues that HRM practice of compensation is an effective motivator for employees' loyalty. It is also established that employees' loyalty has an incremental financial benefit and reward for organizational development and profitability (Anam et al., 2015). Given the previous discussion, it can be concluded that HRM

practices have a positive and significant relationship with employees' loyalty. However, it is important to note that employees' loyalty in government organizations can differ in comparison to private industries (organizations). The current study focused on employees in government organizations (i.e., civil servants in Nigeria). Suggestions arise through the study to be conducted in private industries to ascertain the generalizability of this study's outcome. This is because public and private organisations' operation systems can be contrary in terms of structures and regulations. Hence, policies and HRM strategies introduced by different organisational management can as well differ. Khuong and Phuong (2020) stated that HRM practices in connection to their organisational structure and strategies regarding the working environment directly affected employee motivation, and consequently, they provided indirect effects on employee loyalty.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The present study has found positive relationship between HRM practices and employees' loyalty. Theoretically the HRM practices comprises three sub-constructs which are performance appraisal, compensation and training and development. Each one of these constructs positive and significantly related to employee's loyalty. In view of this, the present study recommends to

the Nigerian public sectors to improve in their overall HRM practices. In otherwards they should enhance their employee's performance appraisal, compensation as well as training and development in order to ensure their employees' loyalty.

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